
NELSON MANDELA PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

“Putting your child at the heart of learning”

Our Vision

- Nelson Mandela School is committed to working in partnership with the community to ensure the best outcomes for all.
- We strive to remove the barriers which may hinder learning
- We will provide challenge and high expectations to help our children to reach their goals
- We strive to open minds and open doors to support everyone on their lifelong journey of learning.

Our aim at Nelson Mandela Community School is to provide the greatest opportunity for children’s learning. We endeavour to provide all our pupils with an equal chance to make the most of the education that school offers, by providing a positive and encouraging atmosphere. For this to be achieved, it is vital that every child attends school regularly and punctually.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly. However the school recognises that problems may occasionally occur which affect this. Through working in partnership with parents, we can find solutions to problems together and ensure children’s right to a full education.

Aims

At Nelson Mandela Community School we aim to:

- Develop supportive strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality;
- Raise pupil, parent and staff awareness of the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality;
- Set targets for attendance annually and submit data to the DfE;
- Use attendance data to identify/address any trends of individuals or groups;
- Reduce unauthorised absence/leave of absence within a legal framework (Spotlight Campaign and Penalty Notices);
- Reward regular/improved attendance and punctuality;
- Take steps to help provide learning for pupils unable to attend school due to serious health issues (and support their return to school).

Attendance and Safeguarding

All staff are made aware of the importance of close attendance monitoring as our duty to safeguard children.

- Poor attendance can be a sign of a family in need, attachment issues, neglect or poor attitude towards schooling.
- Poor attendance can be a sign that the family might be hiding something – possibly an injury
- Poor attendance might be signs that a child is truanting and therefore their whereabouts and safety is unknown.
- Holiday requests might be due to- FGM or forced marriage

Procedures for dealing with absences

Registration

Children arriving at school before the start of day sign in in their classroom.

Registration takes place at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. This is completed using the electronic CMIS system and is the class teacher's responsibility.

Class teachers must say the name of each child and not do a blanket headcount. This should be a nice "touch base" time with the class.

An 'N' is used for absence and the teacher/office updates these following first day phone calls. If a class are on a day trip, the register must be completed for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

The afternoon session should not however be completed for those children that are not going on the trip. (A list of all children on trips is left with the office by class teacher.)

Please note that registers must be completed accurately for safety reasons such as in the event of a fire and because they constitute a legal document and form part of a chain of evidence.

A class teacher concerned about the accuracy of their register should contact the office for advice.

Absence Monitoring

- The Attendance administrator collates attendance data which is shared with teachers. The attendance and punctuality data is analysed weekly.
- Findings, patterns and trends are presented on a regular basis (at least termly) to Governors, parents, senior management team, teachers and children.
- Factors are recorded that may affect overall school attendance e.g. extended absences, religious festivals, pupil mobility etc.
- The class teacher will meet with the family of any child who has an attendance below 95%
- Records of meetings and action points will be added onto MyConcern
- Nicola Mills will monitor this process and support staff where necessary

On the first day of absence, parents are expected to call the office and provide a reason for absence. If no contact is made, a phone call is made to children's parents and a record of the outcome is recorded on the CMIS system. Reasons for absence are available for class teacher/leadership reference.

If the first day contact phone call has been unsuccessful in establishing a reason for absence, a text message is sent to parents asking them to contact the school immediately with a reason for absence. If there is still no response the attendance office/member of the senior leadership are informed. (Home visit may be made to check well-being of missing children.)

If absence continues with no reason and no contact can be made, SLT must be informed so that safeguarding procedures can be followed (making a home visits, left school no trace procedures commenced and MASH referrals made if necessary). If parents have informed of absence via telephone and it is longer than 3 day period, the teacher sends home pro forma letter so the absence reason can be considered and the decision can be made to authorise the absence or not. (copies available in class absence folder) This must be completed by parents and returned to school.

Where a teacher/office staff is not satisfied with the reason given for a particular absence or period of persistent absence, the child's name and details are referred to the Nicola Mills who will pursue the matter.

Staff must raise any attendance with Nicola Mills.

Children are required to attend school 190 days every year. It is the legal responsibility of the parents/person/people with parental responsibility to ensure they do. Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored and when it is appropriate for school to take action this will be undertaken and feedback given to class teachers. Parents who fail to fulfil their responsibilities will be prosecuted.

Pupils with a record of persistent absence (below 92%). They will be contacted by the attendance coordinator and unless attendance improves, medical evidence is requested for any further absence. Failure to produce medical evidence will result in unauthorised absence.

Nelson Mandela Community School participates in the 'Spotlight on Attendance' Campaign in collaboration with the Local Authority to address poor attendance. Persistent unauthorised absence is not tolerated. As part of the Spotlight Campaign parents may be issued with penalty notices and could be requested to appear in court. The attendance coordinator is responsible for gathering evidence/communicating with parents who are part of this campaign and regarding any court proceedings.

Appendix 1 attached shows the flow chart for absence.

Punctuality

If a child arrives at school after 8:55 (when the bell rings) the child is considered late and will be recorded in the late book at the entrance gate.

Procedures for dealing with lateness

1. School bell rings at 8:55am after this time children are classed as arriving 'late' and must report to member of staff on the gate and recorded in the late book.
2. Children who arrive after the register closes (9:15am) will be given a late mark 'L'. If a child arrives after this time, they will be given a 'N' mark until reason established. When the reason is later established this can then be amended to be an "L"
3. Punctuality is monitored on a weekly basis. The impact of letters/meetings is evaluated over time by Kevin Jones.
4. A letter is sent to parents of children who have arrived late **three times**. These parents then attend a meeting with the SLT member for the child's phase to discuss any issues. Parents failing to attend this meeting will be sent a further appointment
5. Persistent lateness will be managed by Nicola Mills in consultation with the head teacher in liaison with the Local Authority.

Medical Appointments

Parents are actively discouraged from arranging routine medical appointments during the school day because dentist and GPs' surgeries are open outside of school hours. Parents need to inform the office in advance of any medical appointments and show the appointment letter/card. If children

arrive late during the morning due to a medical appointment, the register code 'U' will be used to show they are in school and a note added to their record showing the reason. Should a child miss a whole session due to a medical appointment, this will be recorded as 'M'. An 'M' code however may only be used for one session in a day. Medical evidence will be requested.

School Leavers

If a child leaves our school, the school office will forward the relevant CTF to the new school on confirmation from the new school that the child is in attendance.

The school **administrator** will send the leavers form to admissions and appeals to confirm they are officially removed from the register.

Any children with no forwarding school will be kept on roll until either the child is located or sufficient evidence has been shown in trying to locate the child and details given to pupils missing in education. (This would include home visits, contacting other family members, other council offices) in line with child missing in education Jan 2015.

Leave of Absence (no longer referred to as 'family holiday' or 'extended leave')

The Education (Pupil Registration – England) Regulations 2013 and the Education (Penalty Notices – England) Regulations 2013 are now in force and followed by this school. The law clearly states that parents have a legal duty to ensure their child/children attend school regularly and that head teachers can only authorise leave during term time in exceptional circumstances, which must be evidenced.

Taking unauthorised leave in term time is therefore grounds for issuing a penalty notice (£60-£120 per parent, per child, eg: two children taking a one week leave of absence to visit family abroad would result in a fine of £240 for the parents, rising to £480 if not paid promptly).

All parents are informed of this when children join the school, reminders are sent out in newsletter and details appear on the school website. This is in line with the policies in all other local schools.

Parents requesting leave during term time are referred to the attendance coordinator, who will explain the procedures in person and the request is then passed in writing to the head teacher. The outcome of the request will clearly state if the leave is authorised or unauthorised and the consequences, this will be posted to parents.

Nelson Mandela Community School does not authorise leave in term time unless there is exceptional circumstances.

Our school community consists of families where FGM is practiced. This is a world-wide practice that needs to be prevented. If the pupil is female and from a **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** practicing or affected community then the Headteacher will use a FGM screening tool and direct questioning to ascertain whether "cutting" of the girl will be undertaken during this holiday. The Headteacher will then take the information from this meeting and make a decision on whether to refer to local CYPS or Police.

Parents are also warned that penalty notices may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification.

Strategies to Improve Attendance

- The school allows children to arrive at school from 8:15 in the morning to encourage children to arrive early to school. The children can have breakfast in the school canteen and /or have Early Bird Work to complete before the official start of school.
- The attendance dogs are presented in weekly assemblies to the best Foundation & KS1, KS2 classes.
- PowerPoint slides displays outside the hall show attendance figures relative to the rest of the school.
- Staff are provided with a half-termly analysis of attendance/punctuality across the school (prepared by attendance coordinator) and supported in addressing any issues by year leaders/attendance coordinator.
- 100% attendance certificates/prizes are awarded for termly and whole school year full attendance. In addition the children who achieve a 100% attendance for the year receive a special trip chosen by the children.
- Parents are further supported with a dedicated attendance section on the school website and regular reminders go out in school newsletters.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The systems and policy are monitored and reviewed at least annually.

Pupil records are transferred and received in line with legal requirements.

Reviewed and updated July 2016

Next Review Date July 2017

Notes:

The term 'parent' refers to:

- . Any natural parent to the child/children whether married or not*
- . Anyone who has parental responsibility for that child/children*
- . Anyone who cares for/has responsibility for looking after that child/children*

Appendices

- 1) Flowchart*
- 2) Leave in term timeline from BCC*
- 3) Term time request letter*
- 4) FGM risk assessment tool*

Flowchart

Leave in Term Time (Penalty Notice) Programme Timeline

Excludes Weekends and School Holidays

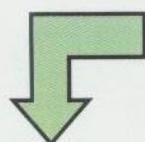
School to send *Whole School Letter (Leave in Term Time)* to all parent/carer/s.
Record all leave in term time with the 'G' code if a request or notification from parent has been received and not authorised

When parent/s request leave in term time:
School to give parent/s a *Leave of Absence Request Form* to complete and a copy of *Leave in Term Time Guidance for Parents sheet*

Parents to complete *Leave of Absence Request Form* and return it to School

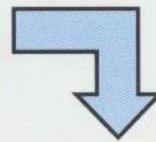
If reasons supplied are not deemed exceptional circumstances:
Head Teacher to complete a *Request Denied Letter* and send it to each parent with a copy of the completed *Leave of Absence Request Form*

DLP to send *DLP Letter1* to each parent and enclose a copy of *HT Request Denied Letter*, *Leave of Absence Request Form* and *Leave in Term Time Guidance for Parents sheet*



Pupil with previous UA prior to the G coded period

Pupil with no UA prior to the G coded period



After 5 school days of G coding

After 10 school days of G coding

6th school day Child has more than 10 sessions of UA in the Previous 12 months on 6th school day of unauthorised leave DLP to: send *DLP Letter2(b)* to each parent

11th school day Child has not returned to School on 11th school day of unauthorised absence leave DLP to: send *DLP Letter2(a)* to each parent

After 10 school days of G coding

After 15 school days of G coding

11th school day Child not returned to school on 11th school day of unauthorised leave DLP to: send *DLP Letter3* to each parent

16th School day Child not returned to school on 16th school day of unauthorised leave DLP to: send *DLP Letter3* to each parent

After 10 continuous school days of unauthorised leave DLP to: request PN send *Family Information Sheet*, *Attendance Printout* and exhibits to Court Section

After 15 continuous school days of unauthorised leave DLP to: request PN, send *Family Information Sheet*, *Attendance Printout* and exhibits to Court Section

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES - LEAVE IN TERM TIME REQUEST

Pupil's Name D.O.B Form

Pupil's Name D.O.B Form

I request permission for the above named pupil(s) to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request

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Dates of Absence

From To No of school days

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

- if travelling abroad, I / we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
- I / we will supply the name and phone number of a contact person whilst abroad.
- if I / we do not return at the agreed time; I / we am / are aware that I / we may be issued with a penalty notice, and could be fined £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. If I do not pay the fine, I / we could then be required to attend Court; this could result in a fine of up to £1000 per child and having a criminal record.
- after four weeks of absence my / our child/ren may be removed from the school register and I / we will then be responsible for finding a new school on my / our return.

Parent/Carer Name DOB Address Signature Date	Parent/Carer Name DOB Address Signature Date
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Request **agreed / denied**

Signed Head Teacher Dated

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) practicing or affected community

Female genital mutilation has been documented in 29 countries, mainly in Africa and the Middle East. Some forms of female genital mutilation have also been reported in other countries, including among certain ethnic groups in Asia and South America. Moreover, growing migration has increased the number of girls and women living outside their country of origin who have undergone female genital mutilation or who may be at risk of being subjected to the practice, including in Europe and North America.

FIGURE 1: PREVALENCE OF FGM AMONG WOMEN AGED 15-49 IN AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Source: UNICEF (July 2013), global databases based on data from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Demographic and Health Survey and other national surveys, 1997–2012.

