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This policy has been produced by the Education Welfare Service, written in conjunction with Wiltshire local authority recommendations for developing a school attendance framework and policy guidance. Revised July 2024

1.Our School Vision

Our school is a safe, welcoming and nurturing school that offers a sense of belonging. We are situated in a small, rural village and we pride ourselves that we know each and every child. Our strength lies in putting the needs of the child at the heart of everything we do. We offer an exciting and stimulating curriculum, with high quality teaching that provides a rich, rewarding and enjoyable learning environment for all. Through a solid partnership working with parents, our church and His Majesty's Armed forces, we encourage children to become confident, caring and independent young learners. We believe that 'Everyone cares and Everyone counts'. Our school our vision is underpinned by the bible verse 'Love One Another As I Have Loved You' (John 15:12) ; it shapes all we do.

2.Rationale

At Newton Tony Primary School we understand that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. School is the foundation for preparing children and young people for life as adults. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils/students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend school regularly and punctually. Parents and the school community share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

This policy represents our commitment to support pupils to achieve 100% attendance. It sets out the principles, procedures and practice the school will undertake. Strategies to improve attendance and rewards and benefits of good attendance (defined in sections 3 and 12). The sanctions and possible legal consequences of poor attendance and punctuality are also detailed. This policy will be reviewed, amended as necessary and published annually in accordance with current legislation and guidance. Excellent education is vital to the lives of all children and to our society as a whole. Whilst it is known that the life chances of children may not be equal from the outset of their lives for various reasons, education can help to redress this imbalance and help to ensure that every child has the chance to fulfil their potential.

3.Aims

We believe that the foundation for good attendance is based on a strong partnership between school, parents and the child. This includes clear communication with parents and pupils regarding our expectations of what is required to secure excellent attendance for pupils at our school.

At Newton Tony Primary School we will:

- Provide regular information about attendance through regular communications through letters/emails/text messages and on our website
- Include attendance information in reports about your child's performance in school and how any absence may be affecting their attainment
- Reward good attendance by awarding individual certificates, whole class certificates and a whole class half termly attendance cup
- Work with you and your child to achieve maximum attendance

At Newton Tony Primary School we expect:

- Pupils to arrive at school every day on time, ready to learn
- Parents to work with the school to ensure that their child attends regularly

4.Attendance: The Legal Framework – roles and responsibilities

The law says that ensuring a child receives education is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act). Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents must ensure their children are educated. For most parents/carers this means registering their child at a school and ensuring their regular attendance. Failure to do so can result in the local authority taking action to secure attendance. For most parents this means registering their child at a school. Permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law and parents/carers who do not secure their child's regular attendance at school may be referred to the Wiltshire Education Welfare Service for a formal legal intervention.

To avoid this happening we will work with parents and carers to address irregular or poor attendance to ensure full-time attendance. Authorised absences are those that have been agreed by the headteacher. Unauthorised absences are those where no valid reason has been provided for absence or those absences which the headteacher has not agreed.

By law schools are required:

- To take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon.
- To report to the LA pupils who fail to attend regularly or who are absent for ten consecutive school days or more without known reason
- By law the attendance register must show for every session, whether a pupil is present, absent, attending approved educational activity or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- DfE statutory guidance says that schools must have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; best practice is that this should be for a reasonable length of time but not more than 30 minutes
- Authorised absence is where the school has given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory justification for the absence. All other absences are unauthorised.
- Reference to the guidance contained in the Wiltshire LA Attendance Policy and the responsibility of the Education Welfare Service in discharging the statutory duties of the Local Authority in respect of non-attendance at school.

5.Partnership Working – roles and responsibilities

Do you know these facts about absence and attendance?

Research suggests that a pupil who misses 17 days of school a year will drop 1 GCSE grade in attainment. (DfE)

95% equates to half a day off every two weeks in a school year

90% equates to a day off every two weeks in a school year

85% equates to one and a half days off every two weeks in a school year

80% equates to one whole day off every week in a school year

A secondary age pupil whose attendance is 80% will have missed ONE WHOLE YEAR of education by the time they leave school

“Better attendance at school by pupils improves their educational achievements and, in turn, their lives and prospects. Even a small reduction in absence would result in many pupils receiving greater benefit from their education.” The National Audit Office.

At Newton Tony Primary school attendance is the business of everyone in our school community. The governors and all staff are committed to supporting all pupils to achieve excellent attendance and regularly review school procedures and strategies to support this.

6.Roles and responsibilities of staff in school

- Our Head teacher is our Senior Attendance Champion and is responsible for improving and maintaining good attendance. She maintains our attendance profile through assemblies, staff meetings, monitoring, registration process, target setting across year group/classes, liaison with the EWO, Targeting Support Meetings parent/carer contact, School Attendance Meetings (SAM), attending Local Authority Attendance Meetings (LAAM)
- Our class teachers are responsible for accurate registration in the morning and afternoon, follow up discussions/ notes, parent/carer contact if agreed, target setting for class/individual pupils

- Our Attendance Governor with specific responsibility for attendance is Anthony Brinkworth abrinkworth@newtontony.wilts.sch.uk
- Mrs Paige is our administrative/attendance officer who manages first day contact procedures with our Head teacher

7. We expect that parents and carers will work with us if school absence becomes a concern. Parents and carers can help to promote positive attendance by:

- Ensuring children arrive at school on time, before registers close, appropriately dressed and in a 'condition to learn' (ie not too tired or too hungry) and with the right equipment for the day
- Working in partnership with us to help their child(ren) gain an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- Working in partnership with us to take an active interest in their child's education
- Working in partnership with us and other agencies (as appropriate) to resolve problems relating to non-attendance or which may have a negative impact on their child's attendance

Our pupils also have a responsibility to make sure they follow school procedures made known to them for receiving their registration mark, in particular when arriving late.

8. Procedures

Our school attendance target is 97%. This means that we are expecting each pupil to aim to have 100% attendance. Pupils who miss just 3 days of school in a school year will contribute to the school not achieving the attendance target set by the governing board.

Legally the school register must be taken twice a day.

At Newton Tony school the register is taken at 8.30am (morning registration time) and once during the afternoon session at 12.45pm. The registers will remain open for 10 minutes. Pupils arriving before registers close at 8.40am will be marked as late (L). Pupils arriving after the registers have closed will be coded U (Late after registers close) which counts as an unauthorised absence for the whole session.

Absence is recorded as unauthorised until a satisfactory reason is provided. If the reason given is not satisfactory and/or evidence of the reason cannot be provided, the absence will be coded as unauthorised. Ongoing and repeated lateness after the close of registration is considered as unauthorised absence and may be taken into account if any legal action is taken.

We will contact parents to address and improve attendance where:

A pupil's attendance falls below 95%,

A pupil has more than 3 weeks where they haven't achieved full attendance in a term (In Wiltshire there are 6 terms in an academic year)

A pupil has more than 4 recorded lates in a term

A pupil has a regular pattern of absence

Parents are asked to:

- Notify the school when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first and subsequent days of absence. Parents should make contact with school before the start of the school day. **Please phone Mrs Paige on 01980 629232 or email admin@newtontony.wilts.sch.uk**
- Keep the school informed, in cases of ongoing absence. A note from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always remain with the school
- Arrange medical or dental appointments outside of school hours unless there is urgent need for an appointment.
- Tell the school if their child is going to be late, the reason why and expected time of arrival.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance. The process for requesting leave of absence is explained further in this policy.

Examples of types of absence that are not considered reasonable and which will not be authorised under any circumstances are: NB: These are examples that schools may use and are not necessarily a reflection of the views of the Local Authority. Schools should determine their own criteria and are not obliged to include the examples below.

- Going shopping with parents
- Birthdays
- Minding other younger children in the family

- Staying at home because other members in the family are unwell
- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Arriving at school too late to get a present mark (After the close of registration)
- Truancy
- Death of a pet

We will contact the parent/carer if a child is absent and the parent/carer has not advised that the child will not be in school. Parents can expect contact on every occasion of an un-notified absence. Mrs Paige will initially phone parents within 30 minutes of registers closing. If we cannot speak directly with parents/carers then we will make contact with nominated emergency contacts to establish the reason for absence; this is in line with school safeguarding procedures.

If after 3 days of absence, your child has not been seen and no contact has been made with the school, a home visit will be made by school staff, to ascertain the safety and well-being of your child and establish the reason for absence from school.

After 10 days of unexplained absence and no contact with the school, we are obliged to notify the local authority. The local authority will follow their procedures for Children Missing from Education (CME) and parents may expect contact and visits from an Education Welfare Officer to ascertain the well-being and safety of your child.

9. Collecting your child from school

We ask that all parents/carers ensure that they are able to collect their children from school on time. School finishes at 3.00 pm if your child is in Hedgehogs Class or Squirrels Class, and 3.20pm if your child is in Foxes Class or Badgers Class. If parents are unable to collect their child as usual then they will need to communicate the alternative arrangements they have made with the school. We will not release children in these circumstances to anyone who we have not been advised of. If children remain uncollected from school the protocol is not contact every trusted adult on the individual child's admission record. If children remain uncollected they will join after school club – parents/carers will subsequently be charged for children attending the club. See Charging policy.

10. Monitoring attendance

Weekly monitoring of the registers will be made by the Senior Attendance Champion and/or the attendance officer, to analyse overall absence for each pupil and identify pupils with low attendance, a pattern of absences that may lead to Persistent Absence (PA), Severe Absence (SA) patterns and levels of broken weeks, lateness, authorised absence and unauthorised absence and reasons for absence.

A pupil is classed as a persistent absentee when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year and as a severe absentee if they miss more than 50% of schooling for whatever reason, whether it be authorised or unauthorised, or a mixture of both. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' full support and encouragement to tackle it. PA and SA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system, and we combine this with tracking academic progress to assess the effect on the pupil's attainment. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a pupil by creating gaps in his or her learning.

The Senior Attendance Champion, together with attendance office will be responsible for putting in place actions for each pupil of concern. Initially we will try to resolve the problem with parents/carers and this may involve requesting medical evidence in order for the school to authorise any further absence due to ill health and/or an attendance meeting with a member of school staff where we can discuss the barriers to attendance and provide help and support to address that. We may ask parents to agree to a Attendance Contract which details how we will work together to improve attendance. However, if absence continues and the support we have offered is not working we may make a referral to the Local Authority for additional intervention.

11. Requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances

In accordance with Department for Education statutory guidance, leave of absence from school may only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Absence for the purpose of a holiday is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance. Parents are required to complete a leave of absence request form which must outline the exceptional circumstances for which the leave has been requested. Leave of absence request forms must be completed in advance of the dates requested. We require two weeks notice unless the absence is related to an emergency. We do not give retrospective agreement for leave of absence so any absence not advised to the school in advance will be unauthorised.

Requests will be considered by the headteacher and parents and carers will be advised if their request is agreed. Any pupil who has taken a term time holiday will be required to provide medical evidence if they are ill in the period directly before or after the dates advised to school or if the absence is immediately before or after a designated school holiday

period. Parents/carers will be asked to provide evidence if a pupil does not return to school on the agreed date following a holiday as a result of delayed or cancelled flights or other travel arrangements.

12. Consequences of persistent and severe absence

At Newton Tony Primary school we will always work with you to address any attendance concerns. If we have been unable to resolve the issue, despite a number of interventions, then we may have to refer you to the local authority where possible actions include:

1) The National Framework for Penalty Notices

The Department for Education has issued a national framework and the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/210/contents> which govern how and when penalty notices may be used. All local authorities and schools must work within the new framework. This means that whenever a pupil accrues 10 sessions (half days) of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period a school must consider whether a penalty notice should be issued. The unauthorised absence can relate to unexplained absence, absence that the school has not agreed to including for a holiday in term time or a pupil being late after the register closes. Where a pupil has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 weeks that is NOT related to a holiday in term time we may issue you with a Notice to Improve. This will provide you with an opportunity to engage with support to improve your child's attendance. If support is not working then we will refer the matter to the local authority who may decide to issue a penalty notice to you. Where there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period as a result of a holiday taken in term time the absence will be notified to the local authority who may issue a penalty notice without further warning. Each parent can receive a penalty notice for each child that has unauthorised absence. For example 2 parents with 2 children who take a holiday in term time can expect to receive 4 penalty notices. The new framework allows for parents to receive a maximum of 2 penalty notices for each of their children in a 3 year period. The first penalty notice issued in respect of an individual child will be in the sum of £160 to be paid within 2 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. The second penalty notice issued in respect of the same child within 3 years shall be in the sum of £160. If the national threshold is met on a third or subsequent occasion in 3 years then the local authority may present the matter to the magistrates' court.

or

2) The local authority may initiate court action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, imposition of orders such as Parenting Orders or even imprisonment.

or

3) In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and development of the child.

12. Strategies for improving and maintaining good attendance

At Newton Tony primary school we take every opportunity to promote excellent attendance for all pupils. We are a caring school community where the needs of all pupils are carefully considered. We provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that pupils feel safe, and know that their presence is valued.

At Newton Tony Primary School, we use a range of strategies to ensure good attendance:

- 100% attendance certificates for individual pupils
- Whole class best termly attendance certificate and attendance cup
- Suggested differentiation and flexibility in the curriculum
- Sensitivity to the needs of individual pupils, understanding the reasons for absence and providing appropriate support
- Raising awareness of attendance at phase transfers
- Governor involvement in monitoring termly attendance, including disadvantaged children
- Pupil involvement/views on procedures and experiences in school which may affect attendance
- Regular attendance data monitoring which forms a baseline from which to action plan responses to specific issues
- Termly meetings with the Wiltshire LA Educational Welfare Officer
- Links with other policies – bullying, behaviour management, pastoral care, equal opportunities, special needs

If there are specific issues which might impact on your child's attendance it is important that you talk to us so that we can support you and your child. You can speak to the Head Teacher by contacting her on 01980 629232 or

head@newtontony.wilts.sch.uk. There may be times when we ask other agencies to become involved to help us understand and work with you to encourage regular school attendance. (eg Wiltshire Council, school health, Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service, Medical Needs Education and Reintegration Service). If we feel that this would be helpful we will discuss with you first. We are very keen to listen to the views of children and parents with regard to attendance matters and we welcome any feedback which helps us to shape how we work with families to address attendance issues and reward excellent attendance.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of procedures and strategies, this attendance policy will be monitored on a regular basis. Our policy will be reviewed annually by governors and school staff to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the school community. We will ensure that the policy reflects current DfE and Local Authority guidance so that parents may be assured of the standards that we strive to achieve.

14. Communicating the contents of the Attendance Policy

All new parents are introduced to the policy and information on attendance in the school prospectus. It is also accessible on the school website. School attendance will be communicated by email and text message, and we will advise parents of any changes to policy and procedures through emails relevant documentation. Our policy is available in other languages if required.

APPENDIX A

ATTENDANCE REGISTERS: NATIONAL ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE CODES PRESENT

Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed. Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

The national absence codes must be used. Schools cannot add to the list of codes or use their own local codes. In order to be useful to schools in helping them identify patterns of absence, it is essential that there is consistency of use by staff within each school.

C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances (not holiday) (<i>eg bereavement, maternity leave</i>)
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad
C2	Absence when a pupil is subject to a part-time timetable
E	Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)
J1	Interview (with a prospective employer or another educational establishment)
M	Medical / Dental appointments
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes

APPROVED EDUCATION ACTIVITY

K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
B	Educated off site (<i>NOT dual registration and not for a pupil participating in remote learning.</i>)
D	Dual registration (<i>ie pupil attending other establishment</i>)
P	Approved sporting activity (<i>arranged by school</i>)
V	Educational visit or trip (<i>arranged by school</i>)
W	Work experience (Yr 10 and Yr 11)

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- G Holiday not granted by the school
- N Reason for absence not yet established
- O Absent in other/unknown circumstances
- U Arrived in school after registration closed

UNABLE TO ATTEND DUE TO UNAVOIDABLE CAUSE

- Q Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements (local authority duty)
- Y1 Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Y2 Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Y3 Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
- Y5 Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
- Y6 Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
- Y7 Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

ADMINISTRATIVE CODES

- X Pupil not of compulsory school age not required to be in school
- Z Prospective pupil not on the admission register (to set up registers in advance of pupils joining school)
- # Planned or partial school closure (eg school holidays, teacher training, school used as polling station, staggered starts for different year groups)

APPENDIX B

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 places duties on all schools in England, including **academies** and **independent schools**.

These duties include providing the local authority (LA) with information about **pupils both leaving and joining the school** at non-standard transition points, i.e. in-year moves or when a pupil leaves before the end of that school's final year of education e.g. a pupil leaving at the end of Y8 so not going into Y9 at that school.

GROUNDINGS FOR DELETING REGISTERED PUPILS FROM SCHOOL ADMISSION REGISTERS (Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024)

- A** The pupil has been registered at another school
- B** The pupil has not continued at the school following completion of nursery education
- C** The pupil is registered at one or more schools and the other schools at which the pupil is registered have agreed the deletion
- D** The pupil has a school attendance order which has been changed to name another school
- E** The pupil had a school attendance order which has been revoked
- F** The parent of a pupil has notified the school in writing that the pupil will be leaving the school to be educated otherwise than at school
- G** The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school
- H** The pupil has not returned following a leave of absence

- I** The pupil has been continually absent from school for 20 school days
- J** The pupil is detained under a sentence of detention
- K** The pupil has died
- L** The pupil will be over compulsory school age and will not continue into the sixth form
- M** The pupil is a boarder at a school maintained by a local authority or academy and their boarding fees have not been paid
- N** The pupil has ceased to be a pupil at an independent or non-maintained special school
- O** The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school

Pupils not of compulsory school age (Regulation 9 (3))

The following are prescribed as the grounds on which the name of a pupil not of compulsory school age is to be deleted from the admission register:

- 3 (a)** The pupil is a boarder and will not attend the school again
 - b)** The pupil is a boarder and has ceased to be a pupil at the school
 - c)** The pupil has been continually absent from school for 20 school days
 - d)** The pupil has died
 - e)** The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school.

APPENDIX C

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION OR WHO MAY OTHERWISE BE AT RISK

[Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Aspects of Safeguarding and preventing Children Missing Education contained within the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006:

[Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)