



THE
NEW GUILD
TRUST


Attendance Policy

POLICY

This policy has been adopted on behalf of all four academies in the New Guild Trust Academy

**Moorpark Junior School
Jackfield Infant School
Alexandra Junior School
Alexandra Infant School**

Approval and review

Committee to approve policy	Resources and Audit Committee
Date of Board / Academy Committee Approval	June 2019
Chair of Board / Academy committee	David Webster
Signature	
Accounting Officer	Mrs K Peters
Signature	
Policy review period	12 months
Date of policy review	June 2020

Contents:

Version Control			
Version	Date Approved	Page	Reason for Alterations
1	June 2019		Initial policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 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. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school. The school has the highest of expectations for school attendance and prides itself on good levels of attendance for all its pupils.
- 1.2 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.

1. *Reporting absence procedure*

All absence must be reported to the school office or attendance line on the day of the absence, within 1 hour of the start of the morning session (09.00 am).

Absence must be reported everyday unless previously stated that a child will be absent for a number of days. Any absence not reported within this timescale would be classed as unauthorised until the school seeks verification from the parent via the first day text system. Where this has not been able to be sourced in spite of the schools best efforts then the absence will remain as unauthorised. Notification of the absence in the morning would cover all day. Any pupils who are not in school will be contacted by school staff or the EWO in order to discuss the absence.

2. Classification

All absence has to be classified as either authorised or unauthorised this is a requirement of law and it is the Governing Bodies responsibility to ensure that all registers are completed correctly.

2.1 Authorised absence

- Absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher or in their absence a member of the senior team. This will be done on an individual basis.
- If the school is notified as per the Reporting Absence Procedure and the child's attendance is above **97.5%** the absence may be recorded as an authorised absence.
- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received a request notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent telephones the school to explain the absence. However, even if a pupil is unwell the absence may still not be authorised see section 2.2 unauthorised absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.
- Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of **both the school and a parent**.

- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.
- Unauthorised absence will also be given where a child's rate of absence is such that it is a cause of concern for the school i.e. below the expected rate of 96%. In these cases the decision may be taken by the Headteacher not to authorise any further absences from school until further information has been sought e.g. medical evidence. It is the parent's responsibility when requests of this nature are made by the school to provide this information to them. This information may be invaluable to the school as it may provide further support for the child with an on-going medical condition.
- All absence will be closely monitored by the school and the EWO on a weekly basis and swift intervention taken in order to improve attendance rates of individuals.

3. If a child is absent

3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the absence will be recorded in the register, and a text will

be sent to parents/carers, who must reply with a reason for their child's absence. If your child's attendance is below 85%, then a referral to The Education Welfare Officer will take place as a matter of routine. On other occasions, where the school has been informed by parents of the absence of a child the Education Welfare officer may still visit the family home in order to discuss the child's absence from school with the parent.

3.3 A note should be presented at least 1 day prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment. All medical appointments taken in school time will only be authorised with the correct evidence provided e.g. letter from the hospital, dental appointment card. As a school we request, where possible, that medical appointments are taken outside school hours in order to provide the least amount of disruption to a child's education.

3.4 If a child is absent from school they will be unable to take part in any extracurricular activities or events run by the school in the evening of the day in which they were absent. The only exception to this would be where a child has had leave from school granted e.g. to attend a family funeral etc.

4. Requests for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances

4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend a special event. An Exceptional Leave of Absence Request form should be requested by the parent via the school office – The school takes a very hard line on term time leave and fully implements the Stoke - on -Trent City Council: Code of Conduct for the issuing of penalty notices 2018 policy. Requests of this nature will only be authorised in the most exceptional circumstances. **All such requests for exceptional leave must be handed to the school office two weeks prior to the proposed leave.** (See Appendix 1 for Request for leave of absence form and relevant Code of Conduct documentation.)

5. Long-term absence

5.1 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 send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, due to ill health, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

5.3 If the absence is greater than 20 days, the school will off role your child and upon their return you would need to reapply for their school place.

6. Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will in conjunction with the EWO, visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 6.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7. Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1 Each school within the Trust celebrates good attendance.

8. Attendance targets

- 8.1 The Academy Trust sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The Trust considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets. The current Trust target is 97% or above.

9. Monitoring and review

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the LCGB to monitor overall attendance in each school, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The LCGB 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. Attendance is reported on a termly basis to the Trust board.
- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually, or earlier if considered necessary.

Approved by Governors: June 19

Review:- June 20

APPENDIX 1

