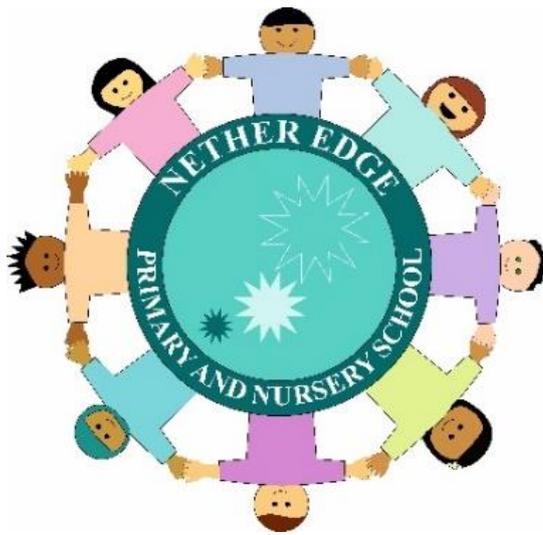


# Nether Edge Primary School



## **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

Revised September 2019

## **Policy for Promoting Good Attendance & Punctuality**

### **Why do we need a policy for attendance and punctuality?**

Children come to school to learn and good attendance is important if they are to gain as much as possible from their time in school. When children miss lessons it is harder for them to reach their full potential. Poor attendance and punctuality can lead to children feeling unsettled at school, it can affect their friendships and reduce their confidence. Poor attendance can result in social and academic problems, reducing the long term life chances of children.

**Punctuality** is important so children can be registered, seated and listening to the teacher ready to start learning when the first lesson of the day begins. It is also important for the social and emotional well being of the children. Being a few minutes late each day has a cumulative effect which can significantly impact on a child's learning and progress.

It is the duty of the Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996. This duty is to ensure that your child receives full time education.

### **Punctuality**

#### **The School Day**

**8.00am:** Breakfast club begins

**8.30am:** Main gates open

**8.45am:** Reception doors open

**8:50am:** Bell goes, children line up and teachers arrive to collect them

**8.55am:** Registration. Children arriving after 9am must use the Front Entrance and report to the Office. A late mark will be recorded after 9am. Parents to sign in with reason why they are late.

**9am:** Nursery starts - Gates open 8.45am

All gates are locked by 9am

#### **Afternoon Registers**

**12:30pm:** Nursery starts – Gates open 12.30pm and close 12.45pm

**1pm:** Reception and KS1 to return to return to classroom to be registered

**1:15pm:** KS2 to return to classrooms to be registered

### **Punctuality procedures**

- Staff who have responsibility for attendance will monitor lateness.
- Late arrivals must report to the school office, where their parent/carer must sign them in. A dinner is ordered at this point.
- Staff with responsibility for attendance input this information to SIMS
- A letter is sent to parents/carers of children who are persistently late. (A persistent late attender is defined as a pupil who is late (before registers close) for more than 15% of all possible days)
- Parents will be contacted to discuss any problem which may contribute to a lack of punctuality.
- A referral will be sent to MAST (The Multi Agency Support Team) if necessary.

### **Collection of Children**

The end of the school day is 3.15pm for the main school

The end of the day for Nursery is 3:30pm.

Nursery children are collected from the Nursery door exit by their parent/carer.

Reception children are collected from the Reception class doors by their parent/carer.

All Year group children are collected from the external door or point on the playground closest to their classrooms by their parent/carer.

It is the parent/carers duty of care to ensure their child is collected from school, on time, by an adult who is known to the school. Unless you inform us, in person, that someone else will be collecting your child from school, only the people listed on a child's record will be allowed to collect your child. The school office must be notified of any changes to these arrangements. Parents/carers are asked to contact school if there is any change to the person who is collecting their child on that day.

Each year we also request permissions for Y6 children to walk home alone. Children will only be allowed to walk home alone if this form has been completed. Parents telephoning school requesting their child walks home alone, will only be authorised if the forms have been completed.

### **Absence**

**Children should attend school every day.**

If they are unable to attend school parents/carers are requested to telephone school on the first day of absence to explain why their child is not in school. We provide a telephone answering machine for parents to leave these messages. The appropriate code will then be entered in the attendance register.

If a parent/carer fails to notify the school the attendance officer will call home. This is known as 'First Day' absence calling. If no response is received, to the phone call, a home visit may be required and a letter will be sent home requesting a reason for absence and will be kept on file. If no explanation remains forthcoming then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Authorised/unauthorised absence**

**It is important to note that a letter or phone call from a parent does not authorise an absence, only the school's acceptance of the explanation can authorise the absence.**

Absences from Nether Edge Primary School will be authorised for the following reasons:

- Sickness
- Days of religious observance – Request for Exceptional Leave to be completed
- Exceptional family circumstances, e.g. bereavement
- Medical/dental appointment - Medical evidence may need to be provided
- Pre arranged visits to another school / educational setting
- Exams e.g. Music, Dance, Gymnastics etc.

Absences will not be authorised for the following reasons:

- No explanation is forthcoming from the parent/carer
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation given
- The child is staying at home to look after siblings, mind the house or because their parent/carer is ill.
- Keeping off all day due to late riser
- Holidays

Any period of '*unauthorised absence*' could result in action being taken against the parent/carer by the authority which could include a fine or court action. The higher '*aggravated offence*' will be pursued by the authority against parents/carers who repeatedly cause their child to be absent from school. Aggravated offences carry higher penalties and are disclosed on CRB disclosures.

#### **Arrangements for medical or dental appointments**

Where possible all medical appointments should be made outside of school hours. If this is not possible then the child must be collected from school by a parent/carer and signed out on the Electronic Entry System.

An appointment card, letter or text should be shown at the school office. If an appointment card or letter is not available a form may be given to the parent for the practitioner to complete.

The school must be informed if a child has an emergency appointment, and will not be in school for morning registration.

Children are expected, where time allows, to be in school before a medical or dental appointment, and to return afterwards.

#### **Attendance Expectations**

It is expected that:

##### **Parents will: -**

- Ensure their child attends regularly and on time
- Notify school on the first day of absence
- Only request a holiday in term time in exceptional circumstances
- Not keep their children away from school for trivial reasons
- Not keep their children off school during SATs or at times of testing.

##### **The school will: -**

- Regularly communicate the Attendance Policy to parents/carers.
- Ensure that the Head Teacher is informed about any attendance matters and is in agreement with any action taken
- Have an expectation that full time, punctual attendance will be the norm and all persistent absences/lateness will be followed up
- Monitor attendance through checking registers and the computerised attendance system
- Identify and act upon problems with attendance.
- Liaise with the Local Authority over attendance concerns.

### **Monitoring**

The registers are monitored on a regular basis by staff responsible for attendance and punctuality. Attendance patterns are monitored half termly, and attendance records of any child who raises concerns will be discussed with the Head Teacher and Attendance and Inclusion Team, MAST (The Multi Agency Support Team). Issues identified will be discussed with the child's parents/carers.

Information on attendance is returned termly to the Local Authority who monitors the attendance of all pupils.

See attached Attendance Monitoring sheet for more information.

### **Attendance Procedures**

If a poor pattern of attendance is formed:

- The Head Teacher will be informed
- Attendance Officer will contact parents
- Head Teacher, Attendance Officer, Local authority and Parents/carers will meet to discuss and implement strategies for improving attendance
- A home visit will be made
- The Local authority will keep in contact with parents where appropriate.
- If Attendance does not improve a warning letter will be sent.
- If Attendance does not improve following the issue of a warning letter a final warning will be issued by the Local Authority.
- Parents may receive a penalty notice or a court summons.

### **Penalty Notices**

Where a child's attendance is consistently poor (less than 90% with at least 20% of the absence being unauthorised) and all steps have been taken to rectify this by the school and the Local Authority working with the child and the parents/carers, but have been unsuccessful MAST (the Multi Agency Support Team) will, after consulting with the school, consider issuing a Penalty Notice.

### **Children missing from education (CME)**

The Attendance Officer will liaise with the Children Missing from Education Team if a child is absent from school for 10 consecutive days and unaccounted for. (1 day if school are aware of movement). Home visits will be completed. Social Care is also informed at this time. Pupils who cannot be located will be considered as missing. The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and they will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures.

### Children in public care

The Office receive the Welfare call on a daily basis and inform them of any absences on the day.

The Attendance Officer will monitor their attendance and report this to the SLT who will inform Looked after Children Team on request.

The school's co-ordinator for looked after children is the Senior Leadership Team.

### Awards and rewards

All children achieving at least 98% or 100% attendance in a half term will receive a certificate during assembly. Children who have significantly improved their attendance will also be recognised.

All children achieving 98 -100% attendance during a full term will take part in a reward event. Children who have significantly improved their attendance will also be recognised.

98-100% children will access an end of year treat (TBD)

All children who achieve 100% attendance for the whole of the academic year will be presented with a Certificate and access an end of year treat. Children who have significantly improved their attendance will also be recognised. (TBD)

Attendance totals for each class are shared regularly with parents/carers through the School Newsletter and displays around school. The class with the highest attendance each week will receive a certificate.

Whole school attendance is displayed on the whole school attendance board in the Hall.

### Attendance Celebration

Each week attendance is celebrated through assemblies.

### Holidays during term time

Holidays in term time are **not an entitlement** but may be granted, in exceptional circumstances, by the Head Teacher.

As I am sure you appreciate, regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to maximise their educational opportunities. The Local Authority and Nether Edge Primary School has a responsibility to provide the best education possible but we can only do this if pupils attend regularly. Taking time out of school for holidays can be disruptive; it can also be difficult for pupils to catch up on work missed.

The Department of Education (DfE) have recently issued updated guidance that states:

“The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in **exceptional circumstances** and the Head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.”

Commented [SA1]:

Therefore the Head teacher may only consider giving permission for a pupil to be absent from school in term time in **'exceptional circumstances'** and proof will be requested by the Head teacher.

If you choose to disregard this guidance the Local Authority may take legal action under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act which states that you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

“Taking unauthorised term time holidays and/or persistent absence (below 85%) may make you liable for a Penalty Notice (fine). The penalty is a **£60 fine if paid within 21 days** of receipt of the Penalty Notice, rising to **£120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days**. If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full within the 42 day period **Sheffield City Council may prosecute**. This could result in a fine of up to **£1,000 plus costs**.”

Nether Edge Primary School is committed to raising the profile of attendance and its link to achievement. It is important therefore that you work with us by ensuring that your son/daughter attends school on time, every day and by not taking your son/daughter out of school for holidays during term time.

If you do feel that there are exceptional circumstances preventing your holiday being taken during school holiday periods please complete a leave of request form (available from the school office) and return it to the school office no less than 20 days before the period of leave is to be taken. Written confirmation of the head teacher's decision will be sent within 10 days of your request being submitted.

### **Re-integration into School after Absence**

Children who do not return to school by the agreed date of return or take unauthorised leave, may be at risk of losing their place at the school.

- To minimise the impact of absence for holidays or extended visits to a country of origin parents/carers are asked to encourage children to read daily and complete learning tasks discussed in advance with the class teacher.
- The school will endeavour to support children returning after long periods of absence.
- The Head teacher and MAST will liaise closely to employ appropriate re-integration strategies.

#### Review:

This Policy will be reviewed annually or in accordance with changes in Government Guidance.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Head Teacher

Signed:.....  
Governors.

Date:..... Chair of

### Attendance monitoring at Nether Edge

