



**Newton Leys**  
Primary School & Nursery

**Newton Leys Primary School  
Attendance Policy**

Written: June 2018

Adopted by Governing Body: October 2018

Review Date: October 2021

## **Introduction**

Newton Leys Primary School expects all children to achieve good attendance, which means attending school every day the school is open and being punctual. This gives children the best possible chance to achieve their full potential and to make the most of the opportunities that school has to offer.

Irregular attendance & punctuality have a serious impact on learning and can lead to underachievement and low attainment, e.g. missing one week a year from school can mean a child is significantly less likely to achieve good GCSE grades.

Please also be aware that the core subjects are taught at the start of the day, so if your child is late they will miss these lessons.

## **Aims of this policy**

- To ensure the welfare & safeguarding of all children
- To promote good attendance & punctuality
- To reduce all absences whether authorised or unauthorised
- To help pupils and their families achieve regular attendance at school
- To recognise high levels of attendance (this takes into account unavoidable absences)

## **Definition of Absences**

Authorised absences can be e.g. sickness, medical or dental appointments, religious observance.

Unauthorised absences can be e.g. family holidays, any absence that we have not been notified about.

## **The School Day**

Our day starts with the gates being opened at 8.20am. Children in KS1&2 make their way onto the 4G pitch and line up in their classes. Reception children wait in their outside play area. At 8.30am, teachers take their children into class.

The gates will be locked at 8.35am and entry to the school after this time will be through the School Office.

Our day ends at 3.30pm and children are collected from their respective areas. Please note if your child is not collected on time you may incur a charge for late collection. **The charge is £15 per child to cover staffing costs.**

## **Lateness & Punctuality**

Registers are taken every day and a variety of codes are used to record your child's attendance. By 9am, the teachers will have recorded attendance and the registers are then closed.

If a pupil arrives after 8.35am but before 9.00am they will be given an 'L' code (Late before registers are closed), this does not affect attendance.

If a pupil arrives between 9.00am and 9.30am they will be given a 'U' code (Late after registers are closed), this **does** affect attendance.

Any pupils arriving after 9.30am will be given an 'O' code (unauthorised absence) unless an appropriate explanation is received.

You will be asked to sign in your child in the late register giving a reason for them being late. Please note that 'late' is not an acceptable reason, acceptable reasons could be medical appointment, family emergency etc.

## **Notification of Absence**

Please notify the School Office as early as possible if your child is going to be absent from school. A message can be left at any time on the answerphone and all messages are picked up at 8am.

If we have not been notified of an absence you will be contacted by staff to find out the reason for the absence. As a Safeguarding matter, we will try all contact numbers given to ascertain the welfare of your child and will continue to try to make contact with you until we know the reason for the child's absence.

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

The school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

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

## **Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. In these cases the 'M' code will be used.

## **Holiday Requests**

All holiday requests must be submitted in writing to the Headteacher in advance. Please note that Milton Keynes Local Authority does not permit children to be taken out of school during term time unless in exceptional circumstances and this is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Any unauthorised holiday absence will be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). (See the Legal Sanctions section).

If we suspect that your child is on holiday and you have notified us that they are sick, you will be notified that the period of absence will be unauthorised and you may be subject to a FPN unless you can prove otherwise.

## **Attendance Monitoring**

Attendance is checked twice daily and any concerns are passed to either the Office Manager or Headteacher.

We will write to you if your child's attendance or punctuality falls below 95% and we will work together to try to improve attendance. If your child's attendance/punctuality continues to give cause for concern, we may refer your case to the Local Authority for further investigation, which could lead to criminal prosecution.

## **Legal Sanctions**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

A FPN can be issued to each parent and is per child, if the child misses 10 days in a 12 week period due to unauthorised absence/lateness or 5 days holiday.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.

If the fine remains unpaid after 28 days then you may be prosecuted under S444(1) of the Education Act, 1996 for the period of non-attendance. This can result in a fine of up to £1,000 per parent, per child.

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

- A 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