



ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL

Introduction

Our Attendance Protocol is designed to promote outstanding attendance for all students across the school. We understand that there is a proven critical link between attendance and academic and social outcomes for our students. It is the desired outcome of this Protocol that it supports the development of our students into academically successful young people of good character with a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning.

We expect all students to attend punctually and 100% of the time. We do however acknowledge that there are occasionally exceptional circumstances that may arise.

Our Attendance Protocol takes account of the guidance set out in “Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities” published by the Department of Education in November 2016.

This Protocol acknowledges the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and how they apply to the principal, school staff, Governing Bodies, students and parent/carers.

This Protocol takes account of key relevant legislation including:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

The Protocol complies with the Gloucestershire County Council Penalty Notice Protocol which, under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, empowers designated LEA officers, Head Teachers (Deputies and Assistants authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school (as from February 2004).

This Protocol takes due regard to all the requirements of the Human Rights Act and all Equal Opportunities legislation.

Aim

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parent/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. It is our aim that we support all our students so they can continue to attend school even though they may be facing challenge personal circumstances.

We are an inclusive school with high expectations for all our students. The Principal expresses this by setting out clearly that everyone within our learning community is challenged to ‘Strive for Excellence’ in all aspects of life.

We expect that:



- every teacher accepts responsibility for promoting and encouraging outstanding attendance within the classroom and across the wider school;
- all staff acting as a tutor are consistent in their approach to attendance and work within the framework set out in this Protocol and liaise closely with the relevant SAFE Officer, Attendance and Welfare Officer, Head of House and Senior Teacher (Attendance);
- every pupil is made aware by all staff of the importance of attendance through lessons, tutor time activities and assemblies where the school's high expectations are set out;
- every parent/carer accepts the shared responsibility for their child's regular and punctual attendance at school.

The Attendance Protocol will ensure;

- that all students will be supported in their right to enjoy and access a top quality education by attending school regularly;
- that students are recognised for their good or outstanding attendance and judiciously supported when their attendance is not good;
- that all staff across the school will work together within a single clearly defined framework to challenge poor attendance and to support good or outstanding attendance.

Rationale

Our Protocol is that all of our students have the potential to achieve at or beyond their indicated potential and we endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome.

Parent/carers and students play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. This Protocol seeks to ensure that parent/carers and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting good and outstanding school attendance and punctuality for all.

For a pupil to reach their full potential a high level of school attendance is essential. We understand that research indicates that;

- there is a direct link between under-achievement and attendance below 95%;
- regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically;
- regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with;
- regular attenders find learning more satisfying;
- regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, higher education, employment and training.

The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. We believe that high attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Protocol in Practice

This Protocol reflects the fact that the school cannot legally authorise any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education (DfE) has issued guidelines to all schools detailing valid reasons for authorised or justified absences. These include;



- a child is ill or receiving medical attention;
 - days of religious observance, notified in advance;
 - absence due to family circumstances (e.g. bereavement, serious illness);
 - other absences, such as approved sporting activities that can be authorised;
 - events affecting families, some unforeseen, which will necessitate absence from school.
- Professional discretion will need to be used in these cases as to whether the absence can be authorised.

The school will inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

The school will notify the local authority when a student's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the student's name is removed from the register.

The school will request that parent/carers' complete an absence request form prior to taking holidays/planned absences during term time. The Principal will only authorise holidays/planned absences in what she believes to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The school can make a referral to the local authority for legal action such as a penalty notice when unauthorised holidays/planned absences are taken. The Principal is responsible for deciding if the absence is classified and recorded as a holiday or otherwise. For operational reasons the Principle may delegate this responsibility to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The school will ensure that it fulfils its legal obligation to register students every morning between 8.40 and 9.10 am and every afternoon between 1.35 and 2.05 pm. This will be taken as an electronic register on SIMS.

As a school we believe that the work to promote outstanding attendance for all students starts with proactive high quality pastoral care. The pastoral team seeks to identify early issues that will affect pupil's attendance and work in partnership with parent/carers and students to support attendance.

Attendance is analysed on a weekly basis for all students by the Attendance and Welfare Officer and Senior Teacher (Attendance). Attendance rates for all students, including attendance rates for key groups of learners, are monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

As a school we reward outstanding attendance while challenging and supporting students whose Attendance could be better. The boxes below outlines how we do this.

Indicative Actions for Attendance-Threshold at 100%

100% attendance bike raffle at the end of every year
100% Easter Egg award at the end of every T4
Tutor group attendance awards every term
Tutor group attendance certificates every week
100% attendance certificates at the end of T2, T4 and T6
99% attendance certificates at the end of T2, T4 and T6
98% attendance certificates at the end of T2, T4 and T6
96% school career attendance certificates at the end of Y11 T5
Improved attendance and punctuality certificates



Indicative Actions for Attendance below target may include:

The Attendance and Welfare Officer identifies any unusual patterns of behaviour and makes personal contact with families of pupils who the school has concerns about. Where appropriate, any pupil eligible for the pupil premium receives a phone call from the SAFE Officer, if absent for more than two days.

Heads of House, in consultation with the Attendance and Welfare Officer, identify pupils “at risk” of having possible attendance deterioration in the future. Pupils are met with and placed on an Individual Attendance Plan (IAP).

Continuation of attendance below target following an IAP may lead to a home visit and/or the implementation of a parenting contract or MyPlan (Attendance)

Indicative Actions for Attendance-Threshold at 90%- Persistent Absentee

Formal letter of warning and option of referral to Local Authority for legal action for unauthorised periods of absence over 10 sessions.

Letter of concern and support sent to parent/carers at the start of T2, T3, T4, T5 and T6 when student attendance drops below 90%

Home visit by the Attendance and Welfare Officer to formulate an informal action plan. Referral to outside support agencies as appropriate with parental consent via a Parenting Contract or My Plan.

Pathway 1:
Sustained poor attendance due to a confirmed medical condition -
Appropriate and bespoke pastoral and inclusion support. Reasonable temporary adjustments to timetable and curriculum.



Pathway 1:
Involvement of external agencies. Sustained medical absence with no impact from pastoral or inclusion support. Medical referral to Hospital Education.



Pathway 2:
Sustained poor attendance in the absence of a medical condition -Formal Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) at school with Attendance Welfare Officer, Head of House, Senior Teacher (attendance), Principal, Governor and outside agencies as appropriate. Appropriate and bespoke pastoral and inclusion support. Scheduled attendance panel meetings are held for one day a term.



Pathway 2:
Sustained poor attendance - Referral to the local authority for legal action.



It is the expectation of the school that all students attend registration and lessons on time every day. All students arriving to school in the morning should register with their tutor at 8.40. The punctual attendance of each pupil will be recorded using the following protocol;

- when a pupil is present when the register is opened at 8.40 they receive a present mark (/).
- when a pupil arrives after 8.40 they are late and should be marked with a late mark (L).
- tutors will close the registers in their tutor room at 8.55 am.
- any pupil who arrives after 08.55am but before 09.10am must sign in at reception and receive a late mark (L).
- reception will formally close the registers at 9.10 and any pupil signing in after this will receive a late after registration closes mark (U).
- morning registers will be marked by tutors for absent students in the usual way using the most appropriate coding set out in appendix 1. Where there the tutor can find no reason for the absence an “N” mark should be entered. Where a scheduled absence (e.g. For a medical appointment or school trip) is know the register may be pre-populated.

Late arrival without a valid reason is not acceptable. The sanctions for this are that;

- when a pupil is late to school one day in the week they will receive a verbal warning from their tutor.
- when a pupil is late to school more than three times in a week an afterschool detention will be issued.
- in the case of persistent lateness over a longer period of time, the pupil should be referred by the HoH to the SAFE Officer who will hold an Attendance Support meeting.

The school expects absences to be kept to a minimum; routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible.

It is unacceptable for a pupil in school to miss a lesson without prior authorisation or permission from a senior member of staff. Any unauthorised absences from lessons will be considered truanting and will result in the pupil spending time in detention. Repeated truancy will result in an internal exclusion.

Roles and Responsibilities

We believe the responsibility for the attendance of all students is shared between the pupil, parent/carers and school as outlined in the home/school agreement.

Parent/carers will:

- make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child attends school 100% of the time and arrives punctually to school;
- inform the school on the first day of their child’s absence (01531 828927 or attendance@newent.gloucs.sch.uk), and on every subsequent day of absence, of the reason for the absence and, supply a medical appointment card, prescription, medical certificate or other evidential paper work as requested;



- Inform the school of any unavoidable medical or dental appointments during school time in advance of any consequent absence.

Tutors/Teachers will:

- mark registers accurately in tutor time and during all lessons, the period 5 mark will be used as the official pm registration mark;
- practise good housekeeping - pass on letters for filing, inform the Head of House of any students giving cause for concern;
- report attendance data and display tutorial attendance certificates during tutor time;
- hold attendance for learning conversations with tutees on a weekly basis;
- maintain awareness of prior and current persistent absentees and liaise closely with the SAFE officers, Attendance and Welfare Officer, Heads of House and Senior Teacher (attendance) to pick up any attendance issues for students or groups of students;
- reinforce the positive messages about attendance at every opportunity.

Heads of House will:

- liaise with tutors over students who are late;
- liaise with SAFE Officers, Attendance and Welfare Officer and Senior Teacher (attendance);
- undertake mentoring and parental meetings of students with poor attendance, and those at risk of poor attendance;
- use assemblies regularly to reinforce the importance of punctuality and good attendance and praise students with consistently high punctuality and/or attendance;
- include attendance information on the weekly messages displayed in all tutorial bases;
- Disseminate attendance data in weekly tutorial briefings.

The Medical and Student Welfare Officer will:

- care call parent/carers to offer support to students with medical based absence;
- assess students wishing to return home due to medical need;
- support students to remain in school when medical need arises;
- liaise with tutors and teaching staff regarding the medical need of students.

SAFE officers will:

- hold weekly Attendance Support conversations;
- collect students from home when need arises;
- send out attendance data to Heads of House on a weekly basis;
- make phone calls home to praise and/or offer attendance support to identified parent/carers of pupil premium students and students of target groups;
- escort students with poor punctuality to tutorial and lessons .

The Attendance and Welfare Officer will:

- monitor and update registers as necessary when they have been completed by teachers and tutors, including inputting all missing marks;
- send first day absence text messages daily;
- ensure codes are recorded accurately (see Appendix 1);
- liaise with tutors regarding students who are late to school;
- prepare, analyse and share relevant data to share with SLT and the pastoral team;



- liaise with Senior Teacher (attendance) and Heads of House to identify causes for concern and decide appropriate level of intervention;
- prepare case studies as appropriate by request of the Senior Teacher (attendance);
- follow up all requests for term time absence;
- praise students with consistently high punctuality and/or attendance;
- review weekly and termly attendance data and ensure an appropriate level of response to attendance concerns;
- liaise with the inclusion and entitlement officer at Gloucestershire County Council regarding legal issues around attendance;
- prepare witness statements for Gloucestershire County Council;
- inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more;

The Acting Assistant Principal (Attendance) will:

- liaise with the Heads of House, Attendance and Welfare Officer and SAFE officers to identify students at risk of poor attendance and ensure action is taken to support these students;
- monitor systems and process to ensure that there are no students that go unnoticed;
- meet with students and families, in addition to appropriate outside agencies, to ensure attendance concerns are addressed and the necessary support is put in place;
- share attendance data with SLT and governors;
- formulate the strategic response to attendance issues across the school;
- analyse data to identify trends, areas of improvement and areas needing improvement;
- investigate strategies to improve attendance of all students at the School.

Governors will:

- review attendance as part of the schools KPIs at least once a term;
- hold senior leaders to account for the level of attendance in school and have an overview of the Protocol and procedures in dealing with attendance.;
- attend attendance panel meetings.

The Principal will:

- attend attendance panel meetings;
- ensure the school follows the DfE guidelines and ensure the legal obligations of the school are met in regard to all matters of attendance.

Sixth Form Attendance

Attendance in the Sixth Form is expected to be exemplary. The baseline target for all sixth form students is a greater than 96% record of attendance at registration, tutorial and lessons. Attendance figures are often requested and provided in references for employment and university.

Registration

Students register with their tutors in their tutorial base at 8.40 am each morning and in all lessons.



Late Arrival

Students who arrive late are required to sign in at Main Reception to ensure their presence on site is recorded for Health and Safety purposes. The student will remain recorded as absent, however, until a valid reason for absence has been submitted to the student's tutor.

Absence

Planned absences should be notified to tutors and subject teachers well in advance and in no less than 2 days before the planned absence.

Acceptable Absences – notified in advance:

- Medical appointment which cannot be arranged outside school hours
- Occasional care for a person if student has definite caring responsibilities
- A religious holiday
- Appointment with Connections Advisor
- Unwaged work experience placement relative to a course
- Occasional extra-curricular activity giving significant personal achievement, including fieldtrips and visits related to areas of study; sports fixtures and expeditions.
- Attendance at a funeral
- Severe disruption to transport
- A driving test
- A school representative's meeting
- University Interview
- Study leave

In the event of an unplanned absence, parent/carers or the student should ring the Sixth Form Office on 01531 828915 on the morning of the first day of absence. When returning to school after an absence the student should complete an absence form which should be requested from the student's tutor.

Acceptable Unforeseen Absences

Unforeseen absences must be notified on the first day of absence and will be authorised for:

- An emergency family situation
- Transport problems with no alternative solution
- Isolated short periods of genuine illness (up to 3 days with details provided by parent/carers or student)

Poor attendance

Where attendance rates are low, parent/carers will be contacted in writing to inform them of their son or daughter's attendance record and clarification will be sought regarding attendance at Newent Community School Sixth Form Centre. Students with poor attendance may be placed on a Sixth Form Attendance Card.



Unauthorised absence

Absences which will be recorded as unauthorised include:

- Holidays
- Part or full time work which is not part of the student's programme of study
- Leisure activities
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting for younger siblings
- Shopping

Leaving the School Site during the School Day

Where a student needs to leave the school site for any reason during the school day, s/he must sign out and back in again at Main Reception. Students are permitted to leave the school site at break and lunchtimes.

Other related policies and documents

- Behaviour Protocol
- Safeguarding Policy
- Home/School agreement
- SEND Protocol
- Equality of opportunities protocol
- Accessibility plan
- Anti-bullying protocol

Monitoring and evaluation of the protocol

The Senior Leadership Team shall review this protocol annually to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. Any amendments will be discussed with the Governing Body.

The School will continue to review the effectiveness of this Protocol to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

May 2022



Appendix 1

Absence Codes – Recorded on registers

\ Present at registration

B Educated Off Site (Not dual registered)

C Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)

D Dual registered (i.e. present at another school or at a PRU)

E Excluded but no alternative provision made

F Agreed extended holiday G Family holiday (not agreed or sessions in excess of agreement)

H Agreed holiday

I Illness

J Interview

L Late but arrived before the register closed

M Medical or dental appointment

N No reason for the absence provided yet

O Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes or descriptions)

P Approved sporting activity

R Day set aside exclusively for religious observance

S Study Leave

T Traveller absence

U Late and arrived after the register closed

V Educational visit or trip

W Work experience (not based working)

X Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age students

Y Partial and forced closure



Z Pupil not on roll yet

School closed to students

AEA Authorised Educational Activity - counted as present.

Internal codes:

1 = Inclusion

2 = Medical officer

3 = In school not in designated lesson

4 = G11

5 = retrospective mark

6 =SAFE support