

Norwich Community West Cluster Attendance Policy
West Earlham Infant and Nursery School

1. Overview

- a. West Earlham Infant and Nursery School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavor to provide an environment where all children feel valued and welcome.
- b. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their families/careers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- c. School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills. Department of Children, Schools and Families.
- d. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and always strive to improve.
- e. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

2. School Procedures

- a. Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [*attendance out of school*]. Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

3. Lateness

- a. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9 am. The registers will remain open for 15 minutes; any pupil arriving during this time will be marked as late. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.
 - The morning registration will be at 9am
 - The register will close at 9.15 am
 - The afternoon registration will be at 1.15 pm
 - The registers will close at 1.30 pm
- b. Along with all the other schools in Norwich Community West operates a 'Traffic Lights' system. We ensure a system of frequent communication with parents on the subject of attendance. This system begins with a regular assessment of each child's attendance pattern and letters are automatically sent home if attendance does not reach the expected minimum levels. Letters are also sent home applauding those parents whose children's attendance is above the benchmarks.

4. First Day Contact

- a. Parents are expected to contact the school with a reason for pupil's absence before the start of the school day. School will make telephone / text contact to those with no contact. This is to happen as soon as possible after registers close, but before 10.30am.

5. Third Day Contact

- a. Best practice is a standard letter sent asking for parents to contact school. At *Insert School name* we follow this best practice guidance.

6. Continuing Absence

- a. We will follow up continued absence in appropriate manner dependent on the circumstances.

- b. Attendance of children with medical needs should be managed on a case by case basis. This should be cross referred to the Schools Medical needs policy

7. Ten Day's Absence

- a. Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral (CME1) to the Children's Services Attendance Team [*This is a legal requirement*]. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.
- b. *Note: A child should not be removed from school roll until investigations have been completed by the Attendance Improvement Officer and the school has been advised of the outcome of the investigations. Ten further days of continuous absence have been observed after the referral to the attendance team.*

8. Frequent Absence

- a. It is the responsibility of school administrators to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.
- b. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Health Adviser if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO).
- c. In our school the following actions are taken to help families improve attendance;
 - a. Term time leave is not authorised unless considered by the head teacher as exceptional.
 - b. Termly traffic light record with % cumulative attendance reported (Green 96%+ - appropriate attendance; Amber 90 -95.9% - attendance could be improved; Red – below 90%)
 - Green – As appropriate the school celebrates excellent attendance; children are awarded 100% attendance stickers monthly.
 - Amber – attendance at this level is monitored and if there are recurring issues a letter will be issued to request a meeting with families or there will be an formal discussion.
 - Red – Families will be required to attend a meeting to discuss how attendance can be improved and ways in which school can support.
- d. The school regularly communicates the importance and impact of good attendance to families.
- e. The school communicates what action will be taken should attendance not improve
- f. The school informs the families how using the fastrack process is used as a legal process and of the Local Authority power to issue fixed penalty notices for each parent.
- g. Attendance data for classes are displayed in the foyer
- h. Any child with attendance at 90% or below is considered within school as a persistent absentee

9. Communication with other schools

- a. During the period of the child's absence the school may liaise with others schools to clarify reasons for absence.

10. A Welcome Back

- a. It is important that on return from an absence that all children are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the child is helped to catch up on missed work and families are brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other families.

11. Absence notes

- a. Notes received from parents explaining absence will be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period with any annotations or comments by staff. This may include any "unauthorisations" and the reasons for them.

12. Leave of Absence

- a. Holidays during term time will not be authorised.
- b. Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances.
- c. Parents are required to fill in an Application for pupil leave of absence form, however it clearly states on here that “term time holidays are not permitted under any circumstances. Any leave of absence should be discussed by appointment with the Head teacher. Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your Childs educational progress.”
- d. The local Authority operates a system where any pupil who has an attendance of 85% of less, with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period or 10 consecutive session unauthorised absence will meet the criteria for legal intervention which could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. If a fixed penalty notice is issued a fine of £60 per parent per child must be paid in 21 days. If unpaid a further invoice for £60 per parent per child is issued; both individual invoices would then have to be paid making a total payment of £120 in 28days. Failure to pay the total amount within the timescales will result in legal action being taken.

13. Attendance Awards

- a. At our school we reward good attendance monthly as young children should not penalised for attendance issues over a longer period of time. They receive a 100% attendance sticker and are celebrated in good news assembly.
- b. The class with the best weekly attendance will look after ‘the attendance activity box’ for the week and will also receive a class sticker/certificate.

14. Attendance Targets

- a. The school aims to improve attendance annually. Monthly monitoring of attendance is carried out with office staff supported by the family support worker and Senior Leadership Team. (*amend as appropriate*) All attendance monitoring is linked to our safeguarding procedures.

15. Our school attendance targets are:

2016/2017: 96%

2017/2018: 97%

16. The registration system

- a. The School will use manual paper registers for keeping the school attendance records.
- b. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.
- c. Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.
- d. **Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes.** Alternatively electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three year.
- e. Entries in paper registers must be in ink. All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity

E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

17. Register Security

- a. The registers must be safely stored. Registers are distributed to classes just prior to each registration and returned to the office after completion.

18. Appendices

1.The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

2. Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

Approval

This policy has been reviewed in line with the 2010 Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Act. Due regard has been given to Equality.

This policy will be adopted in **May 2017**. The date of the next formal review will be **May 2018** and every year thereafter, unless statutory legislation changes.

Policy approved by the Head Teacher of West Earlham Infant and Nursery School.

Signed (*Head Teacher*)

Name:

Date: