



Attendance Policy

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Introduction

Here at Newsome Junior Academy, a very high priority is placed on conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We are committed to providing a full educational experience for all pupils and believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is critical.

The Senior Attendance Champion is Ms Fraser, the Head Teacher.

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. Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. Any unauthorised absence is damaging to a child's education and it gives children the wrong messages about the importance of education, which may lead to problems later in schooling and employment. Good attendance and punctuality are important values for later life.

It is the policy in our school to look at attendance using a traffic light system. This is a visual way for the parents, staff, governors and pupils to understand their attendance, we encourage our pupils to **Aim for Gold** which is 100%. Red is for attendance below 90%, Amber is attendance between 90-94.9%, Green is for 95% and above.

Our aim is to reach our target for attendance which is 96%. This is above the target set by the Department of Education which is 95%. The table below shows how many days absence equates to each percentage.

Our school day begins at 8.55am and closes at 3.15pm. Our lunch hour is from 12.00pm – 12.45pm for Year 3&4 and 12.15pm – 1.00pm for Year 5&6.

Attendance Percentages	Days Missed Over a School Year
100%	0 days
95%	10 days (2 weeks of school)
90%	20 days (4 weeks of school)
85%	30 days (6 weeks of school – approximately half a term)
80%	40 days (8 weeks of school)

Our policy reflects the DfE regulations which came into force in November 2016, which states that;

Head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We also follow the DFE “Working Together to Improve Attendance” document which came into effect from August 2024.

Therefore, no holidays in term time will be authorised and a penalty warning letter/fine will be sent to the parents who insist on taking unauthorised leave.

Newsome Junior Academy would interpret “exceptional” circumstances in this context as being of a unique and significant event or circumstance which outweighs the loss of teaching time. This interpretation will be applied to each case, but in the majority of circumstances, requests for authorised absence in term time will be refused.

It is explained to parents that, if a child is taken out of school during term time without permission for an extended period, it may be that the child’s registered school place may be terminated, and the parent will have to re-apply for another school place on return.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to check the school’s website and newsletters to confirm school holiday dates. If they are uncertain, they should contact the school directly to ask when the holidays dates are.

No holidays should be committed to before checking that the dates are not in school time.

It is also the responsibility of the parent/carer to try and book any medical or other appointments for their child outside of school time, however, the school recognises that this is not always possible.

The school will:

- Provide a safe learning environment
- Promote and encourage full attendance and punctuality
- Keep and maintain registers accurately
- Regularly analyse attendance data
- Report missing children to the LA
- Maintain a consistent approach to marking registers
- Commit to providing a full educational experience for all pupils
- Ensure that records of attendance are maintained on a daily basis, according to the government legislation and guidance
- Monitor attendance closely
- Follow up poor attendance or punctuality and persistent absence by inviting parents to have a meeting or a letter/phone call of concern
- Provide supportive, approachable staff for advice and guidance to parents and pupils at all times
- Acknowledge and celebrate a successful record of attendance
- Provide individual and class incentives to reward good attendance
- Provide end of year celebrations for pupils with 100% attendance with a certificate.
- Send encouragement postcards home for improving attendance and punctuality
- Provide annual reports to parents of their child’s attendance

Parents will:

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly, is punctual, correctly equipped and dressed in full school uniform every day
- Inform the school on the first day of absence, giving full valid reasons for absence before 9am.
- Ensure daily contact between parents and the school when your child is absent; if you do not contact the school this will be followed up by our Inclusion Officer and absence will be unauthorised
- Provide medical evidence if requested to support absence
- Maintain regular communication with the school staff where necessary
- Inform the school of any changes to their contact details
- Avoid arranging medical / dental appointments during school hours
- Not book holidays during term time- if the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of absence authorised. A leave of absence form should be completed in advanced and given to the attendance officer- Please remember to check the website and newsletter before booking a holiday
- Provide medical evidence after 3 days of absence or when requested at any time by the Inclusion Officer
- Inform the school about any concerns or problems that might affect your child/ren's attendance and punctuality
- If your child independently travels to school (Walk, Bus) inform the school in writing

Pupils will:

- Attend school and all their lessons regularly and punctually
- Do their best each and every day
- Be in full uniform
- Be fully equipped and organised
- Understand and comply with the school rules – Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe

Strategies for promoting attendance

The importance of good attendance at school will be promoted with children and parents through the school website, Facebook, X, newsletters etc.

Children who have 100% attendance each week will be rewarded with an attendance sticker and their name will go into a raffle each time. At the end of each half term, the raffle will be drawn and a winner from each year group will receive an Amazon voucher.

Children who achieve 100% attendance over a half term will be presented with an attendance certificate and children who achieve 100% attendance for a term will be rewarded with a coloured attendance t-shirt. There will be the opportunity to collect three different coloured t-shirts throughout the year and the children can wear these to school on PE days. The slate is wiped clean at the end of each term giving the children the opportunity to succeed. The class

with the highest attendance in school each week will be rewarded with a star on their door and at the end of each half term, the class with the highest number of stars will win a reward.

The whole school weekly attendance figure will be published on the school newsletter and on each classroom door.

Monitoring of Attendance

Absence is monitored by school on a daily basis. **Parents are expected to call or email the school office by 9am in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.** The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. Once a child's attendance drops below 93%, the school will carry out the following procedures:

Level 1	A letter will be sent home expressing the concerns over your child's attendance and asking you to ring school for a conversation with the Inclusion Officer. It is the parent's responsibility to contact school regarding this letter.
Level 2	If attendance does not improve and your child is still considered a persistent absentee by the end of the following half term, then a letter will be sent home asking you to come in for a meeting to discuss your child's attendance with the Inclusion Officer.
Level 3	If attendance has still not significantly improved and your child is still classed as a persistent absentee, then a letter will be sent home asking you to come into school to create an action plan with the Inclusion Officer to improve attendance. This may involve support for the family or a challenge for the child.
Level 4	If attendance has still not significantly improved and your child is still classed as a persistent absentee then a letter will be sent home asking you to come into school for a meeting with the Inclusion Officer and the Head Teacher.
Level 5	Failure to adhere to the contract may result in legal action being considered. If legal action is approved by the Kirklees Legal Intervention Panel, the matter is heard in the Magistrates' Court for the offence of knowingly failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance (s444(1)(a) Education Act 1996). If found guilty, this carries a penalty of up to £2500 of up to 3 months imprisonment and you will receive a criminal record. Additionally, other community orders may be attached.

Authorised and Unauthorised absences

Authorised absences include:

- Leave granted by the Head Teacher (Exceptional circumstances only)
- Religious day - The Head Teacher will authorise one day, absence will be coded as an R, should you request additional days, please complete a leave of absence form stating the dates.
- The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause
- There is a family bereavement
- The pupil is attending an approved off-site activity or receiving special off-site tuition
- The pupil is attending a pupil referral unit
- The pupil is participating in an approved public performance
- If your child/ren is unwell and is going to be absent from school, we expect that you inform the Inclusion Officer before 9am to report your child's absence. If you do not report your child absent before then, you will receive a text message to kindly remind you to call the school. If you do not contact the school your child's attendance will be unauthorised for that day.

Unauthorised absences include:

Unauthorised absences are those which the school **DOES NOT** consider reasonable and/or for which no reason has been given by the Parent/ Carer or permission by the school. This includes:

- No explanation of absence is given
- No contact with the school
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional circumstances
- The pupil is absent due to his/ her sibling being unwell
- Leave of absence has been declined by the Head Teacher and the holiday/leave is still taken
- Additional religious day taken without permission
- Whole day taken off for a dental/medical appointment

Home visits will be carried out on the 2nd day of non-engagement/no contact from the parents. Home visits are conducted by the Inclusion Officer or another member of staff.

Persistent absence

Our attendance data is reviewed weekly and half termly to highlight any concerns or patterns regarding absence. Persistent absentees are pupils whose attendance is 90% or below. If a child/ren falls into the persistent absentee category they will be contacted by the Inclusion Officer in line with the 5 steps set out within the **Monitoring Attendance** section.

Referrals to the Local Authority will be made for pupils whose attendance does not improve or if the parent/carer is failing to engage with the Inclusion Officer.

Any teachers or member of support staff with concerns about a child's attendance should refer to the Inclusion Officer in the first instance.

Strategies for reducing persistent and severe absence

We recognise that attendance cannot be seen in isolation and that the foundation to good attendance is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which all pupils can learn and thrive. Therefore, we will:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- Promote the benefits of good attendance and ensure school is a place that the pupils want to be.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies into place.
- Meet with parents of pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them. This may include referrals to services and organisations who can provide support.
- Where absence intensifies and it requires a whole family response, a voluntary early help assessment may be made.

Where voluntary support has not been effective

The school will work with the Local Authority to:

- Put formal support in place in the form of an attendance contract or an education supervision order.
- Issue a Notice to Improve and/or penalty notice where support has not been successful or engaged with.
- Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50%)
- Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate.

Long term illness

Pupils with long term illnesses or other health issues will be supported to continue their education. Parent/carers will be expected to inform the school as soon as possible. Parents should provide medical reports with the diagnosis and length of time a child may be absent. Absences will be coded as I (Illness) with medical evidence, this is an authorised mark. Should no medical evidence be provided upon request, absences will be coded as unauthorised after 3 days.

Please refer to section Parent/Career agreement and unauthorised absences section for more information in relation to unauthorised absences.

If your child is unable to attend school for 15 days or more due to their illness, the local authority will be informed to ensure suitable provisions are in place to support your child's education whilst either in hospital receiving treatment and or during recovery.

Returning back to school:

We require parents to provide a medical report stating their child is fit and well enough to return to school. Should your consultant advise that your child requires post treatment care during school time and recommends appropriate reasonable adjustments to support and suit your child's return, please provide an advisory report to support this. We will arrange a Medical phased return meeting with parents/carers and the Inclusion Officer to discuss your child's return date alongside any reasonable adjustments the school can put in place to provide further support.

Absence due to filming/adverts/sporting events

If a child is involved in activities such as filming during school time, parents should provide a document from the company explaining the activity. It is at the Head Teacher's discretion whether or not permission is granted and if so, how many days will be authorised. The Head Teacher will consider the application form considering specific facts and circumstances which includes your child's attendance history. The Head Teacher is within their right to decline the request.

Withdrawing a pupil from roll

Parents/carers must inform the school if their child is moving to a new school. A withdrawal form should be completed. You must provide the name of the new school your child will be attending, along with a start date. Pupils are expected to attend school until the last day notified. If parents/carers are moving out of the area and do not have an allocated school for their child, please provide the name of the borough within which they will reside.

Punctuality

All pupils are expected to arrive at school on time. Our school gate opens at **8.40am** and the register closes at **8.55am**.

- Pupils arriving to school 10 minutes after the registers have closed, will be coded as L for late. 3 or more lates will trigger a letter and monitoring period.
- Pupils arriving 20 minutes after the registers have closed will be coded as U for unauthorised late – an unauthorised late will be classed as an absence- 3 unauthorised lates or more will trigger a low-level penalty warning letter, meeting and possible referral to the LA for further action.

The school day finishes at **3.15pm**. Parent/carers are expected to collect their child/ren on time, should you be running late due to an unforeseen circumstance, please inform the school office as soon as possible

Minutes Lost Each Day	Days Lost Per School Year
5 minutes	3 days
10 minutes	6.5 days (over 1 week of school)
15 minutes	10 days (over 2 weeks of school)
20 minutes	13 days (over 2.5 weeks of school)
30 minutes	19 days (just under 4 weeks of school)

Being late 10 minutes every day for one year is equal to 33 hours - approximately 6 days.

Application for leave of absence for a pupil in term time

Important Information for Parents/Carers

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 no longer permit Head Teachers to authorise leave for holidays.
- Head Teachers may grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply. This is seen as an urgent and unavoidable response to family circumstances which cannot be resolved or delayed. This absence is only authorised with written evidence of the reason for absence. This could be critical illness of a close relative, bereavement or another family crisis.
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised.
- Requests for Leave of Absence should be made **in advance** by completing a 'Leave of Absence Form' before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed.
- If Leave of Absence is granted please contact the school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress.

This form MUST be completed by the resident parent(s)/carer(s) before requests will be considered.

Failure to make a request for a Leave of Absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:

Head Teachers shall not grant any leave of absence during term time unless:

- An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides AND
- They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.
- The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.
- The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (i.e. home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).
- If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).
- Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.
- Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school. The costs are £80 per child per parent.

Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Head Teacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- Leave of absence taken in term time without permission. There must be a minimum of consecutive absence of 5 school days (this can be split over weekend or school holidays) before triggering a penalty notice request.
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

A penalty notice may be issued if the parents/carers have not sought permission from the school before taking their child out of school for a leave of absence in term-time.

If issued with a penalty notice, a penalty notice is issued to each parent of each child. This is for £80 if it is paid within the first 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Failure to pay the penalty notice could result in the local authority commencing legal proceedings against you for the offence of not ensuring your child's regular school attendance. If found guilty, you may be fined up to £1000 and you will receive a criminal record.

Repeated offences of leave of absence may result in the matter being directly prosecuted in Kirklees Magistrates' Court.

Appendix 1

Attendance Matters! Every Day Counts

Learning is a progressive activity. Each lesson and each day build upon another. If your child is absent from lessons that include demonstrations, discussions, experiments and other participation activities as part of the daily learning activities, they are missing learning that cannot be caught up.



Below 90%
Serious Concern
Persistent Absence

90%- 94%
Cause for Concern
Low Attendance

At least 95%
Expected Attendance 😊

Benefits of Good Attendance

- Pupils with good attendance generally achieve higher grades/better results
- Pupils with good attendance generally enjoy school more and develop stronger friendships
- Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life
- Good school attendance helps to develop other responsible patterns of behaviour

Some Risks of Poor Attendance

- Pupils are likely to miss learning activities that their classmates have taken part in which could mean that they fall behind
- Pupils will miss out on social interaction with friends/classmates and this can have a negative effect on wellbeing and self-esteem
- Low attendance is associated with poor learning behaviours

The Law and You

The law states (Education Act 1996, Section 7) that all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education. As a parent/carer, you are legally responsible for making sure this happens. Failure to do so could lead to intervention such as Fixed Penalty Notices, Prosecution, An Education Supervision Order.

Can we support you?

Absolutely! We believe that the most effective way to ensure your child remains on track is to work together. Our caring and dedicated staff are committed to making sure that your child is happy and making the most of their time in school. If you have any worries or concerns. Please come and talk to us. 😊

Appendix 2

OUR TEN POINT ATTENDANCE REMINDER FOR PARENTS & CARERS

1.	Please take family holidays during the school holidays. Holidays in term time will result in a fine (£80 per adult per child)
2.	Please phone school before 9am if your child is not going to be in school. It saves us having to call you!
3.	If your child is regularly absent due to illness, we will ask to have a chat with you to see how we can help.
4.	Absence due to illness can be unauthorised if we suspect that your child is well enough to come to school.
5.	If your child comes into school after 9am, the registers are closed and it will count as 1 session of unauthorised absence.
6.	Our Inclusion Officer will make contact with you if your child has too many unauthorised absences. This may then lead to a referral or fine if it continues.
7.	If your child has a medical appointment, please provide school with a copy of the appointment so that we can authorise this absence.
8.	If you know there is an unusual or unexpected reason for your child's absence, please try to speak to us ahead of time as we may agree to authorise this absence.
9.	90% is great in tests but 90% or below is considered to be poor attendance.
10.	If you or your child have any worries about what is happening or has happened in school, please come and talk to us about it rather than keeping your child at home.

Appendix 3

Our Graduated Approach

Getting the Foundations for learning right

Attendance is everybody's business.

Attendance matters

Establishing a warm, welcoming safe and supportive environment

Ensuring the curriculum is exciting and engaging for children

Children do not want to miss out on the learning opportunities

Children want to be in school and are keen and ready to learn.



Keeping all children in school

Clarity about timings and expectations shared with parents and children

Keeping the routines, rituals and celebrations related to attendance consistent

Recognition of improved attendance and punctuality

Personalised and positive communication with parents whose children are absent



Intensive intervention

When Early Intervention has proved unsuccessful

Individualised support plans and targets in place

Period of monitoring

Other agencies including Early Help and Social Services are often involved

All success recognised

Legal interventions used as last resort



Early Intervention

This is aimed at children at risk of becoming a PA

Focus is on removing barriers to attendance

Families are invited into a meeting

Breakfast clubs/ early morning clubs are offered as incentives to support families getting children into school every day and on time

Targets are set for improvement and attendance is monitored

Appendix 4

A Guide to Lost Learning Through Absence

98% - 100% Attendance		No Weeks of lost learning		Excellent Keep it Up!
95% - 97% Attendance		You have missed 7 – 10 days of learning 35 – 50 lessons missed		Aim for 98%+
91- 94% Attendance		You have missed up to 20 days of learning 100 missed lessons		Attendance needs to be better – how are you going to improve?
81 – 90% Attendance		You have missed almost 6 weeks of learning 180 missed lessons		Persistent Absence – you must improve!
Below 80% Attendance		More than 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed 200+ lessons missed		This is now a safeguarding concern and will be shared with external agencies

Appendix 5

Monitoring of Attendance – A Guide for Staff

- Absence should be monitored by the Inclusion Officer and Administrator on a daily basis.
- Parents are expected to call or email the school by 9am in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.
- The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Once a child's attendance drops **below 93%**, the school will carry out the following procedures:

Level 1	Administrator to send home Level 1 letter when attendance has dropped to 93%.
Level 2	If review at the end of the following half term indicates that there is no improvement – Level 2 letter to be sent home by Administrator.
Level 3	If attendance has still not significantly improved over the next half term and the child becomes a persistent absentee (If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%) a Level 3 letter to be sent home by Administrator.
Level 4	If attendance has still not significantly improved over the next half term, a Level 4 letter to be sent home by Administrator.
Level 5	Head Teacher to complete Legal Intervention Panel paperwork.

Appendix 6

First Day Calling Procedure

- Class registers completed by class teacher by **9.00am** and saved.
- Late children to report to office and should be checked against registers.
- Absence calls listened to/attendance emails checked and registers updated.
- **First day text sent to first and second name on contact list within half an hour of school start time** asking for response.
- If no response to text, call first name on contact list within 45 minutes of school start time. **If no response, leave voicemail or send text to explain that the next person on the list will now be called.**
- Ring down contact list until reply is received, ensuring where possible that someone from outside of the family home has been contacted.
- If no reply send second text and email to first and second contacts on list.
- Alert the HT in the first instance that this child is absent and no contact has been made within an hour of school start time. In the absence of the HT, alert a member of SLT but **HT should still be alerted via e-mail.**
- HT/member of SLT to risk assess the current level of concern and consider whether circumstances warrant a home visit.
- Home visit to be made following decision where possible by SLT or Inclusion worker or any other agency involved with the child. **HT to be informed of visit if not in the building.** Compliment slip to be pushed through the door if no response asking parent to get into contact.
- If all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child, contact Education Safeguarding or Social Services. **HT to be informed of visit if not in the building.**
- Complete a Child Missing in Education form on Day 2. **HT to be informed of visit if not in the building.**

Appendix 7

Pupil Absence Request Form

To be completed by Parent/Carer and returned to the Head Teacher

Pupil's Name			
First Day of Absence		Last Day of Absence	
Total Number of School Days Absence		Class	
Reason for Absence (please give as much detail as possible)			

Signature of Parent/Carer _____ Date _____

To be completed by Inclusion Officer or Administrator Only

Attendance last Academic Year		Attendance this Academic Year	
Reason for previous absence			
Comment from Inclusion Officer if applicable			
Comments from the Head Teacher if applicable			
Authorised (delete as appropriate)	Yes	No	
Fine to be processed (delete as appropriate)	Yes	No	

Signature of The Head Teacher _____ Date: _____