



# Attendance Policy

Article 3 – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children

Article 29 – Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures and the environment.

| Nova Primary School Governor Information  |             |
|---|-------------|
| Model Policy  | No          |
| Local Changes   |             |
| Customisation*  |             |
| Originally Adopted  | Summer 2015 |
| Last Review Date  |             |
| Next Review Date  | Summer 2016 |
| * additions made to policy (eg local detail) but not a change to any policy structure |             |

History of most recent Policy changes – Must be completed

| Date | Page | Change | Origin of Change e.g. TU request, change in legislation |
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## **1 Introduction**

1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## **2 Definitions**

### **2.1 Authorised absence**

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.
- Parents may be requested to provide medical evidence for all absence due to illness in excess of 2 consecutive school days (4 sessions). Medical documentation may also be requested for any absence from parents of children who are frequently absent from school because of minor illnesses or absence immediately adjacent to a school holiday. They may also be offered a meeting with the School Nurse.
- Provide medical documentation (eg letters/appointment cards) in advance of any medical appointments (eg hospital/dentist). Routine dental check-ups or non-emergency doctor appointments should, where possible, be made outside of

school hours or, if this is not possible, at the very beginning or end of the school day.

## 2.1 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.
- Any child arriving after the close of register 9:00 will be marked as an unauthorised absence. Parents are asked to bring their child to the schools main reception to sign in giving reason for lateness.

## 3. If a Child is Absent

- When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the electronic register. Once registration has closed either the school office or Learning Mentor, will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.
- Initially this contact is made by text and then followed up with a phone call if there has still been no contact from the parents / carers. Text messages will be sent by 9:30 am and telephone contact by 10am at the latest, in order to check on the safety of the child. If no contact has been made after three days the Learning Mentor will make a home visit.
- When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.
- A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

## 4. Requests for Leave of Absence

- We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance, but normally this request will be granted.

- There is no entitlement to holidays for children within term time. However the head teacher has discretion to grant up to 10 days absence where there are exceptional circumstances. In such cases the request for leave must be made well in advance and reasons given indicating why these are exceptional circumstances. Under exceptional circumstance the absence will only be authorised if the child's attendance at school is above 95%

## **5. Long Term Absence**

- When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

## **6. Repeated Unauthorised Absences and Persistent Absences**

- The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, a letter will be sent home asking the parents or guardians to explain the absence. If a satisfactory reply is not received the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the Education Welfare Service (EWS) to discuss attendance and if appropriate make a referral. The EWS will make contact with parents or guardians in order to make them aware of the seriousness of the situation.
- The governors, supported by the EWS, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

## **7. Rewards for Good Attendance**

- All the children who have 100 per cent attendance at the end of term 2, 4 and 6 will receive an excellence certificate for attendance through email direct to parents. A gift will be presented to any child who has 100 per cent attendance for a whole year.
- The school has an attendance display board to promote good attendance. Points are given to classes with 100% attendance, 97% or more and 94%. These are

collated weekly and the class with the most points at the end of the term earns a reward.

In order to promote punctuality the school holds a weekly raffle, each child receives a raffle ticket for each day they arrive on time and a winner is drawn at the end of the week.

## **8. Attendance Targets**

- The school sets attendance targets each year with the aim of reducing our absence total (authorised and unauthorised absences) every year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher/Learning Mentor. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- The rates of attendance will be reported regularly to governors, parents and Local Authority.
- Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for passing on concerns to the Learning Mentor. The Learning Mentor monitors attendance on a daily basis and raises any concerns with either the head teacher and/or appropriate outside agency ie Social Care or EWS (Education Welfare Service). If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, the Learning Mentor will contact the parents or guardian before liaising with the head teacher who will then request a meeting with parents / carers.
- The Learning Mentor will write to each parent to inform them of their child's attendance at the end of each term if attendance falls below 95%. They will be sent a letter detailing their child's absence including current legal requirements.

- This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.