



An Active Learning Trust School

# **Neale-Wade Academy Attendance Policy**

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<b>Review Timetable:</b>	Annually
<b>Review:</b>	The document should be reviewed by a nominated member of staff and updated annually if required; after ratification or earlier if there is any new local or national guidance, changes in process, or legislation.
<b>Purpose of Document:</b>	To give guidance on attendance marking to insure high standards are maintained.
<b>Implementation:</b>	The procedures will be accessed via the Staff Share on the V Drive
<b>Dissemination:</b>	The procedures will be available to all staff, teaching and non-teaching

## Contents

1. Aims.....	3
2. Legislation and guidance .....	3
3. School procedures .....	3
4. Authorised and unauthorised absence .....	5
5. Strategies for promoting attendance .....	6

6. Attendance monitoring .....	6
7. Roles and responsibilities .....	7
8. Monitoring arrangements .....	8
9. Links with other policies .....	8
Appendix 1: attendance codes .....	9

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## 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence

Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

We want all our students to succeed and one of the most effective ways to achieve this is for them to attend school every day. The only reason for absence should be through illness or exceptional circumstances.

As a school we set every student the target of 97% attendance.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Covid-19 legislation](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 3. School procedures

### 3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

Present

Attending an approved off-site educational activity

Absent

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08.45 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08.50 and will be kept open until 09.15. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.40 and will be kept open until 13.00.

### **3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 08.50 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Absences can be reported by the following ways:

- Telephone the Academy
- Email the Academy
- Text using Schoolcomms

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

### **3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### **3.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

### **3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

### **3.6 Reporting to parents**

Parents can access their child's attendance continually through access to the 'GO 4 Schools' website. Student's attendance remains a 'live' documents throughout the year with daily updates.

## **4. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Examples of exceptional circumstances are -

- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments: Please arrange for appointments to take place outside of the school day. If this is not possible, please ensure that your child misses the minimum amount of time possible and brings evidence to school of the appointment.
- Days of religious observance.
- Exceptional family circumstances ie bereavement
- An interview with a prospective employer or college (evidence required)
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

### **Holidays within school time**

Taking time off for holidays interferes with students' learning and progress. In addition, students' exam results may be affected; they may miss important exams or controlled assessments.

In line with the Local Authority it is the policy of Neale-Wade Academy to expect attendance to be 100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence, which will then be authorised.

The Local Authority have amended the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct to take into account the Supreme Court Judgement (Isle of Wight v Platt). The change in policy is that now Penalty Notices may be issued for unauthorised absences of at least three consecutive school days or more, over a four week period. The school is not required to give any warning of the issue of a Penalty Notice to each parent/carer, and is requested to implement this policy change with immediate effect.

Holiday requested should be put in writing to the Principal of the Academy.

### **4.2 Legal sanctions**

#### **Penalty Notices**

Schools are required to inform Cambridgeshire County Council's Attendance Team of all children whose attendance falls below 90% or when children are absent for unauthorised term-time leave or suspected term-time leave.

Issuing of a penalty notice results in:

- A fine of £60 per parent or carer, per child if payment is made to the Local Authority within 21 days.
- A fine of £120 per parent or carer, per child if payment is made to the Local Authority after 21 days but before 28 days
- Failure to pay the fine within the specified time will be liable for prosecution in a Magistrates Court action. If convicted, a sentence of up to £2500 and/or up to three months in prison may be imposed.

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

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

## **5. Strategies for promoting attendance**

Attendance remains a central focus for all staff/students at Neale-Wade. Students' individual attendance is discussed weekly during tutorial periods and the targets are reiterated through the 'Are you in the green' task. This requires students to consider their current attendance.

Students will be highlighted for 'good' attendance and improved attendance. This information will be passed to pastoral teams to be recognized using the school's behaviour policy.

Parents will be contacted as early as possible should a student's fall below the Academy's target.

Pastoral staff will monitor lateness to lessons. In-line with the Academy's behaviour policy, students will be issued a sanction if three or more late marks are entered in a week.

Students that are on the Persistent Absence register will be referred to pastoral teams. It may be necessary to offer a Pastoral Support Plan to ensure attendance improves.

## **6. Attendance monitoring**

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

Parents are expected to call each morning of the absence.

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.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

### **Monitoring of on-line learning**

Where on-line learning has been agreed with school and parents/carers, the school will monitor absence on a lesson-by-lesson basis.

The agreement with parents/carers will be signed as part of an Individual Alternative Education Plan (IAEP).

IAEPs are monitored by the Local Authority Education Inclusion Officer.

Failure to log on or complete less than 15 minutes of work in that designated session will result in an unauthorised mark.

Contact will be made on that day to alert parents to this. If there is no response or the school do not see the student in that same school day, a referral to the safeguarding team will be made.

## **Intervention for falling attendance**

Neale-Wade Academy will send the following letters to parents/carers to notify falling attendance which is causing concern

Letter 1 – Official notification of fall in attendance issued in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council guidelines.

Letter 2 – Official notification of continued fall in attendance issued in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council guidelines. In this letter parents/carers will receive notification that future absences will be unauthorised unless supported by medical evidence. Medical evidence can include appointment letters or cards, copy of prescription or medication box

Letter 3 – official notification of extended fall in attendance issued in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council guidelines. In this letter parents/carers will be required to attend a meeting to discuss concerns with regard to attendance. Parents/Carers will also be informed of the risk of receiving a Penalty Notice if the attendance does not improve.

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **7.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **7.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **7.3 The attendance officer**

The attendance officer:

Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level

Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher

Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Liaise and communicate attendance figures and trends to pastoral staff

Produce weekly updates for tutors / pastoral staff on attendance figures

The assistant attendance officer will support the attendance officer to fulfil their responsibilities.

### **7.4 Class Teachers/ Form Tutors**

Class Teachers and Form Tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

## **7.5 Admin staff**

Admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the **senior leader with responsibility for attendance**. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

## **10. Covid-19 Addendum**

In line with Government guidance, Neale-Wade Academy has planned a response for tiered local restrictions. This includes:

- Tracking of students self-isolating
- Providing online work at home
- Temporary reduced timetables / IAEPs for students to be supported in their planned return
- Structures to continue to educate the most vulnerable and children of critical workers

For students that embark in home learning, it is expected that a register will be taken. Any absence will be addressed using the usual procedures, such as calling home and ultimately a home visit where there is a need.

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day