The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior Schools

Attendance Policy

Review Cycle	Every 2 Years
Policy prepared by/Reviewed by	SLT
Committee responsible	FGB
Statutory/Discretionary/School	School
Date of latest FGB approval	**October 2026**
Date of next review by FGB	**October 2028**

Vision and Values

At The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior Schools, we believe that regular school attendance is essential for every child to achieve their full potential and be the best they can be. We value the attendance of every pupil and recognise that being in school regularly enables children to access their learning, develop positive relationships, participate fully in school life and benefit from the academic, social and emotional opportunities that education provides.

Our Federation is united by four key values that all children are encouraged to live by every day: **Ready, Respectful, Safe** and **Kind**. These values underpin our approach to attendance. We want our children to be Ready to learn and make the most of every opportunity, Respectful of themselves, others and their education, Safe within a welcoming and supportive school community, and Kind in the way they treat themselves and others.

We recognise that every child and family is unique and that there can be a wide range of reasons why a child may experience difficulties with attendance. Missing school can result in children falling behind with their learning and can affect their wellbeing, relationships, participation in wider school life and future opportunities. Poor attendance can also increase a child's vulnerability to wider safeguarding risks. We therefore believe that attendance is not simply about numbers or percentages; it is about ensuring that every child is able to access the education, relationships and opportunities to which they are entitled.

Our approach to attendance is **relational**, **supportive** and **collaborative**. We value open, honest and respectful communication with parents and carers and believe that strong relationships between home and school are fundamental to improving attendance. Where attendance becomes a concern, we will seek to understand the reasons behind this, listen to the child and their family, identify any barriers and work together to find appropriate and sustainable solutions. We are committed to acting early and providing support at the earliest opportunity, rather than waiting for attendance difficulties to become entrenched.

We recognise that attendance is the responsibility of our whole school community. All staff have an important role to play in promoting positive attendance, creating an environment where children feel a strong sense of belonging and responding appropriately when concerns arise. We will work in partnership with parents and carers, and where appropriate with external agencies and other professionals, to ensure that children and families have the support they need to attend school regularly.

Through this policy, we aim to:

- promote regular attendance and good punctuality so that every child can access their education and achieve their potential;
- recognise and celebrate good attendance and the positive contribution it makes to children's learning and wellbeing;
- develop strong, respectful and relational partnerships with parents and carers;
- identify and address barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity;
- provide a supportive and consistent approach to responding to absence and emerging patterns of attendance;
- ensure that every member of staff understands their role in promoting and supporting good attendance;
- provide appropriate support for children and families where attendance is a concern, including working with other agencies where necessary;

- ensure parents and carers understand their responsibilities in relation to school attendance and their child's entitlement to education;
- recognise the safeguarding implications of poor attendance and respond appropriately to concerns;
- ensure that attendance is considered as part of our wider commitment to safeguarding, inclusion, behaviour, wellbeing and children's learning.

Ultimately, our vision is that every child is in school, every day they are able to be, feeling safe, supported and ready to learn. By working together with children, parents and carers in a relationship based on trust, respect and shared responsibility, we aim to remove barriers to attendance and give every child the opportunity to thrive, achieve their potential and be the best they can be.

Legislation and Guidance

This Attendance Policy has been developed in accordance with the legal duties and statutory guidance relating to school attendance in England. It should be read alongside the federation's wider policies and procedures, particularly those relating to safeguarding, children missing education, behaviour, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and supporting pupils with medical conditions.

The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior schools will have regard to the following legislation, statutory guidance and relevant documents when implementing this policy:

- **Education Act 1996**, particularly Section 7, which places a legal duty on parents and carers to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either through regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- **Education Act 1996**, Sections 444 and 444A, which provide the legal framework for addressing a parent's failure to secure their child's regular attendance at school.
- **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**, which set out the legal requirements for admission and attendance registers, the recording of attendance and absence, and the circumstances in which pupils may be absent from school.
- **Working together to improve school attendance 2026**, the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance, which sets out the expectations and responsibilities of schools, governing bodies, academy trusts, Local Authorities, parents and carers in relation to school attendance.
- **National Framework for Penalty Notices**, as set out within the DfE's statutory attendance guidance, including the circumstances in which a penalty notice may be appropriate.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE),** which recognises attendance as an important safeguarding matter. Patterns of absence, unexplained absence or children missing from education may indicate that a pupil is experiencing safeguarding or welfare concerns.
- **Children Missing Education**, DfE statutory guidance, which sets out the responsibilities of schools and Local Authorities in identifying and responding to children who are not receiving suitable education.
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice**: 0 to 25 years, which informs the school's approach to identifying and addressing barriers to attendance for pupils with SEND.
- **Children Act 1989**, particularly in relation to parental responsibility and the responsibilities of those who have care of a child.

- **Relevant Local Authority** attendance policies, procedures and protocols, including arrangements for attendance support, penalty notices, legal intervention and children missing education.

Parental Responsibility

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a legal duty on parents to ensure that their child receives suitable education. For the purposes of education law, a "parent" includes:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child, as defined by the Children Act 1989, even if they are not the child's natural parent; and
- any person who has care of a child or young person.

Where more than one person has parental responsibility for a child, each person has a responsibility to support and promote the child's regular attendance at school.

A child becomes of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday and ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

School Responsibilities

The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior schools recognise that good attendance is essential to pupils' educational attainment, wellbeing, safeguarding and wider development. In accordance with the DfE's statutory guidance, the school will:

- promote good attendance and punctuality;
- monitor attendance regularly and identify emerging patterns of absence;
- identify and address barriers to regular attendance;
- provide appropriate support to pupils and parents and carers where attendance is a concern;
- take early action where attendance begins to decline;
- provide additional support for pupils experiencing persistent or severe absence;
- work collaboratively with parents, carers, the Local Authority and other relevant agencies where appropriate;
- consider safeguarding concerns where attendance patterns indicate that a child may be at risk;
- maintain accurate attendance and admission registers;
- use formal and legal intervention where appropriate and in accordance with statutory guidance and Local Authority procedures.

The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior schools will adopt a support-first and graduated approach wherever appropriate. However, where support is not appropriate, has not been successful, or has not been engaged with, the school may work with the Local Authority to consider formal attendance measures, including legal intervention, in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance.

Related School Policies and Documents

This Attendance Policy should be read in conjunction with the Federation's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;

- Behaviour Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Children Missing Education procedures;
- Equality and Inclusion policies;
- Educational Visits Policy, where relevant;
- Remote Education arrangements, where relevant.

The Federation will review this policy regularly to ensure that it remains consistent with current legislation, DfE statutory guidance and Local Authority requirements. Where legislation or statutory guidance is updated, the school will amend its attendance procedures and policy as necessary.

Roles and Responsibilities

At Netley Abbey Infant and Junior Schools, we believe that improving and maintaining good school attendance is **everyone's** responsibility. It is a shared commitment involving our governors, school leaders, all members of staff, parents and carers, pupils, the wider school community and our multi-agency partners.

We recognise that regular attendance is essential to children's learning, wellbeing, progress and success. We aim to work closely and positively in partnership with parents and carers, providing support and guidance where needed to help every child attend school regularly and make the most of their education.

Everyone within our school community has an important role to play in promoting good attendance and ensuring that children are supported to attend school every day, unless they are genuinely unable to do so.

Role	Name	Contact details
Attendance Leads	Mrs Rosie Earle (Federation Headteacher) Mr James Taylor (Head of School – Juniors) Mrs Vicki Holland (Head of School- Infants)	 juniors@netleyabbeyschools.co.uk infants@netleyabbeyschools.co.uk
Named Governor for Attendance	Stephan Whale (Co-opted Governor)	juniors@netleyabbeyschools.co.uk infants@netleyabbeyschools.co.uk

The Federation Governing Body

The Governing Body of The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior Schools recognises the importance of regular school attendance and promotes this through the Federation's ethos, policies and everyday practice.

The Governing Body will:

- Set high expectations for attendance among all leaders, staff, pupils and parents, recognising that regular attendance is essential to pupils' education, wellbeing and safeguarding.
- Identify a governor with specific responsibility for attendance and ensure that a named senior leader is responsible for leading on attendance across the Federation.
- Ensure that attendance is prioritised within wider Federation strategies, including those relating to attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), wellbeing and safeguarding.
- Ensure that school leaders fulfil their statutory duties and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of attendance procedures and support.
- Ensure that effective attendance systems and processes are in place and that appropriate staff time and resources are allocated to support pupils whose attendance requires improvement.
- Ensure that the Federation works effectively with the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team and other relevant local partners and services.
- Regularly review attendance data, challenge trends and support school leaders to focus improvement work on individual pupils and groups who require additional support.
- Ensure that high expectations for attendance are maintained for all pupils and that support is adapted to meet individual needs. This includes pupils with long-term health conditions, SEND, pupils with a social worker, children supported by the Virtual School and pupils from groups with historically lower attendance, including those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensure that staff receive appropriate attendance training and have opportunities to share and learn from effective practice.
- Ensure that staff understand the safeguarding risks associated with poor attendance and children missing education.
- Ensure that attendance information is shared with the Local Authority and the Department for Education in accordance with statutory requirements and reporting deadlines.
- Review the Federation's Attendance Policy at least every two years and ensure that sufficient resources are available to implement it effectively.
- Ensure that the Attendance Policy is published, regularly communicated and easily accessible to pupils, parents and staff.

The Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of regular school attendance to pupils and their parents and carers.
- Develop and maintain positive, respectful relationships with pupils and families.
- Ensure that a whole-school approach to attendance is embedded across both schools within the Federation.
- Promote high-quality teaching and learning experiences and a positive school culture that encourages pupils to attend regularly, engage in their learning and achieve their potential.
- Ensure that all teaching and non-teaching staff understand the importance of good attendance and the safeguarding risks associated with poor attendance.
- Ensure that staff communicate consistently with pupils and parents and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Maintain a clear Attendance Policy that is understood by staff, pupils and parents.

- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Attendance Policy and ensure that it is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that accurate and complete admission and attendance registers are maintained.
- Ensure that effective daily processes are in place to identify and follow up unexplained or unexplained/unresolved absence promptly.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils and groups who may require additional support.
- Put appropriate, timely and effective strategies in place to improve attendance.
- Work collaboratively with other schools, the Local Authority and relevant services when a pupil's absence is becoming persistent or severe.
- Ensure that a named Senior Attendance Lead has sufficient time, support and resources to carry out their role effectively.
- Attend termly attendance support meetings with the Local Authority, with particular focus on pupils experiencing severe absence, and ensure that individual support plans are regularly reviewed.

All Federation Staff

All staff have an important role in promoting regular attendance and supporting pupils and families.

All staff will:

- Promote the importance and value of regular school attendance.
- Develop positive and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole-school approach that promotes good attendance and supports pupils to engage positively with school.
- Provide high-quality teaching and learning experiences that encourage pupils to attend and achieve.
- Understand the importance of good attendance and the safeguarding risks associated with poor attendance.
- Communicate consistently and positively with pupils and parents about attendance.
- Complete any attendance-related training and professional development required for their role.
- Follow the Federation's attendance procedures consistently.

The Senior Attendance Leads

The Attendance Leads will work closely with pupils, parents and staff to promote regular attendance and identify and address barriers to attendance.

This may include:

- Monitoring individual and whole-school attendance.
- Identifying pupils whose attendance is causing concern at an early stage.
- Working with pupils and families to understand barriers to attendance.
- Developing appropriate attendance support and improvement plans.
- Maintaining regular communication with families.
- Working with school staff and external agencies where additional support is required.
- Seeking appropriate multi-agency support where attendance difficulties are linked to wider family, health, safeguarding or wellbeing needs.

- Working with the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team when appropriate.

Parents and Carers

The Federation recognises that parents and carers play a vital role in supporting good attendance. Parents and carers are expected to:

- Take a positive interest in their child's education, learning and progress.
- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time.
- Promote the value of education and regular school attendance at home.
- Contact the school promptly when their child is absent, explaining the reason for the absence and, where possible, the expected date of return.
- Provide any further information requested by the school regarding an absence.
- Avoid unnecessary absence, including arranging medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible.
- Speak to the school if their child is experiencing difficulties with school, learning, friendships, home or family circumstances that may affect attendance.
- Inform the school promptly of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance or wellbeing.
- Support their child's education and maintain a positive and constructive relationship with the school.
- Establish and maintain effective routines at home that support good attendance and punctuality.
- Attend meetings requested by the school to discuss attendance concerns and work collaboratively with staff to improve attendance where necessary.

Further information for parents and carers can be found through Hampshire County Council's guidance on school attendance. https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents

Pupils

Pupils are expected to take responsibility for attending school regularly and making the most of their education.

Pupils will:

- Understand the Federation's expectations for attendance and know when and where they are required to attend.
- Listen to and follow the attendance guidance provided by school staff and their parents or carers.
- Speak to their class teacher or another trusted member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home that may affect their attendance.
- Attend lessons regularly, on time and ready to learn.
- Bring the equipment and resources they need for learning.
- Follow the Federation's procedures if they arrive late to school.
- Understand that following the school's registration procedures helps staff to maintain accurate attendance records and is important for everyone's safety, including during an emergency evacuation.

Working Together to Improve Attendance

At The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior Schools, improving attendance is a shared responsibility.

Everyone has a role to play: governors provide strategic oversight; leaders establish effective systems; staff promote a positive attendance culture; pupils engage with their education; and parents and carers support regular attendance at home.

Where attendance becomes a concern, the Federation will work positively and supportively with pupils and families to understand the reasons for absence, identify barriers and put appropriate support in place. Where necessary, the Federation will work with the Local Authority and other relevant services to ensure that pupils receive the support they need to attend school regularly and safely.

Absence and Attendance

When completing our attendance registers, we will use the national attendance codes set out in Department for Education guidance to ensure that attendance and absence are recorded accurately and reported consistently. A full list and explanation of these codes can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy.

Where emotional wellbeing, anxiety or mental health difficulties impact attendance, the Federation will work in partnership with families and relevant professionals to identify appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

At The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior Schools, we believe that regular school attendance is essential for children to achieve their best, make good progress and enjoy positive relationships and experiences at school.

The Department for Education (DfE) states that schools should only grant leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. A family holiday or other absence for leisure or recreation is not normally considered an exceptional circumstance.

For this reason, holiday requests during term time will not normally be authorised.

If you believe there are exceptional circumstances that require your child to be absent from school during term time, you must complete a Leave of Absence Request Form and submit it to the Head of School at least one month before the proposed absence. An example of the Leave of Absence Form is available in Appendix 3 of this policy.

Each request will be considered individually by the Head of School. The decision will consider the circumstances of the request, the amount of time requested and your child's attendance record. The Head of School decision will be confirmed to you in writing. Please do not make travel arrangements before receiving a decision from the school.

If your child is absent without the school's agreement, the absence will normally be recorded as unauthorised. Where appropriate, the school may request that the Local Authority issues a penalty notice or may refer the matter to the Local Authority for consideration of prosecution.

If leave has been authorised, your child must return to school on the agreed date. If they do not return and we are unable to contact you, we may refer the matter to the Local Authority. This could result in Children Missing Education procedures being followed.

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually. At The Federation of Netley Abbey Infant and Junior Schools, we work with families to support good attendance and will provide appropriate support where attendance is a concern. Where unauthorised absence continues, formal action may be taken.

Before requesting a Penalty Notice, the school and Local Authority may issue a Notice to Improve. This will set out attendance concerns, support offered, expected improvements and the review period.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that may be issued as an alternative to prosecution where a pupil has failed to attend school regularly. In Hampshire, a Penalty Notice may be considered where a pupil has 10 or more half-day sessions (equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period, or where a parent/carer is deliberately avoiding the national attendance threshold.

A first Penalty Notice is £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Where a Penalty Notice has previously been issued to the same parent/carer for the same child within the preceding three years, a second Penalty Notice may be issued at £160, with no reduced-rate option.

Where there is an ongoing pattern of unauthorised absence, parents/carers will normally receive a written warning or Notice to Improve, setting out the concerns and the improvement required. However, a Penalty Notice may be issued without further warning where appropriate. If a child has further unauthorised absence following two Penalty Notices within a rolling three-year period, further legal action may be considered by Hampshire County Council. This may include prosecution or an Education Supervision Order.

A Penalty Notice may be issued to a person with parental responsibility for, or who has day-to-day care of, the child. There is no statutory right of appeal against a Penalty Notice. It may only be withdrawn where it was issued in error or should not have been issued. The Federation will continue to work in partnership with families and Hampshire County Council to promote regular attendance and address barriers to attendance wherever possible. More information for parents about attendance and penalty notices can be found on the Hampshire Guidance for Parents/Carers website.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Wherever possible, medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours. If an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, please inform the school in advance and provide details of the appointment. Children should be absent from school for the shortest possible time. A child should not normally need to miss a full school day for an appointment. When collecting your child for an appointment, you must report to the school office. Children will not be allowed to leave the school premises without confirmation from a parent or authorised adult.

Illness

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, please inform the school as soon as possible and follow the school's usual absence reporting procedure. We understand that children will occasionally be ill and need to stay at home. However, where we have concerns about the reason for an absence or notice a pattern of absence, we will speak with you to understand the circumstances and offer

appropriate support. In some circumstances, the school will ask for appropriate medical evidence to support an absence. This could include an appointment card, prescription or other relevant evidence.

Where a pupil has a long-term or chronic medical condition, we will work closely with parents/carers and, where appropriate, healthcare professionals to support the child's health, wellbeing and education. We will make reasonable adjustments and put appropriate support in place to help the pupil access school and their learning as fully as possible. This will be in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school. Where appropriate, we will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to develop an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP). This will set out the support the child needs in school and how their medical condition will be managed safely. If a pupil is unable to attend school, or can only attend intermittently, because of their medical needs, we will work with the family and relevant services to help ensure that they continue to receive an appropriate education.

Our aim is to ensure that a pupil's medical needs do not prevent them from accessing education and being included in school life wherever possible.

Religious Observance

We recognise and respect the religious beliefs of all our families. Where a recognised religious festival or day of religious observance falls during term time, parents/carers may request leave of absence. Requests should be made in advance using the school's Leave of Absence Request Form. The Head of School will consider the request in line with current Department for Education guidance.

Parents/Carers Who Travel for Work

Where a parent/carer's employment or business requires them to travel and their child travels with them, please speak to the school as soon as possible.

Parents/carers should:

- inform the school of their travel arrangements as soon as they are known;
- provide the dates and expected duration of the travel; and
- keep the school informed of the child's expected return date.

We will work with families to ensure that the child's education and attendance are supported wherever possible.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence will only be authorised where the reason meets the requirements of the Department for Education's attendance guidance. The Head of School is responsible for deciding whether an absence can be authorised.

The following are examples of reasons that would not normally be authorised:

- birthdays
- family holidays
- shopping for school uniform or other items
- haircuts or other routine personal appointments
- a sibling's school being closed for an INSET day

- staying at home because a child does not want to attend school
- keeping a child at home when they are well enough to attend
- absence taken without the school's agreement, or
- family or childcare arrangements that could reasonably be made without the child missing school.

Where the school has been unable to establish the whereabouts of a pupil despite reasonable enquiries, Children Missing Education procedures will be followed and the Local Authority informed in accordance with statutory guidance.

Our Approach to Attendance

We recognise that there may be genuine reasons why a child or young person may struggle to attend school regularly. In line with our relational, support-first approach, we will always seek to understand the reasons behind absence and work collaboratively with children, young people and their families to identify and overcome any barriers to attendance. Our approach will be supportive, respectful and focused on building positive relationships and finding solutions. Where we have concerns about a child's attendance, we will contact the family to understand the circumstances, discuss any barriers and, where appropriate, agree supportive steps to help improve attendance. Our Support-First Approach, which underpins how we work with children, young people and families, can be found in the Appendix 2.

School Procedures

The school day runs from 8:50am until 3:15pm at the Infant School and 8:50am until 3:20pm at the Junior School. However, all children may enter the school premises from 8:40am.

Infant School

- Reception: 8:50am–3:10pm
- Years 1 and 2: 8:50am–3:15pm

Junior School

- All year groups: 8:50am–3:20pm

Registration

By law, the school register must be taken twice each school day.

Registration takes place:

Infant School

Morning: 8:50am

Afternoon: 1:00pm

Junior School

Morning: 8:50am

Afternoon: 1:00pm

Parents and carers are asked to ensure that children arrive at school before 8:50am, allowing them sufficient time to settle into their classrooms and be ready to learn when the school day begins.

As part of our support-first and inclusive approach to attendance, we recognise that some children may, at times, require additional support with their arrival or departure from school. Where appropriate, a soft start or soft finish may be considered as a supportive intervention to help a child successfully access and engage with school. Any soft start or soft finish arrangement will be considered on an individual basis and agreed with the Federation Headteacher, Federation Inclusion Lead or Head of School. Such arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to meet the child's needs and support their successful attendance and participation in school.

The Federation will maintain admission and attendance registers in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Registers will be completed electronically and all amendments will be recorded with the date, time and person making the amendment. Registers will be retained in accordance with statutory requirements. The Federation will only remove pupils from the admission register in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and will notify the Local Authority when required.

Lateness and Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time and be ready to begin learning at the start of the school day. A pupil who arrives between 8:51am and 9:20am will be recorded as late, using the appropriate attendance code.

The morning register will close at 9:20am. Any pupil arriving after the register has closed will be recorded as an unauthorised late, using the appropriate attendance code. This will be recorded as an absence for attendance data purposes.

Where a pupil is persistently late, the school may take further action, which could include the issuing of a Penalty Notice, in accordance with current attendance regulations.

Punctuality at the End of the School Day

Children should be collected promptly at the end of the school day.

Infant School:

- Reception: 3:10pm
- Years 1 and 2: 3:15pm

Junior School:

- All year groups: 3:20pm

Where a child is collected late on a persistent basis and/or is collected significantly late, the school will keep an ongoing record of late collections. If late collection becomes persistent or there are significant concerns about the arrangements for collecting a child, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and may contact Children's Services where appropriate.

Following Up Absence

A pupil who misses 10% or more of their schooling over the school year, for any reason, is classified as a persistent absentee. The school will follow up all unexplained or concerning absences to:

- establish the reason for the absence
- ensure that appropriate safeguarding procedures are followed where necessary
- determine whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised

- ensure that the correct attendance code is recorded.

Where a reason for absence has not been provided, the school will contact the parent or carer and request an explanation. Parents and carers will be given five school days to provide a reason for the absence. If no explanation is received within this timeframe, the school may record the absence as unauthorised.

Expected Absence Procedure for Parents and Carers

At Netley Abbey Infant and Junior School, we believe that regular school attendance is essential to support every child's learning, wellbeing and development. Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time.

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or another unavoidable reason, parents/carers should:

- Contact the school by telephone on the first morning of absence, before the start of the school day.
- Provide the reason for the absence.
- Let us know, where possible, the expected date of your child's return.
- Continue to contact the school each day that your child remains absent, unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed with the school.

If we do not receive a reason for your child's absence, the school will follow its absence procedures to establish their whereabouts and ensure their safety.

What happens if your child is absent without a reason?

If your child is not in school after the register closes at 9.05am and we have not received a reason for their absence:

- First-day contact – The school will contact parents/carers to establish the reason for the absence.
- Further contact – If we are unable to make contact, we may make a further telephone call later that morning.
- Emergency contact – If we are still unable to contact a parent/carer, we may contact the child's named emergency contact.
- Home visit – Where appropriate, the school may arrange a home visit if we are unable to establish the reason for the absence or confirm the child's safety. If a child has been absent for 3 consecutive days (even if we have a reason) welfare calls may be made as part of our safeguarding duty.
- Unauthorised absence – If no contact can be made and no satisfactory reason for the absence is provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

If a pupil leaves the school premises without permission, the school will contact their parent/carer. Where appropriate, the school may also contact the police on 999 or 101.

Supporting improved attendance

Where there are ongoing concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality, the school may take further action. This could include:

- Contacting parents/carers to discuss attendance or punctuality concerns.

- Inviting parents/carers to meet with school staff to discuss any barriers to attendance and identify ways in which the school can support the family.
- Writing to parents/carers to highlight concerns and explain the importance of regular attendance.
- Working with the Inclusion Support Service (ISS) for advice, guidance and support.
- Making a referral to the Local Authority where appropriate, so that further enquiries can be made to establish the whereabouts of a child.
- Considering a penalty notice or prosecution where appropriate, particularly where other supportive interventions have not resulted in improved attendance or where an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken.
- Referring to appropriate external agencies for multi-agency support, which may include a Family Support Plan, Children's Social Care or the police where there are safeguarding concerns.

Our approach is to work supportively and collaboratively with families to remove barriers to good attendance wherever possible. However, where attendance concerns remain unresolved, the school and Local Authority may need to take further action in line with statutory requirements.

For further information and guidance, parents/carers can visit the Hampshire County Council resources relating to attendance and inclusion support.

Promoting Positive Attendance

At our school, we believe that every day in school matters. We want all children to enjoy coming to school, feel valued and understand that we love having them in school every day. Our staff actively praise and encourage children for their positive attendance and remind them of the importance of being in school regularly.

Each week, during our Values and Attendance Assembly, the class with the highest weekly attendance is recognised and celebrated. This provides an opportunity to acknowledge the collective efforts of each class and celebrate their success together. At the end of each term, children with strong attendance are recognised for their commitment to attending school regularly. Throughout the year, opportunities are provided to celebrate and encourage excellent attendance, helping to promote a positive culture where attendance is valued.

We also provide additional encouragement and support for children whose attendance is below 90% and who are identified as Persistently Absent (PA). These children may be supported through individual attendance targets, personalised encouragement and recognition of improvements in attendance. Our approach focuses on helping children achieve realistic goals and celebrating the positive steps they take towards improved attendance.

Alongside celebrating positive attendance, we closely monitor attendance and work proactively with families where concerns arise. Our aim is to identify and address barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity and work collaboratively with children and families to support improved and sustained attendance. Where attendance concerns continue, appropriate support and interventions will be put in place in line with our school's attendance procedures and local authority guidance.

Monitoring Attendance

The Attendance Leads will:

- Monitor and analyse attendance patterns and trends on a daily and weekly basis, acting promptly where concerns are identified.
- Analyse attendance data beyond whole-school percentages by disaggregating data for all significant pupil groups, as well as individual pupils, classes, year groups and cohorts. This will include analysis of attendance, absence, lateness and punctuality. Attendance data and key findings will be shared regularly with staff and Governors to support monitoring, accountability and the identification of areas requiring further action.
- Provide regular attendance information to class teachers and school leaders to support conversations with pupils and families and to inform appropriate interventions.
- Work closely with relevant staff, including the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Pupil Premium Lead, where appropriate, to ensure attendance concerns are considered alongside the wider needs of the child.
- Undertake regular individual-level analysis to identify pupils who require additional support and ensure that staff efforts are focused on appropriate, targeted actions.
- Develop specific strategies and interventions to address areas of concern identified through attendance analysis.
- Monitor the impact of whole-school attendance initiatives and individual interventions to assess their effectiveness and inform future practice.
- Provide appropriate attendance data and reports to the Governing Body/Board and the Local Authority when required.

Persistent and Severe Absence

At Netley Abbey Infant and Junior School, we will not wait until a pupil's attendance has fallen below 90% before taking action. We will identify pupils who are at risk of becoming persistently absent and provide timely support.

For the purposes of this policy:

- Persistent Absence (PA) is defined as a pupil missing 10% or more of their schooling across the year, for any reason.
- Severe Absence (SA) is defined as a pupil missing 50% or more of their schooling across the year, for any reason.

Attendance will be monitored regularly so that pupils who are persistently absent, severely absent, or at risk of reaching these thresholds can be identified at an early stage.

Where emerging concerns are identified, the school will implement appropriate and proportionate support and intervention.

Support Systems

At Netley Abbey Infant and Junior School, we recognise that poor attendance can sometimes be an indication of difficulties or challenges within a child's life. These may relate to circumstances at home, difficulties in school, health concerns or other factors affecting the child or family.

Parents and carers are encouraged to speak to the school at the earliest opportunity if there are difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance, punctuality, wellbeing or behaviour. This may include circumstances such as:

- bereavement;
- family separation or divorce;
- changes in family circumstances;
- emerging physical or mental health concerns;
- difficulties with friendships or relationships;
- anxiety or concerns about attending school;
- additional needs or barriers affecting attendance.

Sharing this information with school will help us to understand the circumstances affecting the child and identify any additional support that may be required. We recognise that some pupils may require additional support to achieve and maintain good attendance. The school will therefore use a child-centred and individualised approach, taking account of the pupil's needs and circumstances.

Where attendance concerns arise, we will work in partnership with pupils and their parents or carers to understand the barriers to attendance and identify appropriate support. Where appropriate, parents/carers and pupils will be invited to a meeting to discuss concerns, identify barriers and agree an attendance support plan.

Any support offered will be:

- focused on the individual needs of the child;
- developed in partnership with the pupil and their parents/carers;
- proportionate to the level and nature of concern;
- reviewed regularly to assess progress and effectiveness.

Where appropriate, the school may work with external agencies to provide additional support.

Persistent Absence, Severe Absence and Legal Intervention

A pupil is considered to be a Persistent Absentee (PA) when their attendance is below the persistent absence threshold of 90% or less, meaning they have missed 10% or more of their schooling across the year for any reason.

Over a full academic year of 190 school days, this equates to approximately 19 days or 38 sessions of absence. A pupil is considered to be a Severe Absentee (SA) when they have missed 50% or more of their schooling across the year. Over a full academic year of 190 school days, this equates to 95 days or 190 sessions of absence. Absence at these levels can have a significant impact on a child's education, progress, attainment, wellbeing and wider development. For this reason, attendance will be monitored closely, and action will be taken at an early stage where a pupil's attendance is declining.

The attendance of all pupils will be monitored to identify:

- pupils who are persistently absent;
- pupils who are severely absent;
- pupils whose attendance is declining;
- pupils who are at risk of becoming persistently absent;
- patterns of poor attendance or punctuality.

Where concerns are identified, the school will seek to understand the reasons for absence and put appropriate support and intervention in place. Where appropriate, referrals may be made to external agencies for targeted support, including the Inclusion Support Service (ISS) at Hampshire

County Council. If parents/carers do not engage with the support offered and their child's attendance and/or punctuality continues to be unsatisfactory, the school may refer the matter to the Local Authority for consideration of further action. This may include the use of a Penalty Notice, consideration of an Education Supervision Order, or prosecution through the Magistrates' Court, where the legal criteria are met.

Parents/carers should be aware that failure to secure their child's regular attendance at school may constitute an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Where a parent/carer is found guilty of an offence under Section 444(1), they may receive a fine of up to £1,000. A more serious offence under Section 444(1A) may result in a fine of up to £2,500, and/or a custodial sentence of up to three months. Any legal intervention will be undertaken in accordance with current legislation, Department for Education guidance and Hampshire County Council procedures.

In line with Hampshire County Council guidance, Netley Abbey Infant and Junior School will notify the Inclusion Support Service of any reduced timetable as soon as a reduced timetable plan has been agreed.

Appendices

The following pages contain appendices relevant to this policy.

Appendix 1 School Attendance Codes

The following attendance codes are taken from the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance.

Present and Approved Educational Activity

Code	Definition	Scenario
****	Present (AM)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (PM)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before the register closes
B	Off-site educational activity approved by the school	Examples include attending a taster day, an educational course, or alternative provision approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil attends another setting where they are also registered
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority	Examples include alternative provision or home tuition arranged through the Local Authority
P	Sporting activity	Approved sporting activity supervised or authorised by the school
V	Educational visit or trip	Educational visit or trip arranged and supervised by school staff
W	Work experience	Approved work experience placement arranged through the school or Local Authority

Absent: Leave of Absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	Authorised by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances only
C1	Regulated performance or employment abroad	Approved performance, modelling, television, film or employment activities
C2	Part-time timetable	Temporary part-time timetable agreed in the pupil's best interests
E	Excluded	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision available
I	Illness	Physical or mental health-related illness
J1	Interview	Attendance at an interview for employment or another educational setting
M	Medical or dental appointment	Attendance at an appointment
R	Religious observance	Recognised religious observance
S	Study leave	Studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Child travelling with parent engaged in a travelling occupation
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend	Used for pupils who are not yet of compulsory school age

Absent: Unable to Attend Due to Unavoidable Cause

Code	Definition	Scenario

Q	Lack of access arrangements	Transport or access arrangements unavailable
Y1	Transport normally provided unavailable	School or LA transport unavailable
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Significant transport disruption
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Closure affecting attendance
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	For example, severe weather or emergency closure
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil detained within the criminal justice system
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Attendance prevented by public health restrictions or legal requirements
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Emergency circumstance preventing attendance

Unauthorised Absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
G	Unauthorised holiday	Holiday not authorised by the school
N	Reason not yet established	Awaiting reason for absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No satisfactory reason provided
U	Arrived after register closed	Pupil arrives after the register has closed

Administrative Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Used before admission commences
#	Planned whole school closure	School holiday, INSET day, bank holiday or polling station closure

Appendix 2 Support for Attendance

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, statutory guidance)

'Support first, stepped and increasingly intensive approach'

A graduated response to attendance begins with universal strategies such as promoting a positive school culture and monitoring attendance, before moving to early intervention through parental engagement. Where absence persists, NAIJS will implement targeted support plans and involve external agencies, with legal intervention used only as a final step when voluntary support has not been successful.

Stage 1: Universal (for all pupils) Aim: To promote attendance and prevent attendance issues	✓ Clear attendance policy shared with all parents ✓ Daily register and first-day absence contact ✓ Weekly Values and Attendance assemblies where we share class winners for each year group (10 mins extra play). Children with attendance about 95% also entered into draw to win token for attendance shop. ✓ Award for above 96.0 % + attendance in a term ✓ Award for 96.0% + for whole year ✓ Strong school culture linked to our vision of Excellence Every Day. Child feel valued and safe in school.
Stage 2: Early / Emerging Concerns (at risk of persistent absence) (attendance drops below 95%) Aim: To identify and address barriers to attendance	✓ Text messages sent to parents (DfE guidance) invite to make appointment to discuss barriers e.g. sleep, anxiety, routines, transport. Wake and Shake may be offered. ✓ Offer Early Help support ✓ Monitor attendance weekly ✓ Award for improved attendance (if appropriate)
Stage 3: Targeted Support (persistent absence = below 90%) Aim: Provide structured, personalised intervention	✓ Telephone calls and face to face meetings to discuss barriers and patterns ✓ Targeted support based on need mentoring, pastoral or SEND support, adjusted timetable (short-term, where appropriate). ✓ Involve external services if needed (early help, health) ✓ Make parents/carers aware that attendance will not be authorised below 85% unless circumstances are exceptional
Stage 4: Intensive / Multi-agency Support (severe absence) Aim: Address complex and entrenched barriers	✓ Regular face to face / virtual meetings ✓ Multi-agency meetings (school, LA, health, social care) ✓ Early Help or Child in Need plans
Stage 5: Formal / Legal Intervention (last resort) Aim: Enforce attendance if support has failed	✓ Support has not worked or is not engaged with ✓ Absence is unauthorised and ongoing ✓ Notice to improve issued ✓ Penalty notice (fine) ✓ Prosecution (rare, last step)

Federation of Netley Abbey Schools
Support first approach to attendance

Attendance Target: 96%

We recognise that children in both infant and junior school are continuing to develop routines and establish positive habits for learning. Our approach is to work closely in partnership with families, offering timely support and reassurance while promoting strong attendance habits throughout their education journey.

Stage 1: Everyday Attendance	Stage 2: Below 95%	Stage 3: At Risk of Persistent Absence (below 93%)	Stage 4: PA Below 90%
At our school, everyone belongs. We: Provide a warm, welcoming environment where children feel safe and valued. Promote a culture of belonging and high expectations. Recognise and celebrate good attendance. Monitor attendance of all children daily, weekly and termly to identify any early concerns	We will: Contact parents to discuss attendance and offer support. This will be done via text message or telephone call. Share regular attendance updates Send an Early Support letter where appropriate Work with families to understand and address any barriers	We will: Speak directly with parents through meetings or phone calls. Explore the impact of absence on learning and wellbeing. Identify barriers and agree strategies to improve attendance. Offer early help support where appropriate through school nursing, children's services or other external agencies. Develop an 'Attendance Support Plan' in partnership with parents.	We will: Arrange a formal meeting with a senior attendance leader (HoS). Work with families to create a structured plan for improvement. Involve external agencies where appropriate. Continue to provide support while clearly setting expectations. **Stage 5: Review and Monitoring** Regular review meetings will be held to monitor progress. If attendance improves, support is gradually reduced while monitoring continues.

			If attendance does not improve: Support plans will be strengthened. Additional services may be involved. Further action may be considered.
			Stage 6: Formal Action (Last Resort) If all support has been offered and not engaged with or has not been effective: A formal referral may be made to the Local Authority and may include: - Attendance contracts - Notices to Improve - Penalty notices or legal action

*If a child has been absent for 3 consecutive days, a home visit will be conducted as part of our statutory safeguarding duties.

Appendix 3- Example leave of absence request form

Request to authorise absence from school due to exceptional circumstances

Federation of Netley Abbey Infants and Junior School

Leave of Absence Request Form – Exceptional Circumstances Only

Under Government guidelines, schools may only authorise absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. Holidays and financial reasons are not considered exceptional and will be unauthorised. The Local Authority may issue Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences.
If you remove your child for an unauthorised period and it is the belief of the school and Local Auhtority that you have done this in any way as to avoid being issued a Penalty Notice, the Local Authority reserves the right to authorize the issuing of a Penalty Notice before the national threshold is met.

Penalty Notice Structure (Rolling 3-Year Period)

1st Offence: £160 per child, per parent (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days)

2nd Offence: £160 per child, per parent
3rd Offence: No further notices; case referred to Magistrates Court. Fine up to £2500 per child, per parent and possible conviction.

Section A – Child Details

Child's Full Name: _____ Class: _____

Year Group: _____

Dates of Absence: From _____ to _____

Total Number of School Days: _____

Sibling's Name: _____ School: _____

Year Group: _____

We may contact other schools to verify leave requests.

If you are requesting leave for more than two children, please complete an additional form.

Section B – Exceptional Circumstances Explanation

Headteachers are only permitted to authorise absences in *exceptional circumstances*.
Each request is considered individually against strict criteria set by the Department for Education.
Exceptional circumstances are typically rare, significant and unavoidable events that are outside of a family's control.
Please explain why you are requesting leave during term time and why this cannot be scheduled during the 13 weeks of school holidays. Include details of any specific event, travel arrangements, and why this qualifies as exceptional:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered and this form is returned to you.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Section D – Parent/Carer Details

Warning: Unauthorised absence may result in a Penalty Notice or prosecution if prior notices have been issued.

Name of Parent Applying: _____

Does your child reside with you? Yes / No

If yes, what % of time? _____

Name of Other Parent with Parental Responsibility: _____

Have you informed the other parent? Yes / No

(They are also liable for any fines/legal action.)

I understand that a Penalty Notice may be issued per parent, per child.

If applying for two children, this may result in four notices.

Date Submitted: _____

Signature of Parent/Carer: _____

Section E – School Use Only

☐ Request Approved for ___ days (from _____ to _____)

☐ Personal discussion requested. Please contact: _____

☐ Request Not Approved – Circumstances not deemed exceptional or educational impact too great.

PLEASE NOTE: This leave of absence form serves as a Warning to parent/carer. Any unauthorized absence during this period may be subject to a Penalty Notice OR may result in a prosecution if two previous penalty notices have been issed in a rolling three- year period

Headteacher Signature: _____

Date: _____

Current Attendance Rate: _____