

**NEWARK ORCHARD SCHOOL**  
**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

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# NEWARK ORCHARD SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Statement of Intent

Newark Orchard School is an area Special School that meets the needs of a diverse population of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The school is committed to providing an individualised and targeted provision for all pupils and recognises the importance of attendance at school in order for all pupils to achieve their potential.

School attendance is subject to various educational laws and this policy outlines the school responsibilities and within school practice. Newark Orchard has a behaviour and attendance action plan and has targets to improve attendance and strategies and interventions for those pupils whose attendance is causing concern.

### School Procedures

Any pupil who is absent from school will need to have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as attending provision off site. There are a variety of codes to ensure that authorised absences are recorded in the appropriate format.

The school day is as follows.

3-14 - 9.00-3.10

14-19 - 8.50-3.20

As DCSF guidance suggests, the registers will be open for half an hour after school commences. Any pupil arriving after this period will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation - e.g. school transport being delayed.

It is the responsibility of the class teacher (or level 5 teaching assistant) who is responsible for the class at register time to complete the class registers. While it is appropriate and positive for pupils to be given the job of delivering / retrieving the registers to and from the school office it is the responsibility of the supervising adults to ensure the register arrives there.

It is the responsibility of the Deputy Head teachers to investigate and intervene where absences are frequently unauthorised and attendance is affecting pupil attainment.

The school has attendance targets which are outlined in the behaviour and attendance action plan.

On the first day of absence from school, parents/carers are expected to contact the school. Absence notes should be retained for the remainder of the academic year, unless there are ongoing

concerns in relation to attendance and the notes may need to be retained for a longer period. The school office staff will then investigate any unauthorised absences and report this information to the class teacher in the first instance.

In order to encourage and identify strategies to support pupils who are disengaged or have other reasons for not attending school, the school adopts a multi-agency approach in order to identify interventions and strategies for promoting engagement with education. Pupils will be supported in various ways and where appropriate a referral will be made to the *Early Help Team to targeted support* in order to seek advice and to assist intervention.

Any unauthorised absences need to be investigated and where these are without explanation a thorough and proactive approach needs to be adopted.

### **Holidays in Term Time**

*Newark Orchard School follows the Department for Children, Schools and Families' guidance on school holidays. Holidays in term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances and applications are made in advance.*

### **Attendance Targets**

Newark Orchard sets annual attendance targets alongside other school improvement factors. School attendance figures will be analysed termly, although in cases where an individual pupil is not attending on a regular basis then earlier more dynamic intervention will be necessary.

*In 2013/14 the attendance figures for Newark Orchard School for compulsory school age was 92.3%. Pupils falling below 90% attendance will be monitored and where appropriate an attendance target included in the pupils' PEP. This will be shared with parents / carers and any supportive proactive strategies outlined.*

The targets set by Newark Orchard fall below national attendance target thresholds but reflect the SEN of the pupil population and the complex medical needs and emotional and behavioural factors that impact on attendance. The school is committed to intervening rigorously but with pragmatism when considering the environmental, social and physiological factors that impact on attendance. However non-attendance will be considered a barrier to engagement and challenged robustly and using a range of strategies appropriate to the individual pupil. Consideration needs to be given towards timetabling and adjustments where there is regular non-attendance on a particular day or session. Likewise, after a spell of absence, some pupils (especially but not only ASD pupils) may need additional support to encourage their engagement at school and also when attending after a holiday when routines or class groups may have changed.

Pupils who have 100% attendance for any term will be rewarded through 'GOLD' certification or with tangible reward commensurate with their ability and profile. Pupils who exceed the school

attendance target will receive a 'SILVER' certificate. Pupils with less than 90% attendance but who improve their overall attendance will receive a 'BRONZE' certificate.

## **Appendices**

### **The Law**

The Education Act 1996 (revised 2011) Part 1 Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- A. To their age, ability and aptitude
- B. To any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the word parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details when an offence is committed of a child fails to attend school.

### **Register Keeping**

Registers are completed daily using attendance codes as outlined by Nottinghamshire County Council (please see attached attendance codes list). For full explanation of attendance codes please refer to DFES Absence and Attendance Codes which is available on Wired Communications - (Communities - LA Community - Document Library - Attendance/Pupil Registration - Registration Codes). A copy of the DFES - 'Absence and Attendance Codes' and 'Keeping Pupil Registers' are kept in the school office.

The registers are kept in the school office which is locked at the end of each day.

It is school policy that at the end of each school year registers will be kept for at least three years.