



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Updated September 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out North West London Jewish Day School ('the school')'s expectations and procedures in relation to attendance. Its purpose is to promote and incentivise good attendance, and remove barriers to attendance quickly.

Whilst all pupils have a right to full-time education and we have high attendance expectations for all pupils, we will account for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. In applying this policy, we will bear in mind our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This policy reflects the law and [guidance produced by the Department for Education \(DfE\)](#) and will be revised annually, published on the website and circulated to all stakeholders.

This policy should be read in line with the:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions Policy
- Policy for Inclusion

Children thrive in a structure of stability and consistency. Poor attendance disrupts the stability of routine and is detrimental to the child's ability to achieve their potential. The staff carefully plan lessons and absences are counterproductive towards the child's learning. This disrupts the whole class as a community working towards a common goal of class learning.

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance of their compulsory school aged child at their registered school and failing to do so is an offence except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school..

2. EXPECTED ATTENDANCE LEVEL

We expect your child to attend school every day, however the minimum expected level is 95%. Good attendance is important because regular attenders:

- Make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Find school routines, school work and friendships easier to manage.
- Are more successful in transferring between Primary and Secondary Schools.

If your child's attendance falls significantly below the required level, or there are unauthorised absences, you will be invited to discuss their attendance with the Head Teacher or a senior member of staff.

If you feel you need some support in improving your child's attendance or punctuality, please discuss this in the first instance with the Class Teacher and/or the relevant Head of Key Stage. Where further detailed support is required, the Deputy Head Teacher or the Head Teacher should be contacted.

3. THE SCHOOL DAY

School gates open at 8.30 am. Pupils may enter the playground at that time.

a. Registration

The school day begins and morning registers open at 8.50am and close at 9.30am. Afternoon registers open at 1.30pm and close at 1.45pm (except for Fridays in the winter term or when school ends at 1pm, when the afternoon register will be taken in the morning)

b. Codes

Entries into the register will be done in accordance with the National Attendance Codes which comply with regulations (see Appendix A). These enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absences in consistent way and are also used to collect statistics through the school census system.

c. Punctuality

Any child arriving at school after 8.50am should be brought into school via the School Office entrance and must be signed in the late arrivals folder by their parent/carer. A child who arrives at school between 9.15am and 9.30am will be marked with Code 'L' in the register. A child who arrives after 9.30am will be marked with Code 'U' in the register, which is an unauthorised absence (see Appendix A for codes).

If a reason is given for a late arrival, designated school staff will decide whether to authorise the absence. It is the school and not the parent who authorise absences.

Entries in the late book will be transferred to the computerised registration system daily by the School Office.

There may be circumstances in which the Head Teacher could authorise late arrivals after the register has closed, e.g. bad weather and road closures.

d. Following up on lateness

Children who arrive late on a regular basis will be monitored. Parents whose children are regularly late for school, will be contacted by a member of school staff who will work with the parent/carer to bring about an improvement in punctuality.

e. Close of school day

- The school day ends at:
- 3.40pm for Nursery, Reception and Year 1

- 3.50pm for Year 2 and Year3
- 4.00pm Year 4, year 5 and year 6

Friday winter times are as follows:

- 12.40pm for Nursery, Reception and Year 1
- 12.45 for Year 2
- 12.50 for Year 3 and Year 4
- - Year 5 and Year 6

4. ABSENCES

Parents must provide an explanation for all absences from school. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence.

a. To request an absence in advance

To request a planned absence (also known as a 'leave of absence') please email absences@nwljds.org.uk at least two weeks in advance confirming the date(s) of and reason for the requested absence. The Head Teacher will decide whether to authorise the absence.

b. To notify the school of an unexpected absence including illness/emergency appointment

If a child is unwell or has an emergency medical appointment, or is unexpectedly absent for any other reason the parent/carer must call the School Office or email absences@nwljds.org.uk by 9.30am with a reason for the absence, for each day of the absence.

c. Long term absence due to illness

If a child is absent from school for more than three days the school may request medical evidence such as a doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

d. Travel before Shabbat or Overseas

We recognise that from time to time, your family will wish to celebrate a family simcha and spend Shabbat away from home. Wherever possible overseas trips should be taken during the School Holidays. If you do need to travel during term time, please email absences@nwljds.org.uk at least two weeks prior to the absence and the Headteacher will decide whether the absence can be authorised.

e. Year Six Visits to Secondary Schools

Learning in Year Six is a priority as it lays the platform for Secondary School, however we believe the children should be involved in the decision regarding which Secondary School they will attend. Year Six pupils will therefore be authorised to be absent at the Head Teacher's discretion, as will children from other cohorts. Please inform the Class Teacher and Head Teacher as soon as these dates are known so that lessons can be planned and adapted accordingly. In exceptional circumstances the Head Teacher may allow more absences to 'tour' potential schools.

5. PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS OR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

a. Working with parents and health professionals

We will work with parents and health professionals to develop support approaches for attendance for pupils with medical conditions and/or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). In addition, we will use our best endeavours to ensure the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan (EHCP) is accessed.

b. Part-time timetables

Where it is in the pupil's best interests, a temporary part-time timetable can be considered as part of a re-integration package to meet the child's needs and encourage regular attendance at school. This may be appropriate where a pupil is unable to attend full-time education due to a physical or mental health condition.

A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and there will be pastoral support and other programmes running alongside the part-time timetable to encourage full-time attendance.

6. UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE PROCEDURE

If a child is absent and we have not been informed of a reason then the parent/carer will receive a phone call from the school requesting a reason for the absence. This will be followed up with an email if there is no answer. If no reason is provided for the absence it will be recorded as unauthorised (Attendance Code O). If a reason is provided then designated school staff will decide whether to accept the reason given and to authorise the absence.

7. PERSISTENT AND SEVERE ABSENCE

a. Notifying the Local Authority

- The school is obliged to inform Brent's Educational Welfare Service (EWS) of any pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or who have missed 10 school days or more without the school's permission.
- The school will work collaboratively with the Local Authority to put in place additional targeted support to remove any barriers to attendance.
- Please be aware that where attendance does not improve and/or the support put in place is not engaged with, and there is no justification for continuing absences, the EWS may instigate legal proceedings to secure regular attendance as set out below.

b. Working to improve attendance

The School will monitor attendance and where it is low the school will meet with parents to discuss what support can be given and put in place. This may include but is not limited to:

- daily monitoring
- financial support ie Pupil premium
- external agencies involved
- regular meetings with parents

Where attendance is a concern and not improving a safeguarding referral may be may.

c. Legal action to enforce school attendance

- Local authorities can take action in circumstances where absence was unauthorised and support has been provided but has not worked or been engaged with, or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time).
- This could include a Parenting Order, an Education Supervision Order, a School Attendance Order, a fine (sometimes known as a ‘fixed penalty notice’) or, as a last resort, attendance prosecution. Further information is available on the DfE’s website.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following list sets out the responsibilities of specific individuals and relevant contact information.

a. Responsibilities of the Class Teacher

- Day-to-day point of contact for parents/carers to discuss or seek support in relation to attendance.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual pupil’s attendance, looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/carers.
- Informing the Head Teacher where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Following up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings where necessary.

b. Responsibilities of the Head Teacher

- Senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Overall monitoring of school attendance.
- Monitoring trends in authorised and unauthorised absences.
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absences including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues and providing /arranging support where required.
- Monitoring pupil’s attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Making referrals to the EWO service.
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussions with the school’s EWO.

- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absences and to identify and arrange relevant support to be put in place / other actions to be taken to improve attendance.

c. Responsibilities of the Administration staff

- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Contacting parents of absent children where the School Office has not been notified of a reason.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home early.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance and reporting concerns to the Head Teacher.
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance below the expected level.

d. Responsibilities of the Parents

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child receives an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and taking into account any special educational needs (section 7 of the Education Act 1996). Where a pupil of compulsory school age is registered at a school, this means ensuring regular attendance at the school. Other responsibilities include:

- Ensuring your child is punctual for registration.
- Contacting the school by calling the School Office or emailing absences@nwljds.org.uk on the first morning of absence due to illness.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments arranged during school time (and, whenever possible, arranging these outside school time).
- Providing a letter from a doctor for an absence of more than three days due to illness.
- Making requests for an absence during term time only if unavoidable.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.
- Proactively engaging with support offered in the case of low attendance.

e. Responsibilities of the school

The law requires all schools to keep an accurate attendance register in accordance with regulation 6 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended. It is an offence for the school to fail to do so. The school's responsibilities include:

- Maintaining appropriate registration processes.
- Recording attendance data.
- Communicating clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- Having consistent and systematic daily records which give details of any absence and lateness.
- Following up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated a reason with the school.

- Informing parents/carers what constitutes an authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Strongly discouraging unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- Working with parents to improve individual pupils attendance and punctuality.
- Referring to the Educational Welfare Service any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- Reporting attendance statistics to the Brent LA/EFA and the DfE where requested.
- Making all staff aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Head Teacher.

9. CONTACT INFORMATION

- School Office – 020 8459 3378
- absences@nwljds.org.uk - to report an unexpected absence or to request a leave of absence
- Your child's Class teacher emails are given at the curriculum evening or the school office can give you these.
- Head of Key Stage's contact details can be found below:
 - EYFS - Miss Judith Caplan - jcaplan@nwljds.org.uk
 - Key Stage 1 - Mrs Amanda Shoota- ashoota@nwljds.org.uk
 - Key Stage 2 - Mr Sheffi Korman - skorman@nwljds.org.uk
 - SENCO - Mrs Madeleine Bendell - ecm@nwljds.org.uk
- Head Teacher and Safeguarding Lead: Miss Judith Caplan can be contacted on jcaplan@nwljds.org.uk
- Deputy Head Teacher: Rabbi Ronen Broder can be contacted on rbroder@nwljds.org.uk

APPENDIX A

Attendance Codes

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Off site educational activity (NOT Dual registration)	Approved education activity
C	Leave of absence	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. present at another school or PRU)	Approved education activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved education activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Authorised absence
O	Absent from school without authorisation	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved education activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved education activity
W	Work experience (not work based training)	Approved education activity
X	Not required to be in school (i.e. non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

APPENDIX B

Daily absence email

Dear Mr/s (insert Parent's name),

I am writing to you because (child's name) is not in school today. Please contact the School Office as soon as possible to notify us of the reason so that this will not need to be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

To report a same day absence (such as illness) please call the School Office by 9.30am on 0208 459 3378. All other absences should be requested by emailing absences@nwljds.org.uk at least two weeks in advance.

Kind regards,

The School Office
North West London Jewish Day School
Tel: 020 8459 3378

APPENDIX C

Letter for half termly attendance below 90%

Dear Mrs (insert Parent's name),

Re: (insert Child's name)

Attendance, to date, this academic year: _____%

I am writing to inform you that children's minimum expected level of attendance is 95% and we remind you that we expect your child to attend school every day. There are many legitimate reasons for absence, however currently your child's attendance is below this level.

It is clear that children thrive when they have the stability of continuous uninterrupted attendance. Their results are at the optimum which gives them pride and self-esteem and their social development is better as they have more time to make friends and learn within the School environment.

I am therefore writing to you at this stage, to invite you to meet me so we can discuss how to help improve their attendance. I am available at the following times for a meeting at school:

[insert times]

Please let me know as soon as possible which time is most convenient for you.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Miss J Caplan

Head Teacher

APPENDIX D

Letter for half termly attendance above 90% but below 95%

Dear Mrs (insert Parent's name),

Re: (insert Child's name)

Attendance, to date, this academic year: _____%

I am writing to inform you that children's minimum expected level of attendance is 95% and we remind you that we expect your child to attend school every day. There are many legitimate reasons for absence, however currently your child's attendance is just below this level.

It is clear that children thrive when they have the stability of continuous uninterrupted attendance. Their results are at the optimum which gives them pride and self-esteem and their social development is better as they have more time to make friends and learn within the School environment.

I am therefore writing to you at this stage, informing you that we will be closely monitoring your child's attendance over this next half term.

If their attendance level remains low I will write to you again inviting you to meet me so we can discuss how to help improve their attendance.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Miss J Caplan

Head Teacher