

The Welbeck Federation of Schools



Attendance Policy





September 2025/26

Introduction





This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority. Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school.

As a result, we expect all staff members to:

-  treat pupils with dignity, build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries.
-  take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence, handling confidential information sensitively.
-  understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity.
-  communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being.

In return, we expect all parents and carers to:

-  treat staff with respect.
-  actively support the work of the school with regards to attendance.
-  call on staff for help with attendance when they need it.
-  communicate as early as possible circumstances which may affect absence or require support.

In addition to school attendance, we will also make the best provision we can for those children who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.




The Law

By law, all children become compulsory school age at the beginning of the first term following their 5th birthday. Once a child is of compulsory school age, children must receive a suitable full-time education. For most parents, this means registering their child at a school. However, some choose to make other arrangements to provide a suitable, full-time education.

Once your child is registered at a school, you are legally responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If your child fails to do so, you risk getting a penalty notice or being prosecuted in court.

Responsibility for Attendance

Overall responsibility for Attendance:

-  Mrs J Rischer (EHT) / Mrs Scott (EHT)
-  Mrs L Jordan (HoS & Attendance Lead)
-  Mrs J Snape (Attendance Governor)

Definitions





Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate, unavoidable reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the Headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school, even if the absence is supported by the parent.

Absence from school is likely to be recorded as unauthorised absence when:

-  There is no parental explanation
-  The school is not satisfied with the explanation for an absence
-  The child already has poor attendance (90% or below)
-  The child is absent due to holidays

In any of these situations, you could face prosecution.

School Attendance

Our school is committed to following these procedures to promote and support good attendance.

Netherfield Infant and Nursey School

Start of the day 8.45

Eastlands Junior school

Start of the day 8.50

Once the register is closed, the attendance officer will identify any children whose absence is unexplained. As a safeguarding measure, parents or carers will be contacted to establish the reason for the absence.

If contact cannot be made with the parent or carer through calls or other available contacts, a Dojo message or text will be sent to inform them that, if no contact is received by 1:30 pm, a safe and well home visit will be carried out.

If no contact can be made from a home visit:

A home visit letter will be left at the house, requesting contact by end of the school day.

If the child has a social worker, they will be informed that the child has not been in school today and that they have not been seen when a home visit was carried out. If contact is not made by the end of the day, social services will be contacted for advice and to request a safe and wellbeing check. The police will also be contacted if required. Professional advice to be followed.

School will do all it can to contact the pupil each day and continue to follow professional advice. On day 10 of no contact, school will contact Children Missing Education.

Illness

If your child is ill or unable to attend school, you should contact the school office by phone to notify them:

Netherfield Infant school and Nursery



01623 842683

Eastland Junior School




01623 842257

Depending on the reasons for absence, the Head Teacher will decide whether the absence can be authorised or not. Where the child already has poor attendance, medical evidence may be required and subsequently may only be authorised for a maximum of two days.


Medical Absence

-  Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
-  For all appointments, a letter/appointment card or documentation should be provided to the school office of the appointment prior or straight after to ensure that it is marked as a medical absence

Long-term absence

-  When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to support the child with their education.
-  Parents/carers should inform school staff of any such absence and the school will support them as much as possible.
-  If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the Family Support Services and Health Related Education Team.

Known Pupil Absence – Day 5 Procedure

-  Where there has been contact with the parent/carer but a child has been absent for 5 days, a home visit will be undertaken on the 5th day to check on the wellbeing of the child and to see whether there is anything school needs to be aware of.

- 🌐 If the child is not seen, the HT/SLT will undertake a risk assessment to decide on level of concern.
- 🌐 If applicable, school will contact social services or police for advice and to request a safe and wellbeing check. Professional advice to be followed.

Children Missing Education

In order to safeguard children who may be at risk of missing education it remains important for all staff in school to take swift action.

This will include the need to liaise with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within Nottinghamshire County Council for pupils who are to be removed from the admission register and include circumstances where the pupil:

- Has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education; this will be communicated with the home elective education team.
- Does not arrive at the school as part of an admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts.
- Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered and has been discussed with the children missing officer (CMO).

Refusal to Attend

Where a child refuses to attend school, parents/carers must contact the school office to inform them on the first day of absence.

Parents/carers should explain that their child is refusing to attend; school will aim to work with parents/carers to support their child in returning to school.

In the first instance an appointment should be made with the Head Teacher or the Inclusion lead to see if reasons for the refusal to attend can be identified and addressed.

School will then work with parents to offer to support. This may include:

- Nurture support in school
- Referral to outside agencies

Applications for leave of absence

- 🌐 In September 2013 the government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers must not give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 🌐 Any requests for term time leave should be made on a 'Request for Leave of Absence' form which is available from the school office and handed in 4 school weeks before the first date of the requested absence whenever possible.
- 🌐 You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school.
- 🌐 Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold.
- 🌐 If at this point, parents wish to appeal against the decision, they should put their case in writing within 10 working days to be addressed to the Chair of Governors of the school. This appeal will be considered by a designated governor on behalf of the Chair. A final response will be issued after a further 10 working days.

Holidays cannot be authorised

- 🌐 A penalty notice will be issued to parents taking pupils out for a holiday in term time.
 - 🌐 Education penalty notices are now capped nationally at two fines per child within any three-year period. After this, other actions, such as a Parenting Order or prosecution, may be issued. This could result in prosecution or a fine of up to £2,500 per parent, per child.
 - 🌐 If the school has evidence that a parent has removed a child from school for the purposes of a holiday during term time without authorisation and the level of absence is 5 days (10 sessions) in total over a 10-week rolling period, then the school can request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent for each child to whom unauthorised absence applies.
1. **First Offence** – Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance
 - Amount: **£160 per parent, per child** if paid within 28 days.
 - Reduced to **£80 per parent, per child** if paid within 21 days.
 2. **Second Offence (within 3 years)** – Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance
 - Amount: **£160 per parent, per child** if paid within 28 days.
 3. **Third and Subsequent Offences (within 3 years)** – Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance
 - No Penalty Notice will be issued.
 - The case will be referred directly to the **Magistrates' Court**.
- 🌐 Pupils should not be taken out of school during term time unless it is unavoidable.
 - 🌐 Schools are required to consider requests for leave of absence in term time and

should only approve the leave if there are exceptional circumstances.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least 97%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly.

We rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance parents are always informed of our concerns and support is offered.

If a child's attendance does not improve and absences are unauthorised this may lead to consideration of parental responsibility measures which include the issue of penalty notice fines or other statutory action

Attendance Monitoring

We have established robust attendance monitoring and escalation procedures which are initiated in an attempt to prevent absence becoming a problem.

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| Tier 1 |
| Strategies in place to support whole school attendance |
| Tier 2 |
| Pupil becomes at risk of persistent absence (95% or lower) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A wellbeing phone call with parent/carer, by the class teacher• Find out if any support is required in improving their child's attendance• Inform parent/carer that their child's attendance will continue to be monitored.• Inform parent/carer that if their child's attendance was to fall below 90%, any further illnesses may not be authorised without a medical note (this will be on a case by case basis).• They will also be made aware that 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period will result in a fixed penalty notice being requested. |
| Tier 3 |
| Attendance falls below 90% |
| If a child's attendance falls below 90% this will trigger the following: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Monitoring Attendance' letter sent out (letter 1).• A wellbeing phone call with parent/carer, from the Attendance Officer. |
| If there is no improvement: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone call to the parent/carer, by the Attendance Officer, informing them that their child's attendance has not improved and that it will continued to be monitored over the next 10 days.• Letter 2 to be sent out. |

- Parent/carer to be offered a telephone call to discuss their child's attendance with the Attendance Lead.
- Inform them that any further illnesses will not be authorised without a medical note (this will be on a case by case basis).
- They will also be made aware that 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period will result in a fixed penalty notice being requested.

If there is no improvement, and parents/carers do not arrange to speak with the Attendance Lead, to see how school can support with their child's attendance, a further letter (letter 3) will be sent out informing them:

- Of a given time and date to attend a meeting to discuss their child's attendance and agree on an attendance support plan.
- That failure to attend the meeting, and if there is no improvement in attendance, a referral will be made to the Early Help Unit.
- That a referral will be made to the Local Authority to issue a fixed penalty notice (if the pupil has had 5 days unauthorised absence within a 10-week period).

During an Attendance Meeting:

- Parent/carer, Attendance Lead and Class Teacher to be present.
- Inform parents/carers that their child's attendance will be monitored weekly.
- An attendance support plan will be developed and signed by all stakeholders.
- Parents/carers will again be informed that any further illnesses will not be authorised without a medical note (this will be on a case by case basis). They will also be made aware that 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period will result in a fixed penalty notice being requested.

If the pupil has **10 sessions of unauthorised absence**, within a rolling 10-week period, a fixed penalty notice letter (letter 4) will be sent informing parents/carers:

- Of their child's current attendance
- A referral to the Local Authority for consideration of enforcement action, which may include the issuing of a fixed penalty notice, has been made
- A time and date for a 'Team around the family' meeting, with the attendance lead, class teacher and the SENCO / PP lead, to formalise an attendance support plan.





Where needed, SLT and the Inclusion team will make regular contact via phone and text to offer help and support, and to keep communications open. This will be logged via CPOMS.

Rewards for good attendance

- 🎉 Weekly attendance awards/mentions are presented each Friday to the class who achieves the best attendance.
- 🎉 Certificates are also given for improved attendance, sent directly to the pupils home.
- 🎉 There are special awards for any child who has 100% attendance for a whole year.

Monitoring and Review

- 🎉 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

-  The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
-  The rates of attendance will be reported in the Head teacher's report to governors.
-  The school office, with support from the class teachers, will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, the office will contact parents/carers immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the head teacher, who will contact the parents/carers.
-  This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually, or earlier if considered necessary