

**Netherhall School**

*An Ambitious, Caring Community*



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Adopted by Netherhall School Governing Body**

**On 1 September 2022**

Signed:  (Neil Watt, Chair of Governors)

**Date by which the procedure was last reviewed: 29 August 2024**

**Anticipated review date: September 2025**

## **Equality Act 2010**

Our school is committed to equality both as an employer and a service provider. We welcome our general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. In addition we recognise our specific duties to publish information every year about our school population; explain how we have due regard for equality; publish equality objectives which show how we plan to tackle particular inequalities and reduce or remove them.

We recognise our duty to ensure no-one experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their age, any disability they may have, their ethnicity, colour or national origin, their gender identity or reassignment, their marital or civil partnership status, being pregnant or having recently had a baby, their religion or belief, their sexual identity and orientation.

We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion and British values.

## **POLICY Introduction**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

*"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient fulltime education suitable: -*

*(a) to age, ability, and aptitude and*

*(b) to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."*

This means that it is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by *regular* attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

DfE statutory guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' aimed at schools and local authorities (LA) provides clear evidence linking regular attendance at school to improvements in a child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances as well as reducing their exposure to extra-familial harms like crime or violence.

### **The statistics tell us that children who attend school regularly are more likely to:**

- Build a firm and secure knowledge and understanding across all curriculum subjects.
- Ensure they consistently meet and build upon expectations for their age or developmental stage.
- Develop good habits and important life skills.
- Maintain friendships.
- Gain better qualifications.
- Have access to a wider range of opportunities when they leave school.

### **Regular attendance is vital for all students if they are to achieve their potential. There are clearly documented links between regular attendance and attainment:**

- For every 10% drop in attendance, a student is likely to achieve 1 less GCSE.
- 80% attendance all the way through school is the equivalent of missing a whole year of education.
- 80% attendance means a student is missing 1 full day of education every week.

This school understands that improving attendance is everyone's business; that barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates; and that they are often specific to individual pupils and families. We recognise that good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be – a calm, orderly, safe and supporting environment.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school so at all stages of improving attendance, we are committed to working in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

This Policy and procedures should be read alongside other school Policies and procedures as follows:

- Child Protection Policy and associated Policies and procedures.
- Behaviour Policy and procedures.
- Children with medical needs; managing medicines policy.
- Equality Policy.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.
- Admissions Arrangements.
- Complaints procedure.
- Code of Conduct for Staff and other Adults.

## **Aims**

By writing and implementing this Policy and the procedures that support it, we aim to:

- Ensure the safeguarding, child protection and welfare of all pupils.
- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve an attendance for all pupils, that is in line with the National Average, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Provide additional support to those pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness among parents, carers, and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our Policy applies to post-16 aged children and young people so that we promote good habits in an ongoing way.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families by working in partnership and collaboratively with pupils, parents, staff, and others, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance to remove them so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere – a place pupils want to be - in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of a Senior Attendance Champion (SAC) on the school's leadership team and the role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.
- Provide effective strategies for early intervention to ensure pupils are not deprived of educational opportunities through non-attendance or lateness.

## **Communication and Review**

Communicating the school Policy and procedures to all members of the community is an important way of building and maintaining trust and our school's culture. It helps make expectations transparent to all pupils, parents, and staff, and provides reassurance that expectations on attendance, and responses to issues are consistent, fair, proportionate, and predictable aimed at removing any barriers.

We will provide a copy of the Attendance Policy and procedures to a family when their child becomes a pupil at our school, and we will remind parents about it annually at the beginning of the school year and whenever it is updated. We also publish our current Attendance Policy on our website.

As the barriers to attendance can evolve quickly, we will review and update our Attendance Policy and procedures as necessary, and we will seek the views of pupils and parents when we make significant changes.

## **PROCEDURES Roles and Responsibilities**

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. This means that we all need to work together to:

1. EXPECT – Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.
2. MONITOR – Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.
3. LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND – When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
4. FACILITATE AND SUPPORT – Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or school action plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.
5. FORMALISE SUPPORT – Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance plan or education supervision order.
6. ENFORCE – Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

An effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities. To ensure all leaders, staff, volunteers, pupils, parents, and carers understand these expectations, we have developed this Policy and procedures.

### **Governors**

Our Governors are responsible for:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it across our school's ethos, policies, and procedures ensuring that they also help us meet our equality objectives and do not discriminate.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Evaluating our effectiveness on attendance by regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts and year groups (including their punctuality) who need it most.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Dealing with representation by parents or carers if their application for an authorised absence is refused and handling complaints regarding this Policy.

### **Headteacher**

Our Head teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group, and whole school attendance and punctuality patterns.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the school Attendance Policy and procedures.
- Having effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance.
- Ensuring that all staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, understand their responsibilities for following the Attendance Policy, modelling good attendance behaviour, and ensuring pupils follow the Policy as well and that it is implemented fairly and consistently.

### **Senior attendance champion (Assistant Headteacher)**

Our Senior attendance champion is responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, making sure they are followed by all staff, using absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school.
- Monitoring and evaluating the progress of individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality and ensuring useful data is reported to the Head teacher and governors at least half termly.
- Contact and work with parents or carers regarding concerns about their child's attendance.
- Arranging meetings with parents or carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties. These will involve the pupil where they are old enough to understand.
- Supporting admin staff in offering initial challenge and support when pupils are late or absent and working with key partners if attendance and/or punctuality becomes an issue.
- Coordinating daily punctuality checks with late pupils.
- Making parents and carers aware of the school Attendance Policy and procedures by making them available on the school website, on request from the school office, or through an attendance leaflet for parents.
- Line manages the attendance team.
- Liaise with Pastoral staff regarding the emotional or social issues of specific students.
- Make decisions to escalate actions and procedures for those students with falling or persistently low attendance.

### **Attendance Team**

Our Attendance Officers are key to promoting expected attendance and punctuality and they are our main link with students, parents/carers, staff and Local Authority's Inclusion Officer where attendance issues are concerned. They are responsible for:

- Implementing the school Attendance Policy and procedures.
- Regularly inputting and producing attendance data to identify students at risk of poor attendance and celebrate those with good and excellent attendance.
- Producing data at given times during the year according to the Attendance Calendar for a variety of audiences.
- Meeting with students and their parents/carers to investigate poor attendance and devise strategies to improve attendance.
- Making routine phone calls and send out standard communication to parents/carers about their child's attendance.
- Providing data to the senior attendance champion.
- Persistently contacting parents where an explanation of their child's absence has not been received.
- Monitoring the completion of registers and ensure statutory requirements are met.

- Ensuring attendance data is accurate and sent on time to the Local Authority.
- Ensuring students are safeguarded through vigilance in monitoring absence from school and from lessons.
- Ensuring the Attendance Reward system is operating effectively.
- Maintaining an accurate record of attendance on SIMS.
- Processing all legal documentation regarding attendance monitoring including penalty notices to the LA.
- Recording pupils arriving late or leaving early on a daily basis.
- Using Edulink One to request the reason for an absence from parents.
- Ensuring that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each pupil by the end of each week.
- Making a judgment together with the Senior Attendance Champion about whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

### **Staff**

Teachers and other staff who take the register in the morning or afternoon are required to:

- Provide an accurate record of the attendance of each pupil in their class. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- Respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by admin staff.
- Arrange for appropriate work and resources to be sent home to pupils who have missed lessons and who are expected to be absent for an extended period of time.
- Raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the attendance team.
- Communicate to students the links between attendance and attainment.

### **Local Authority Access and Inclusion Officer**

Our Local Authority provides us with an Access and Inclusion officer whose job it is to support parents and schools in achieving outstanding attendance and punctuality. The Inclusion Officer will:

- Enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- Support our whole school response to attendance through regular Targeting Support meetings, monitoring of individual pupil's attendance, and support with specific attendance, access, or inclusion issues as they arise.

### **Students**

Students must:

- Aim for 100% attendance.
- Attend and be on time for morning and afternoon registration.
- Attend and be punctual for every lesson.
- Remain in school during the school day.
- See individual teachers and catch up any work missed during the period of absence.
- Use Edulink, tutor discussions etc to keep an accurate view of their attendance.
- Let parents and/or staff know if they are experiencing any problems e.g. bullying, difficulties with classwork or homework so that support can be offered.

### **Parents**

Parents must:

- Ensure their child arrives at school on time, in the correct uniform, with the correct equipment and in a condition to learn.

- Contact school via Edulink/telephone on the first day of any absence by 9.00 am at the latest and maintain contact throughout the length of the absence.
- Make all appointments e.g. doctors, dentists etc. out of school hours where possible. Appointment cards **must** be provided for appointments made within school hours.
- Contact the school if they are having a problem getting their child into school for any reason e.g. bullying, difficulty with work, family issues etc so that the relevant staff can support the student and the family.
- Attend any necessary meetings and respond as quickly as possible to any communication and information about their child.
- Regularly use Edulink to stay up to date with their child's attendance, including by subject, in order to review the impact this may have on learning and attainment.
- Providing us with accurate and up to date contact details (including a minimum of 2 emergency contacts) and updating us as soon as possible if those details change.
- Avoiding taking their child out of school for non-urgent matters.

## **Attendance Expectations**

This school will:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing.
- Have a clear school Attendance Policy which all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents understand.
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicate these regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels. We will also include clarity on the short- and long-term consequences of poor attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers to include relevant detail of any absences or lateness and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify individual pupils or groups of pupils that need support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place. This will not only focus on persistent and severe absence but will look at all severities of absence to identify pupils who can be supported earlier before patterns become entrenched.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work in partnership with families to remove them. In doing so, we will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support.
- Build strong relationships with foster carers, Social Workers, Youth Offending Team workers and the Local Authority Virtual Head teacher in relation to cared-for children.
- Challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like.
- Ensure that where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, the best placed person in the school works with alongside and supports the family and wherever possible, the person remains consistent.
- Support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance e.g. bullying or harassment. For more information on this refer to the School Behaviour Policy and procedures.
- Work in partnership with parents of pupils with mental or physical health conditions or special education needs and disabilities to ensure that the barriers to attendance these pupils face are minimised, providing additional support where necessary, to help them access their full-time education.
- In line with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, consider formal reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, those with an EHCP and adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school. Any adjustments will be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with, the pupil and their parents.

- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in our area, our local authority, and other partners when a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe. This includes referring to the Local Authority Access & Inclusion Officer, any pupil whose attendance causes concern and where parents or carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve. These actions will be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.
- Share information from the register with the Local Authority, for example, in relation to new pupil and deletions returns; attendance returns, sickness returns.
- Report statutory attendance statistics to the DfE.

## **Registration Procedures**

Pupils are registered every morning and afternoon. Registers will be taken punctually each day at 8.30am and at 1:20pm.

The register closes at 9.00am and 1.40pm.

Pupils will be marked absent or late by teachers using our attendance system. Admin staff will record whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised (*see Appendix 1 for current school registration codes*).

Short term absence with no reason given – the parents of any students absent after registration closes will receive notification of this and are required to contact school immediately. The attendance officer and/or pastoral team will make every effort to contact parents. If school have not received contact, advice will be sought from the DSL regarding further action which may include home visits or involvement of external services. *See Appendix 2 for first day calling procedures.*

Registers are legal records, and we will preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 3 years from the date of entry. It will only ever be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it becomes necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, we will ensure the register shows the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name and title of the person who made the amendment.

## **Absences**

Every absence must be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. *See appendix 1 for national school codes.*

**Only the Headteacher has the authority to classify an absence.**

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason e.g. illness or emergencies.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given.

This includes:

- Truancy
- Absences for which no reason has been given.
- Students who arrive after registers have closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays, concerts etc.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.



## **Severe Absence (SA) and Persistent Absence (PA)**

A student becomes a 'severe absentee' when their attendance drops below 50% for **whatever reason** and a student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance drops below 90% for **whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects. The parents of any student who is in danger of moving into PA are notified and all PA cases are automatically made known to the Local Authority's Access and Inclusion Officer.

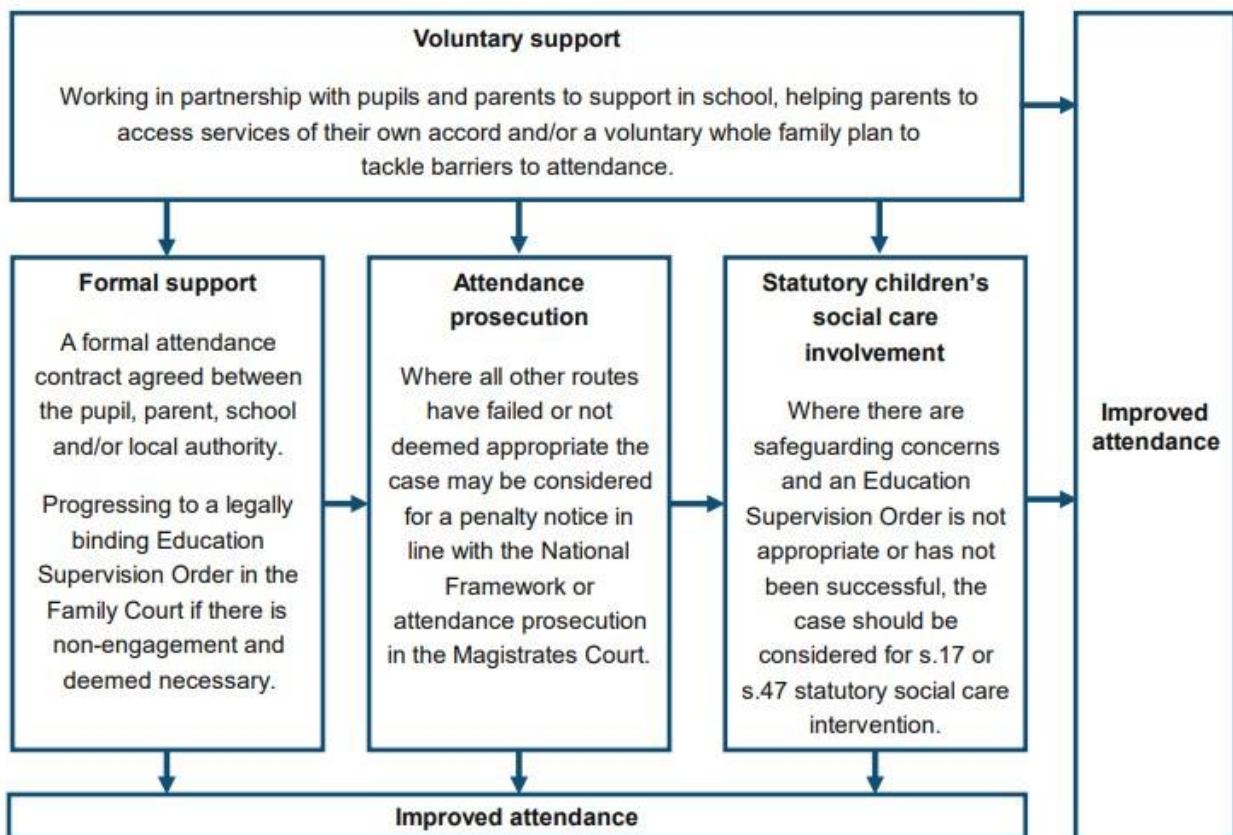
Attendance figures will be tracked and reported weekly to the pastoral team for all students. Suitable actions will be decided for any students repeatedly flagged for absence in these weekly reports. This may include, tutor mentoring, Head of Year mentoring, contact with parents, home visits or further action.

## **Absence Procedures and Intervention**

Absence is often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, and we are committed to working with our local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide the right support.

Supportive approaches are most effective when they are put in place as early as possible, and it is essential that all partners work together.

Where that is not successful, interventions are failing, or are not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions will always be made on an individual case by case basis in 3 broad stages as follows.



Rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution, there are other legal interventions available to schools. Each case will be considered individually, but any of the following may be used:

- **Attendance contracts (action or attendance plans)** – a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or LA to address irregular attendance at school. Attendance contracts are not legally binding but allow a more formal route to secure engagement with support. The aim of an attendance contract is to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution.
- **Education supervision orders (ESO)** - Where a voluntary early help plan, or formal attendance contract has not been successful, an ESO is an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.
- **Attendance prosecution** - If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. The decision to prosecute rests solely with the LA.
- **Parenting Orders** – Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made.
- **Penalty Notices** - Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or, in certain cases, at a place where alternative provision is provided. Penalty notices can be used by all schools (with the exception of independent schools) where the pupil's absence has been recorded with one or more of the unauthorised codes and that absence(s) constitutes an offence. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence). See Appendix 3 for the new national framework for penalty notices.
- **Notice to improve** – A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support.

If the school register closes (for either morning or afternoon sessions) causing a pupil to be marked as absent when there is no authorised absence agreed for them, we will take the following action:

1. Implement our First Day Calling procedure to find out where the child is. See Appendix 2.
2. Follow our Escalation of Attendance Intervention Procedures (see Appendix 4) where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging.
3. Routinely send letters for information to all parents about their child's half termly school attendance and specially send a letter home when we have identified absences leading to attendance below 95%.
4. When termly attendance monitoring identifies persistent absentees (below 90%), we will send a letter home advising parents or carers that their child's attendance will be closely monitored during the following half term and if there is no improvement, they will be invited to a meeting to discuss any support needed.
5. Conduct a review after one half term, and if there has been no improvement in attendance, we will consult with our LA Access and Inclusion Officer to determine the next course of action. This may be an Early Help Assessment, a referral to another agency, or an agreement to formally refer the matter to our Access & Inclusion Officer for official involvement and the consideration of legal action.

We will keep a detailed chronology of all interventions and action taken to improve attendance.

### **Attendance Monitoring Procedures**

To properly monitor and manage attendance this school has in place:

- A First Day Calling protocol.

- Follow up phone calls and other methods of communication like SMS, email, Edulink notifications etc.
- Weekly attendance reports and individual attendance reports for analysis for patterns and trends.
- Strategies to support young carers and children with a social worker.
- Close monitoring of our identified disadvantaged pupils' attendance for comparison with their non-pupil premium counterparts.
- A regular attendance section in the school newsletter.
- BRAG (blue, red, amber, or green) attendance letters issued at the end of every term.

### **BRAG System**

Every individual student's attendance is tracked and monitored. A category is allocated according to the % achieved. The level of concern is graded by colour – see below. Every individual student is subject to an action plan.

Students with attendance of:

- **100%** **blue category. Outstanding = No concerns**
- **95 to 99.99%** **green category. Expected – No concerns.**
- **92.60 to 94.99%** **amber category A. Unacceptable - Concerns**
- **90 to 92.59%** **amber category B. Inadequate - Serious concerns**
- **Less than 90%** **red category. Chronic – Acute concerns**

For the purposes of information to students and parents the two amber categories are not sub divided and the blue category is included in the green band. The subdivisions are used by school staff and the Local Authority Inclusion Officer to fine tune their interventions, action plans and rewards. All interventions will consider genuine reasons for absence and will be actioned on a case-by-case basis. Absence will be monitored to ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) to ensure unlawful discrimination is eliminated, equality of opportunity is advanced and good relations are fostered. See *Appendix 4 for escalation of attendance interventions.*

## **Late Procedures**

Lateness to school can affect a child's wellbeing and their education by disrupting their routines and learning opportunities. It can also be disruptive for teaching staff and the rest of the class as latecomers arrive.

### **Late Arrivals**

If a pupil arrives after 8:30am they are late for school. If the school has been secured for the day, late pupils should enter school through the student services entrance and report to the attendance office.

### **Persistent Lateness**

It is to be expected that *very occasionally* a pupil will be late for a genuine reason. We are concerned when late arrivals become often and/or regular (persistent), especially if the reasons given seem repetitive and avoidable.

We will monitor lateness regularly and, where necessary, will implement a lunchtime or after school detention. We will discuss lateness with the student and parents and offer advice and support if necessary. If lateness persists a referral to the LA Access and Inclusion Officer may be appropriate in the most persistent cases.

## **Medical or Dental Appointments**

Missing registration for a health-related, medical, dental, therapy, hospital etc. appointment is an authorised absence. Advanced notice to school is required to get our authorisation for these absences. Parents or carers can tell us about these appointments in advance by telephone, email, Edulink, letter, or verbally in person (although we may provide pen and paper and ask for the date, time, place, and reason for the appointment to be written down for us).

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

### **Students with Long Term Medical Reasons for Absence**

Pupils who are absent from school for medical reasons are entitled to full-time education unless their medical condition means that this would not be in their best interests. The Local Authority are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children who because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. This means that where a child cannot attend school because of health problems, and would not otherwise receive a suitable full-time education, the LA is responsible for arranging provision.

School will liaise with the student, parents, relevant medical staff and the Hospital and Home Tuition Service to ensure that any student who is absent for an extended period of time (4 weeks or more) due to medical reasons has access to suitable full-time education. This may be done through the completion of an "Early Help Assessment" (EHA) and a subsequent "Team Around the Family" (TAF) process. School will ensure that regular reviews are held and that the student has access to resources. School will also aim to ensure the student does not become isolated from their peer group.

## **School Roll Procedures and Children Missing Education**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing

education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation, or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training) later in life.

Effective information sharing between parents and carers, schools, local authorities, and other safeguarding children partners is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. We encourage parents to inform us of any changes whenever they occur in order to ensure that the school admission register is kept up to date.

Our attendance monitoring procedures allow us to quickly identify pupils at risk of missing vital education so that we can take prompt action to address issues, lower a child's risks, and improve their outcomes.

### **Updating the School Roll**

We must notify our local authority when we are about to remove a pupil name from our School Admission Register under any of the 15 grounds listed in the Children Missing in Education Regulations 2016 annex A.

We must also notify our local authority within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to our Admissions Register.

We must complete the 'Pupils Gains and Losses Information Sheet' and send it to the local authority at the end of each week if gains or losses occur in the school.

If a pupil leaves our school and their destination is not known to us then we must complete form CME1 and forward it to our LA Child Missing Education (CME) officer as soon as possible.

We must enter pupils on our electronic Admission Register at the beginning of the first day on which we agreed or were notified by a person with control of the pupil's attendance, that the pupil will attend our school. If no date is agreed, we will enter the pupil's name on the first day they attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, we will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts and consider notifying our Local Authority about a potential child missing education at the earliest opportunity.

### **What Happens when a School Thinks a Child is Missing Education**

This school understands that we have a duty of care to ensure we have conducted 'reasonable enquires' to locate a child missing education before it is reported to the Local Authority CME officers.

Where a pupil leaves without advance notice or their destination is unknown, we will:

- Check possible whereabouts with staff.
- Contact parents using their last known telephone number, email address, app accounts or other reasonable route.
- Contact any other emergency contacts held for the pupil.
- Make a home visit to the last known address.
- Check with neighbours and any known friends.
- Contact any agencies known to be involved.
- If the pupil is statemented or has SEND check with SEND services.
- If the pupil or family is known to Social Services inform their named social worker in accordance with the child's plan and previously agreed arrangements.
- Ask the pupil's friends and their parents if they are aware of the pupil's whereabouts.
- Check any social media sites e.g. Facebook.

**If the pupil's whereabouts is still not known**, the school will complete a CME1 referral and email it securely to LA Child Missing Education (CME) officer. This will enable the LA to make further enquires, as appropriate, to try and locate the pupil.

The pupil should remain on our school roll for **20 school days** and their absence should be recorded.

We will contact the CME officer to **agree the date** that the pupil should be removed from our school roll before we remove the pupil from our roll. On this date, the CME officer will forward a CME2 form to us. We will ensure the pupil's attendance data is up to date on that day and remove them from our roll with the correct leaving date.

### **Admission of Children from Overseas**

This school understands and will comply with the Schools Admission Code when dealing with an application for a child who is not a UK National. We cannot refuse a school place simply because of doubts about a child's immigration status, neither can we check the immigration or nationality status of foreign national children as a pre-condition for admission. In addition, we must not ask to see passports or other immigration information as a condition of admission. With the exception of children who are Irish nationals, we must not actively recruit foreign national children who are still resident overseas as pupils.

### **Procedures in the Event of a Child Going Missing During the School Day**

In the event that a child goes missing and cannot be accounted for, staff will ensure a systematic search is made for the child (both inside and outside of the building) as soon as possible. Parents and authorities are notified at the appropriate stage, and a high level of care is maintained of other pupils at the school while the procedures are followed.

Where a child is thought to have been abducted the Head teacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will **immediately** call the Police using 999.

The procedures that will be followed are:

- Lists held in the school office will be checked (Texts, emails and voice mail for those who may have not arrived at school prior to registration; Attendance registers; Off-site register/late book; Off-site visit records; Music lesson lists; Intervention lists; Lists of those attending other schools e.g. transition activities or alternative provision).
- If child has registered and the teacher suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity, raise the alarm by informing the Head teacher and DSL immediately.
- Staff will use professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the pupils' whereabouts before notifying the Police. Timeliness should be on a case-by-case basis.
- DSL should, together with the pastoral team, assess the child's vulnerability.
- SLT will make a search of the premises and outdoor areas. This will be undertaken as quickly as possible.
- Whilst the initial search is made, the person in charge will make enquiries of all adults in the school to establish the last sighting and time, clothes that the child was wearing, and the possible mental state of the child (happy, upset etc.).
- Where appropriate, check with the pupil's known friends to establish whether or not they are aware of his/her whereabouts.
- If the child has not been found after 15 minutes from the initial report of them as missing, parents will be contacted using emergency contact details provided and staff will try to contact the pupil via their mobile telephone if known (if applicable). Encourage parents to keep calm and enquire as to whether the child has returned home or might be making his/her way home. Ask the parent to come to the school using the normal route that the child would take and to walk if appropriate.
- If the child is not found during the initial search (after 15 minutes) the Head teacher/DSL will alert the Police (999).

### **Leaves of Absence During Term time**

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time and parents or carers must apply to school for a leave of absence.

The Department for Education allows a Headteacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time in 'specific circumstances' and in 'exceptional circumstances.' We are

required to consider each application individually taking account of the specific facts and circumstances, and relevant background context behind the request.

Parents and carers who the child normally lives with must complete a 'Leave of Absence' form (see appendix 5) in advance outlining in writing the exceptional circumstances for the request. A paper copy of the form can be obtained from the Attendance Office. The form must be returned to school for a decision at least 2 weeks before the first day of leave requested (except for a bereavement or other serious family emergency). You may be invited to attend a meeting to discuss your request.

'Specific circumstances' include:

- **Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad:** in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA).
- **Attending an interview:** for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.
- **Study leave:** for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
- **A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable:** where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an event or problem which a parent or carer cannot control or did not expect.

**No holidays taken during term time will be authorised unless an exceptional circumstance also applies. Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.**

Valid reasons for applying exceptional circumstances and allowing an authorised absence may include:

- Being too unwell or infectious to be in school, medical or dental appointments, or an absence from school recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from physical or mental ill-health or injury.
- The school site, or part of it is closed due to an unavoidable cause when it should be open.
- Transport provided by the school, or a local authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within safe walking distance (2 miles measured by the nearest available safe route for a child aged 7 and under and 3 miles for children aged 8 and over).
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel or daily activities which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
- Service personnel close to the family returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be able to take leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Pupils travelling with their parents/carers 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.
- Bereavement or unexpected and serious personal or family problems.
- To attend the wedding of a person close to the family – up to 1 day.

Evidence may be required in each case to support any application for leave.

If a request meets the exceptional circumstances criteria but falls within the following times, the Head teacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- The first half term of any academic year.
- Any designated teacher assessment period.
- Mock examination periods not eligible for study leave.

As well as the specific and exceptional circumstances described above, there are certain educational activities where a leave of absence may be granted by the school, for example:

- To attend an offsite approved educational activity.
- To attend another school at which the pupil is registered (dual registration).
- To attend provision arranged by the local authority. e.g. alternative provision or as part of an education, health and care plan.
- To participate in an approved sporting activity.
- To attend an educational visit or trip arranged by the school.
- To attend work experience.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school, and they may not authorise the whole period requested. If a pupil does not return to school on the day after their authorised leave of absence ends, their attendance will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the Head teacher, are cumulative (they are added together with all past periods of absence at this school). Parents who fail to ensure regular attendance of their children at school can be issued with a Notice to Improve and/or Fixed Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended). For a first offence, the amount is £80 (per parent per child) if paid within 21 days and £160 (per parent per child) if paid between 21 and 28 days. The second time a Penalty Notice is issued (within 3 years) for unauthorised absence the amount will be £160 (per parent, per child) paid within 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice within 28 days may result in prosecution. We will comply with the LA local code of conduct for issuing penalty notices which is available on the Cumberland council website. See appendix 3.

## **Incentives and Rewards**

Pupils will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level and we will positively encourage and celebrate good and improving school attendance as follows:

- Every day, pupils are celebrated and build up achievement points in their own classes for being in school and on time.
- Staff and pupils talk about the benefits of school attendance and punctuality, and we share tutor group attendance percentages weekly with year groups, celebrating the range of achievements such as 100% attendance and most improved. Tutor groups who have the highest attendance for a week can go into the canteen first during their lunch time.
- Every half term we reward all pupils who have achieved 100% attendance or +95% attendance with achievement points and recognition in assembly.
- Every term we reward all pupils who have achieved 100% attendance or +95% attendance with achievement points, certificates and recognition in assembly.
- Every year we reward all pupils who have achieved 100% attendance with achievement points and recognition at awards day.
- When we work with pupils who are unlikely to achieve 100% attendance but not for health or medical reasons, their attendance Action Plan will describe any incentives or rewards in place for their attendance achievements to build up to participating in the whole school scheme.



- We publish information about the importance, and our expectations, of good school attendance and punctuality and how we celebrate it on the school website and in regular newsletters.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Appendix 1 – National School Attendance Codes**

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder).

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario (present mark)</b>
<b>/</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed. If a pupil is marked 'N' but arrives later in the session, the attendance register must be amended to mark them as absent using code 'U' or another appropriate code.
<b>B</b>	Approved educational activity	Attendance at any other approved educational activity arranged by the school e.g. Alternative provision not arranged through the approved framework (See 'K' below); taster days at other schools; course at college. Record nature. Provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code. Pupils who are absent from school but receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the relevant absence code.
<b>K</b>	Education provision arranged by the LA	Attending education provision arranged by the LA e.g. home tutoring; approved framework for alternative provision; course at college; blended learning. Not provision arranged by the school where codes 'P' or 'B' must be used. Record nature. Provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered e.g. PRU; hospital education; education at a secure/residential site; off-site direction/managed move. This code may be used by either setting. All unexpected and unexplained absences must be promptly followed up by school.
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by school. Record nature. Provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit/off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a school staff supervised off-site educational activity or on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by school. Record nature. Relevant code must be used if the pupil does not attend the activity.
<b>Q</b>	Unable to attend	Pupil unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements i.e. a failure by the LA to make travel arrangements for the pupil to which the pupil was entitled.

<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement provided by the school or LA. Provider to notify the school of any absence which must be recorded with the relevant code.
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Leave of absence granted by the school	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from schools for pregnant pupils. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Generally a holiday or other absence for leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

<b>C1</b>	As above.	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad under a licence or exemption.
<b>C2</b>	As above.	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a temporary or permanent part-time timetable.
<b>E</b>	Suspended/Permanently excluded	Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds, but their name is still entered in the admission register and no alternative provision has been made. Alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion.
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Pupil is attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment. Application for leave must be made in advance by parent or pupils over compulsory school age. If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend an approved medical or dental appointment during the session, no absence needs be recorded for that session.
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day or part day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). If a religious body sets apart a single day and the parent applies for more than one day, only one day should be recorded using this code, any other additional dates should be recorded using the relevant code 'C'.
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes accompanied by the pupil (mobile child)	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business which requires them to travel from place to place. For a child aged 6 or over, the parent must prove that the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months.

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday or term-time leave that was not granted or approved by school or in excess of the period authorised by the school. The school cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively.
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended with the correct absence code as soon as the reason emerges, but no more than 5 school days after the session or replaced with code O if no reason for absence is established within 5 school days).
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence or are not made aware of the reason for absence within 5 school days.
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed.
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age who is not required to attend school. If the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend school, the absence must be recorded using the relevant absence code.
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause or exceptional reasons. 'Y' codes are broken down below.
<b>Y1</b>	Not expected to attend	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available and school is not within walking distance of their home (normal walking distance rules apply).
<b>Y2</b>	As above.	Unable to attend due to widespread (local, national or international emergency) disruption to travel.
<b>Y3</b>	As above.	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed and pupil cannot practicably be accommodated in other open areas of the school.
<b>Y4</b>	As above.	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating. Not to be used for planned closure e.g. weekends or holidays.
<b>Y5</b>	As above.	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.
<b>Y6</b>	As above.	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. Travel to or attendance would be contrary to, or prohibited by, any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.
<b>Y7</b>	As above.	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The nature of the unavoidable cause must be recorded.
<b>Z</b>	Pupil on admission register (does not attend)	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school. This code is not collected for statistical purposes.
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day/use of the whole school as a polling station. Not collected for statistical purposes.

## Appendix 2 – First Day Calling Procedures

### **First-Day Calling Procedure**

#### ***(School's safeguarding response to children who are absent from education)***

1. Registers saved by 8:55am.
2. Late children checked against registers if recorded separately and intervention students added.
3. Absence calls listened to/Edulink messages checked by 10:00am.
4. First day email sent on Edulink and SMS text to first contacts before 10:30am asking for response.
5. If no reply, send second email on Edulink and SMS text to first contacts by 12:30pm, stating that the child is absent, and the school are unaware of their whereabouts as no response.
6. For focussed students, first contacts would be called before 12:30pm.
7. Alert DSL and pastoral team that this child is absent, and no response has been received.
8. If no response, phone calls would be made to other contacts on the student's file.
9. Home visit made if possible/appropriate by school or other agency involved.
10. If still no response by the end of the day, ring down contact list until reply is received stating that this child has not been in school all day, and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence if no response from parent is received.

11. If child does not present in school on second day, there has been no contact received from any of the contacts and the child's whereabouts are unknown, repeat steps 4-9.
12. If no contact by midday contact Police and LA Children Missing from Education Officer. This should be done using the **101** number.

### **Appendix 3 – Penalty Notice Fines from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

# Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing from 19th August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes will come into force for School Penalty Notice Fines issued **after 19th August 2024**.

From 19 August 2024 there is a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

**Please note:** The DfE **does not** consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

## First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

## Per Parent\*, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent\*, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

## \*Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

## Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

## Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

## Appendix 4 – Escalation of Attendance Interventions

### What do we do to improve attendance at Netherhall School?

#### ALL STUDENTS

- Assemblies to promote good attendance (ongoing throughout the year).
- Rewards - achievement points awarded for good attendance and celebrated in assembly and on social media (weekly)
- Attendance information/reminders printed in the Newsletter and on website (half-termly)
- Unauthorised absence Edulink notification/texts (daily, as and when required to alert parents when no contact made)
- Letters for unauthorised holidays (as and when required)
- Letters for unexplained absence (as and when required)
- Attendance data available at any time via 'Attendance' section on Edulink
- Attendance to date printed on to Academic Reports (annually) and data sheets (half-termly)



#### STUDENTS WITH OUTSTANDING ATTENDANCE (BLUE BAND: 100%)

- Rewards – achievement points for 100% for Y7-13 and certificates Y7-11 (half termly)
- **Name** displayed in assembly (weekly)
- **Name** displayed on TV screens around school (weekly)
- Edulink messages for 100% attendance (weekly)
- Displays within tutor classrooms and year areas (ongoing - updated monthly)



#### STUDENTS WITH EXPECTED ATTENDANCE (GREEN BAND: 95 – 99.99%)

- Rewards – achievement points for 95+% for Y7-13 and certificates Y7-11 (half termly)
- **Name** displayed in assembly (weekly)
- **Name** displayed on TV screens around school (weekly)
- Edulink messages for 95+% attendance (weekly)
- Displays within tutor classrooms and year areas (ongoing - updated monthly)



#### STUDENTS WITH INADEQUATE ATTENDANCE (AMBER BAND: 90.01 - 94.99%)

- Tutor intervention (ongoing, as and when required)
- Edulink communication to parents warning of poor attendance and possible consequences (as and when required)
- Pupil interviews conducted by the Attendance Officer and HOY/SLT lead
- Attendance mentoring
- Parental meetings with HOY and Attendance Officer
- Attendance Panels attended by Attendance Officer and SLT Lead including a 6-week review plan (half termly)
- Liaison with the Local Authority Inclusion Officer –
- Liaison with HoP regarding attending TAF, Core Group or involvement of external services



#### STUDENTS WITH CHRONIC ATTENDANCE (RED BAND: 90% OR LESS)

- HOY intervention (ongoing, as and when required)
- Communication via Edulink warning of poor attendance and possible consequences (as and when required)
- Headteacher's warning letter of legal consequences of ongoing poor attendance (as and when required)
- Involvement from the Local Authority Inclusion Officer
- Involvement with other external agencies e.g. Social Care, CAMHs where appropriate (as and when required)
- Early Help intervention (as and when required, reviewed in TAF (every 6 -8 weeks)
- Attendance Review Conferences attended by Julie Topping, Attendance Officer and The flow chart below shows our responses to unexplained absences in more detail:Assistant Headteacher (attendance) (3 weekly)
- Issuing of fixed penalty notices (as and when required)
- Legal procedures activated by the Local Authority, including interviews under caution and legal prosecution (as and when required)

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### **Appendix 5 – Leave of Absence Form**

Dear Parents/Carers

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The Department for Education allows a Head Teacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in “exceptional circumstances”.

Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. Please consider writing to your MP to campaign for the cost of holidays during authorised dates to be the same price as holidays taken during term time.

You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will still miss out on the teaching that their peers will receive whilst your child is away. Children returning from a leave of absence during term time are also unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed. Teachers then have to give more time to help individual children catch up on missed work. This poses a potential risk of under achievement for your child and other students in the class. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

You need to request a leave of absence by completing the form on the reverse of this notification. If the holiday is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance, and you nevertheless take your child out of school for the leave of absence this **will be recorded as unauthorised leave.**



**All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the headteacher, are accumulated and parents who fail to ensure regular attendance of their children at school can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The amount is £60 (per parent per child) if paid within 21 days and £120 (per parent per child) if paid between 21 and 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution, except in limited circumstances.** All leave of absence requests must be completed on the attached form, letters will not be accepted. This should be returned to the school at least 10 days before the start of the holiday. All requests must be made prior to the leave being taken. Leave cannot be authorised retrospectively.

In considering the decision whether to authorise, the following will be taken into account: -

- Reasons given for the holiday.
- Any holiday leave taken in previous academic years (authorised or unauthorised)
- Your child's previous attendance record: this includes attendance in the current academic year - which should be over 95% - as well as attendance in previous academic years.
- Whether your child will miss any tests/examinations (or important preparation for their tests)
- Whether your child is making good progress.

I hope you will support our efforts to raise attendance and attainment at our school.

Yours sincerely

**Headteacher**

Netherhall Road, Maryport, Cumbria, CA15 6NT

Tel: 01900 813434 Ext. 0 (Main Reception) | Email: [office@netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:office@netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk)

Head Teacher: Mr. David Tromans BA(Hons), PGCE, NPQH, MEd

[www.netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk) | [www.facebook.com/NetherhallSch](https://www.facebook.com/NetherhallSch)

# Netherhall School

An Ambitious, Caring Community



Pupil Name .....Year group .....

Date of first day of absence .....am or pm      Date of return to school  
.....am or pm.

Number of school days that your child will be absent from school .....

Please detail the exceptional circumstance for which you are requesting leave of absence.

***I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the Local Authority may be notified of the holiday taken and a Penalty Notice may be issued. I understand that a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days I also understand that failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution, except in limited circumstances.***

Name(s) of Parent/Carer (s) making application.

Dr/Mr/Mrs/ Ms Forename..... Surname .....

Dr/Mr/Mrs/ Ms Forename..... Surname .....

Signed ..... Dated .....

(Please ensure you are giving at least 10 days' notice of the proposed absence; retrospective applications cannot be authorised)

Netherhall Road, Maryport, Cumbria, CA15 6NT  
Tel: 01900 813434 Ext. 0 (Main Reception) | Email: office@netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk  
Head Teacher: Mr. David Tromans BA(Hons), PGCE, NPOH, MEd  
www.netherhall.cumbria.sch.uk | www.facebook.com/NetherhallSch