

Newbottle and Charlton C.E.V.A. Primary School	
<i>'Let all that you do be done in love'; Every Person Matters, Every Moment Counts</i>	
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Headteacher: Mr Peter Smith	Chair of Governors: Mr Chris Coopman

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Adopted by the Governing Body on [Date]:	Sept 2024
Chair of Governors Signature:	Chris Coopman
Date of next review:	Sept 2025



Newbottle and Charlton CEVA Primary School

Newbottle & Charlton CEVA Primary School seeks to create an environment that reflects our Christian ethos, providing safe, happy and challenging working conditions for all members of the school. This environment is exemplified by our school values and wheel with hope, dignity, wisdom and community at its hub.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Why is it important for children not to miss school?

Children only get one chance at school. If they do not attend school regularly, they may not be able to keep up with their schoolwork or could miss whole sections of the curriculum. Setting good attendance patterns from an early age will also help children later on in life.

Pupils whose attendance is good:

- Understand lessons better
- Achieve better results
- Sustain friendships
- Have good self-esteem and are positive and confident

Pupils whose attendance is unsatisfactory:

- Don't understand lessons so well
- Get behind with their work
- Find it difficult to maintain friendship groups
- Have low self-esteem/confidence
- Achieve less

What does unsatisfactory attendance mean?

- Attending 90% of the time or less. This will have a serious effect on learning
- One half day's absence every week will give 90% attendance
- Continual lateness

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

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

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Working with School Attendance Support Officer (SASO) to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher in conjunction with the SASO as to when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Our SASO's details are: Nikki Youngman: School Attendance Support Officer (SASO), School Attendance Support Service, Children & Young Peoples Services.

Class teacher

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

School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Arrange phone calls and meetings between headteacher and parents to discuss any attendance issues
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and report concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

Parents/carers

It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to ensure his/her child attends school regularly and punctually

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Contact the school without delay to report any absence (ideally by 9am)
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Adhere to the policy with regard to holiday absence
- Ensure children have a good attitude to learning and attendance
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register 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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age- whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at just after 8:50 and will be kept open until 9:05. The register for the second session will be taken at just after 1:00 and will be kept open until 1:15.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible. Please phone and leave a message or email the school office to explain why your child will be absent and the estimation of the likely length of absence, as well as daily updates on the situation.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

The normal pattern of absence for sickness would be for consecutive days in a week rather than odd days in different weeks.

The aim would be for pupils to achieve a record of attendance with unbroken weeks (i.e., those where the pupil is marked present on all ten sessions); Regular, broken weeks are a cause for concern and will be followed up by the school.

Planned absence

Whilst absences are not encouraged there will be occasion when a request is needed to be made. Additional factors will be considered as to whether the absence will be granted as authorised. This includes current attendance figures, reason for absence, one off occasions and personal circumstance of the request.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Please contact the school office to inform the school of a medical or dental appointment rather than the class teacher.

However, we do however encourage parents/carers 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.

For requests other than medical or dental, formal letters and or emails are expected to be sent to the headteacher which request the time off with reasons for the request. All of these requests will be responded to with a formal letter which details reasons why or why not the absence has been authorised/unauthorised. This must be made in a timely fashion with at least 2 weeks' notice given.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late (after 8:50):

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Being punctual for school means making sure children are at school and ready to learn. There are many ways to ensure children are on time for school, from making sure their school bags are packed the night before to making sure they get up with plenty of time to eat and get ready. Lost minutes mean lost learning.

Being late doesn't only affect the child, it disrupts other children in the class as well as the teachers trying to teach a lesson.

The office where possible will record the reason for the late arrival. If a child persistently arrives late, the headteacher will address the issue with parents by means of letters and meetings.

Following up absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer at 9:30am on the morning of the first day at of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. (If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will follow the procedure outlined in the Missing in Education section below)
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving our local authority Schools Attendance Support Officer.

Parents whose child's attendance is below 90%, or who displays a pattern of absence/lateness over a term will be contacted by the school through the appropriate channel depending on the circumstance- phone call, letter or face-to-face meeting with the headteacher.

Reporting to parents

The school reports to parents/carers on their child's attendance record every short term and in the written end-of-year report.

Reporting attendance more widely

From August 19th 2024:

Every state school in England will now **share their daily attendance registers** across the education sector - including with the department for education, councils, and trusts. Schools, trusts and councils will be able to access this data via an interactive secure data dashboard maintained by the DfE.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as unexpected, unavoidable and outside of your control.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. The headteacher will need to be satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the leave of absence request form, accessible via (see policy page on the school's website). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Absence for exceptional family circumstances- e.g. bereavement, serious illness, wedding of close family member or other serious family emergencies.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If

necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- 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
- There are other absences, such as "Approved Sporting Activity" (attendance at a sporting competition – see request for absence protocol for other factors that will determine this authorisation), "Approved Educational Activity" (this would include school entrance exams if cannot be taken at the weekend) or that can be authorised and there are events affecting families, some unforeseen, which necessitate absence from school.

Professional discretion will be used in these cases.

Exceptional circumstances do **NOT** include:

- Birthday treats;
- Shopping trips;
- Visits from relatives;
- Attending pop concerts, sporting events and the like

Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Head teachers shall not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Unauthorised Absences

An unauthorised absence will be recorded in the following circumstances:

- No letter or acceptable explanation is provided by parents or carers – this includes statements such as my child will not be in school today,
- The reason for the absence does not fall into a category of authorised absence;
- The pupil is already on the attendance monitoring system and no evidence has been provided to the school to support the absence.

Missing in Education

If a pupil is absent, all schools have a responsibility to contact the parent or carer on the first day of absence and continue to make every effort to locate the pupil. When you have identified the child is not in school, we will follow the procedures below:

Day 1 - Phone call

A staff member trained to do so, telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent or carer that the child is safe at home.

Response from parent	Next step from school
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There is no answer at the home or on mobile numbers	Call back. Risk assess after 2 hours
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is safe with them	Ask for reason for absence and record on your school's attendance management system
The person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe	The school's designated lead for child protection should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned	<p>School to advise the parent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing • Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child's whereabouts or actively searching for the child • Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centres near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment • Report back to school if the child is found or remains missing

Day 2 - Follow up phone call

A subsequent telephone call must be made either from the school landline or a mobile phone.

Day 3 – Write/email parents

Write to or email the parent in plain English, asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. Please give the parents/carers 3 working days to make contact and if you are aware that English may not be the parent's first language, copy the letter into a language that may be more accessible.

Day 5/6 - Home visit

Arrange a visit to the home address ensuring that risk assessments are in place

Once the school have completed these checks (or within 10 days, whichever is earlier)

If the child has not been seen and the parents or carers have not made contact with either, schools must report the child as missing from education.

[Tracking children \(and their families\) who have gone missing from education - West Northamptonshire - Schools and education](#)

Legal Sanctions

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice 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

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

From August 19th 2024: The DFE sanctions are as follows:

Parent fines for unauthorised absences will be brought under a national framework to help tackle inconsistencies in their use.

From September, schools will have to consider a fine if a pupil misses 10 sessions (half days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. But councils retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met.

Alongside this, costs for fines will go up from £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days and from £120 to £160 if paid in 28 days which will ensure all parents are aware of when they might face a fine to ensure all councils are issuing fines appropriately. Any second notice will automatically be charged at £160. New "notices to improve" will also be the "final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued".

The threshold can be met with "any combination of unauthorised absence". For example, four sessions in term time plus six instances of arriving late. The period of 10 weeks can also span "different terms or school years".

Schools decide whether to issue fines, but councils administer them. From the autumn, only two fines can be issued to the same parent for the same child within a

three-year rolling period. So at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another tool must be considered (such as prosecution or other attendance legal interventions).

Strategies for promoting attendance

We will:

- Contact parents via letters to remind them of the need for regular attendance and punctuality and to encourage improvement
- Invite parents to come and meet with us to discuss any difficulties they may be experiencing
- Explore ways in which the school can support the parents where possible

Attendance Monitoring

Newbottle and Charlton CEVA Primary has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

The school will:

1. Monitor attendance and absence data on a weekly basis detailing weekly and annual attendance to date at an individual level.
2. Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absence may be a cause for concern (include those at risk of becoming persistent absentees).
3. Analyse attendance data and identify pupils that need additional support with their attendance.
4. Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
5. Regularly share with parents their child's attendance report (every long term) to support them in understanding if their child is at risk of becoming a persistent or severe absentee.
6. Contact parents whose child's attendance has been identified as a cause for concern (this may be through an email, letter or in a face-to-face meeting) and look at ways in which they can be supported to ensure that their child's attendance improves. This could include setting targets.
7. Monitor 'cause for concern' children over a six-week period. Further meetings will be called (which may include the school attendance support office) if targets are not met. Other strategies may be implemented including drawing up a parenting contract and a further four-week period of monitoring will be established.

School Attendance Support Officer

All schools can gain support from the School Attendance Support Team. An officer will be linked to the school and will closely monitor attendance data and will schedule termly meetings to discuss any attendance issues which will include but not be limited to severe or persistent absence. Their aim is to work with schools to improve school attendance. They may be called in to meetings with parents to discuss ways can be improved.

Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other Policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

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
Authorised absence		
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
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	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
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day