



# **NOTLEY HIGH SCHOOL & BRAINTREE SIXTH FORM**

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Governors' Student Outcomes and Achievement Committee**

<b>Last reviewed:</b>	April 2014
<b>Next review due:</b>	March 2018
<b>Ratified Committee:</b>	February 2016
<b>Ratified Full Governors:</b>	March 2016
<b>Designated Postholder:</b>	Mrs Rachel Kelly Deputy Headteacher

# Attendance Policy (Years 7 – 11)

## Contents

	Page Number
Introduction	2
Legal Framework	2
Aims of the Policy	2
Objectives of the Policy	3
School Responsibilities	3
Parent and Carer Responsibilities	3
The Process for Monitoring Attendance	3
Absences during Term Time	4
Lateness	5
Sickness	5
Promoting Good Attendance	5
The Role of the Investigation Officer	6
Governors	7
Appendix 1: Copy of Leave of Absence Form	7

## Introduction

Good attendance at school is essential for a child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. 100% attendance is certainly possible, but in the event of a child being away from school it is essential that the parent/carer informs the school of the reasons for absence.

## Legal Framework

- The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient full time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).
- Parents and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's Attendance Policy, as any absence will have a huge impact on their child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents and carers, together with school staff, all have a part to play in ensuring that a child's full potential is achieved.
- Students are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:
  - **Authorised absence** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
  - **Unauthorised absence** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's/carer's request.

Please be aware that when a parent/carer telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. A child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

Keeping a child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require the school to request that medical evidence is obtained from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be handed to your child's tutor who will ensure that this is passed to the Attendance Office. (Please note that the school is not asking any parent/carer to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost).

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents and carers, the school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

## Aims of the Policy

To promote regular attendance thus offering all students equal access to learning.

## Objectives of the Policy

- Meet the government attendance targets set for us.
- Create a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/carers.
- Ensure students are in school for the maximum number of days.

This policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable children to attend school regularly and thus be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

## School Responsibilities

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence message sent via In Touch to parents/carers.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the Investigation Officer (IO) and support their work with students as necessary.
- To report to the government on attendance twice a year.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- To promote good attendance.

## Parent/Carer Responsibilities

- To have children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day at 8.40am.
- To inform school on **every** day of any absence.
- To request leave as far in advance as possible.
- To make applications for leave in writing on the school's '**Leave Of Absence Form**', giving the reason for the request.
- To work with the school and NEMAT Support Services and in the most serious of cases with the Missing Education & Child Employment Service (previously EWS) and the Local Authority Investigating Officer to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

If parents or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving.
- Talk to your child's tutor in the first instance.

## **The Process for Monitoring Attendance**

The school Attendance Officer will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss fortnightly with the Year Leader and Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour and Safety). Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

### **Stage 1:**

Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the school will make verbal contact with home.

### **Stage 2:**

If the concerns persist the school will write to the parents/carers.

### **Stage 3:**

If the concerns persist the school will arrange a school-based meeting (SBM).

### **Stage 4:**

If the concerns persist the school will make a formal referral to the Missing Education & Child Employment Service to deal with the on-going issues.

Should concerns persist the Investigation Officer will agree action (as above) and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Please note that ultimately the Local Authority can take legal action.

## **Absence during term time**

The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a student; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Missing Education & Child Employment Service (previously EWS). This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate notice would be issued to each parent/carer for each child. The rate per parent/carer per child is £60 if paid within 21 days and rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the penalty notice is not paid each parent/carer may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

- Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides on the form headed 'Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time'. These may be obtained from the Student Services.
- Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents/carers will be informed within 7 school days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.
- There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school

holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

## **Lateness**

Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also good manners.

Students must be in class by 8.40am each day. Registers will be taken as soon as possible after that time. Students will be marked late if they arrive at school after that time. The school doors will be locked by 8.50am. Students who arrive after that time must come into the building via Student Services, where they will be entered into the late book. Lateness will be monitored by the Year Leader and detentions set for repeated lateness.

If a student is late due to a medical appointment they will receive a late mark upon arrival at school when they sign in at Student Services. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays. Where appointments are unavoidable, we would recommend that you make an afternoon appointment.

Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other students. Parents/carers of students who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents/carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem with the Attendance Officer, the Year Leader or a member of the NEMAT Support Services team.

## **Sickness**

Please notify the school on each day of the absence. We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.

## **Promoting Good Attendance**

We celebrate good attendance throughout our school

- By awarding a certificate to the class with the highest attendance each half term.
- By awarding individual certificates to individual students who have 100% for each half term.
- By presenting students who have achieved 100% attendance for the term with a congratulatory 100% postcard from their Year Leaders.
- By awarding certificates to individual students who get 100% attendance for the whole academic year (September to July).

From September 2015 (start of the 2015/16 academic year) schools will be judged against a persistent absence rate of 10 per cent, therefore if your child/children's attendance drops below 90% this will be classed as a Persistent Absenteeism and we will monitor their attendance on a regular basis. Should their attendance not improve, parents/carers will be invited to a School Based Meeting (SBM) to discuss this further.

The chart below shows the hours of learning lost in relation to attendance in school.

Threshold Attendance	Actual Attendance	Whole Days Absent	Learning Hours Lost
100%	190 days	0	0
99%	188 days	2	10
98%	186 days	4	20
97%	184 days	6	30
96%	182.5 days	7.5	37.5
95%	180.5 days	9.5	47.5
94%	179 days	11	55
93%	177 days	13	65
92%	175 days	15	75
91%	173 days	17	85
90%	171 days	19	95
89%	169 days	21	105
88%	167 days	23	115
87%	165 days	25	125
86%	163 days	27	135
85%	161.5 days	28.5	142.5
84%	159.5 days	30.5	152.5
83%	158 days	32	160
82%	156 days	34	170
81%	154 days	36	180
80%	152 days	38	190

### The Role of the Investigation Officer

The Investigation Officer strives to support schools, parents/carers and students with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the Missing Education & Child Employment Service (previously EWS) also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness

Section 444 of the Education Act states that “if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents/carers are guilty of an offence.” Essex Local Authority, through the Missing Education & Child Employment Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents/carers when children do not attend school regularly. A Fixed Penalty Notice when requested by a Headteacher can be issued as long as the following criteria apply:

- Penalty notices may be issued where there have been at least ten unauthorised sessions of absence during a period of six school weeks. In respect of unauthorised leave of absence, the ten sessions must be consecutive.
- Parent/carers will receive a warning letter at least ten days prior to the issue of a penalty notice.
- Discretion will be used to enable up to two penalty notices to be issued to each parent/carer for each child within a twelve month period. If the law continues to be broken around school attendance the Missing Education & Child Employment Service legal intervention process will be used.

We promote early intervention and aim to ensure that appropriate action is taken to tackle non-attendance as soon as attendance problems become apparent. We seek to engage the parent/carer and specify what improvements need to be made over a fixed time-frame (usually a half term). Parents/carers have the responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly. Where a parent/carer fails in this responsibility and no improvement is brought about within the specified time frame, legal proceedings are initiated in the Magistrates Court.

### **Governors**

It is the Governors legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools. The school's attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

### **Appendix 1: Copy of Leave Of Absence Form**



