



# NEWTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Philosophy

Newtown Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognize that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilized whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

### Objectives

- to encourage full attendance and punctuality
- to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimize its occurrence
- to acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance
- to ensure a consistent approach throughout the school

### Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

### Principles

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly.

We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed. We will consult with all members of the school community and the Education Welfare Service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.

We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance. We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.

Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues. Promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by Senior Managers and the school governors.

Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place.

### Procedures

- The bell for start of school rings at 08.55am
- Registration starts at 8.55am and registers close at 9.10am, and in the afternoon, registration starts at 1.15pm and registers close at 1.30pm.
- School finishes at 3.25pm
- Guidance on the completion of registers is in the front of registers.
- Children will be encouraged to be punctual for school.
- Staff are aware of the criteria for authorized and unauthorized absence.
- The Headteacher is informed of pupils with emerging attendance problems.
- Annual targets for attendance are set with the EWO. Targets are approved by the Buildings & Curriculum committee annually in the autumn term.
- The Headteacher monitors attendance throughout the year.
- The Education Welfare Officer (Emma Hamilton 01392 287223) is contacted if there are concerns about a child.
- The inclusion of attendance information is available in the school prospectus and the School Profile, and children's reports to parents in the summer term.
- Good attendance will be rewarded with a certificate at the end of the Summer Term.

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Responsibility to promote attendance is the responsibility of the whole school.

### Requests for Absence

The law does not grant parents/ carers an automatic right to take their children out of school during term time. Permission must be sought in advance. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the school, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child(ren) satisfactory attendance up to the date covered by this request. If the school refuses the request for absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Date reviewed	Reviewed by	FGB approved	Next review due
24 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	Teaching & Learning Committee	N/A	Autumn 2014
Signed by the Chair			



# S2

## ABSENCE REQUEST FORM (exceptional circumstances only)

To: *The Principal / HeadTeacher of*  
 .....

I wish to apply to have an 'avoidable' absence authorised, for:

Child's name ..... Class/Year .....

Child's name ..... Class/Year .....

Date from ..... date to .....(inclusive)

Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s): .....

Address: .....  
.....

**Please fully explain the exceptional circumstances that you would like the school to consider. This section must be completed. Please continue on a separate sheet if needed.**

Signature of Parent(s)/Carer(s).....

Office use only			<input type="checkbox"/> Absence authorised Code ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Absence unauthorised
Date form received	No of school days absence requested	% Attendance	
			Signed _____ Headteacher

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**This portion to be returned to parents/carers**

Please note that even if this absence request is authorised you may still receive letters of concern from either the school or Local Authority if your child's attendance drops below a level that the school deems acceptable,

Pupil(s) name(s).....

Class/Year.....

Absence authorised from .....to ..... (Inclusive)

Absence unauthorised current attendance ..... % as of ...../...../20.....

Signed .....(HeadTeacher) Date.....

**NOTES TO PARENTS/CARERS**

The law does not grant parents/carers an automatic right to take their children out of school during term time. If the request is for an absence in term time you must have Parental Responsibility and be the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives. Permission **must** be sought in **advance**. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the school, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child(ren) attending satisfactory up to the date covered by this request.

**Warning:** If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. A significant amount of unauthorised absence may make you liable to a Penalty Notice for each child, payable by each parent/carer, or the subject of court proceedings which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

**AVOIDABLE ABSENCE IN TERM-TIME**

**IMPORTANT:** Please read carefully the information below.

**WARNING:** If you allow your child to miss school in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the school, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice\* per parent per child, or made the subject of court proceedings under section 444 Education Act 1996.

**As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason.**

THE FACTS	THE LAW
<p>School aged pupils in Devon maintained schools are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are a number of unavoidable reasons why a pupil might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, exclusions etc), the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances.</p> <p><b>WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER</b></p> <p>Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.</p> <p>Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.</p> <p>If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as <b>unauthorised absence</b> and you may receive a £60* fine per parent for each child.</p>	<p>The law allows schools to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However before the school can authorise any such requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are exceptional circumstances which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information/evidence in order to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides</p> <p>If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.</p> <p>If the child is away from school for a total of four weeks or more, the school may have the option to take the child off roll subject to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.</p> <p>In the case of unexpected extended absence, it is advisable that the parent fully informs the school as to the reasons. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.</p>
<p><b>Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Genuine illness</li> <li>▪ Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible)</li> <li>▪ Days of religious observance</li> <li>▪ Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces</li> <li>▪ External examinations</li> <li>▪ When Traveller children go on the road with their parents</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other examples of absence from school that will not be authorised:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Any type of shopping</li> <li>▪ Looking after siblings or unwell parents</li> <li>▪ Minding the house</li> <li>▪ Birthdays</li> <li>▪ Resting after a late night</li> <li>▪ Relatives visiting or visiting relatives</li> </ul>
<p>Please contact your child's head teacher if you wish to discuss this issue.</p> <p><b>The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.</b></p> <p>We hope that when you have read this leaflet you will consider that your child's education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.</p>	

\*Penalty Notice £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21days and before 28 days