

# NEW MILLS SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM



## ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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Signed: .....M Cole..... Date: .....6/4/2017....  
Chair of Governors

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## Our Vision

We aim to empower everyone to be the best that they can be, optimising their future success, well-being and contribution to society. Engagement with our community is at the heart of all that we do, responding to the needs and aspirations of all our stakeholders to create a friendly and inclusive school community that is rich in variety and diversity.

## Our Aims

At New Mills School we work with all our students to enable them to :

- Achieve the highest personal academic standards and progress in all areas of the curriculum.
- Develop outstanding levels of literacy and numeracy.
- Develop high self-esteem and aspirations.
- Respect members of their community and their environment.
- Celebrate diversity.
- Extend themselves academically, physically, spiritually and morally.
- Become life-long learners, flexible and adaptable for the modern world.
- Work both collaboratively and independently as appropriate.
- Acquire employability skills for economic wellbeing.

## Our Values

Our values are based on the school motto 'Let Right be Done'

Respect

Integrity

Generosity

Honesty

Tolerance

## 1. Purpose of Policy

New Mills School believes that a student's good attendance and punctuality is vital if they are to gain the most from the education we provide. We believe that to be successful, all learners require the highest level of access, attendance and engagement and we will work closely with all agencies in order to achieve this. The School aims to achieve an attendance target of 97% annually.

The purpose of this policy is to define the ways in which all stakeholders at New Mills School will work in order to ensure the best possible levels of attendance and punctuality for our students.

### Statutory Duties

The School will work closely with the Education Welfare Service (EWS) in order to fulfil the statutory requirement outlined in the 1996 Education Act that:

*'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable to a) his/her age, ability and aptitude; and b) to any special educational needs she/he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'*

The Local Authority has powers to fine and prosecute parents for the non-attendance of their child at school.

### Objectives

- To work in partnership with all agencies, including the EWS, Multi Agency Team to help support families where attendance at school falls below the threshold of referral (91%).
- To achieve whole-school attendance figures of at least 97%.
- To reduce the number of persistent absentees to below National average.

## 2. Definitions

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Term	Definition
Persistent Absence	A child who has been absent for 10% or more of the sessions he/she has been eligible to attend.
Fixed Penalty Notice	A fine issued to parents who: fails to ensure the regular attendance of their child (including term time holidays) of compulsory school age (5-16) who is registered at a state school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not found in a public place during schools hours without a justifiable reason From September 2013, this fine is £60 if paid within 21 days of issue or £120 if paid after 21 days but before 28 days.
Session	There are two "sessions" in a school day. An AM session and a PM session.
EWS	Education Welfare Service
MAT	Multi Agency Team
SSM	Student Support Manager

## 3 Policy Content and Guidelines

### 3.1 Standard Operating Procedures

#### Registration

Morning registration takes place promptly at 8:45 am in Forms and is updated with late comers.

Registers are taken throughout the day at the start of each lesson. Teachers are expected to complete these within the first ten minutes of the lesson.

Registers taken at the start of period 4 inform afternoon session registration.

## **Absence**

We expect and encourage all students at New Mills School to strive for 100% attendance, but as a minimum we expect 97%.

We expect students to be absent only when entirely necessary, because of illness or other authorised circumstance. As a diverse school community we will always respect a student's right to religious observation and will authorise any relative absences accordingly.

The school operates a first day response system to absence.

We expect parents to adhere to the following protocol if their child is absent:

- Assess whether the child is definitely required to be absent from school or whether or not they could be sent in.
- Contact school before 9:00 am on the first day of absence to inform the school why their child is absent.
- Parents should then contact school on every day of subsequent absence.
- If the child is absent through serious illness, they should seek medical advice/help for the child.
- If the child is able to come in later in the day, they should.

We expect students to adhere to the following protocol if they are going to be absent:

- Assess whether they are definitely required to be absent from school or whether or not they could come in.
- Catch up on any work missed from school.

As a school, if a child is absent, we will:

- Send a text message via sims (automated response system) before 10 am to all parents of absent students, who have not yet contacted school.
- Ring all parents of absent students, who have not contacted school before 10 am or as a result of receiving the text message.
- Send a text or letter to all parents of absent students who we have been unable to contact during the school day.

At the end of the school day parents who have not contacted the school to report an absence will receive a text message advising them the absence has been unauthorised and urging them to contact school.

## **Punctuality**

We expect and encourage all students at New Mills School to attend school on time, every day.

Students who arrive after 8:45 am should report to their form tutor where staff will mark them as late (L). Students will receive a 30 minutes after school detention the same day.

Students who arrive after 9:15 am should report to reception where staff will mark them as late. Students who arrive after 9:15 am do not get an AM mark and are considered to have had an unauthorised absence. On arrival, students should proceed to lessons.

Any student who arrives late (after 8:45 am) will receive a same day 30 minute detention after school.

If there is a legitimate reason for lateness, i.e. doctors appointment etc., parents should notify the school before 9:00 am that their child will be late for this reason and on arrival at school should show their appointment card/letter at reception. They will not be marked as late but will be given an authorised absence for medical reasons (M).

Persistently late students may also be placed on punctuality report to their form tutor.

### **Medical Appointments**

We expect all medical appointments to be arranged for after school or in the holidays. Many surgeries will gladly provide appointments to students studying for their GCSEs outside of school hours.

Students who have appointments made for school time should attend school before and after the appointment. This will enable them, in most cases, to still get their AM and/or PM registration marks. They should sign out of and back into school at reception.

Parents should inform the school of any appointments and are expected to provide evidence for the appointment (card, letter, etc.) before the school authorises the absence.

### **Leave of absence during term time**

The Department of Education states (September 2013) that: "The Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted." At New Mills School, we will not authorise any absence in term time unless in exceptional circumstances.

Parents wishing to take their child/children out of school during term time should put this in writing to the Head Teacher, detailing:

The child's name and Form.

How long the parent intends to keep the student absent from school for.

The exceptional circumstances that makes it necessary for the student to be absent during school time.

Once the Head Teacher has received the letter of application she will decide whether or not to authorise the absence and will then notify the parent in writing. Parents/carers can expect a written response within 5 working days.

Parents who then decide to take their child out of school during term time, without the Head Teacher's permission or when the Head Teacher has not authorised the absence, are likely to be issued with a Penalty Notice. Section 444(a) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices to parents/carers if they take a leave of absence in term time without the school's authorisation.

### **Leaving school during the school day**

Students wishing to leave school during the school day should approach a Year Manager who will make a decision for the best course of action. This should only be at break or lunchtime, unless sent from their lessons by a member of staff. Students should not make their own arrangements with parents to leave school. Students will only be allowed to leave school if they are ill or for other authorised circumstances. No child will be allowed to leave school without the express permission of their parent or carer.

Students are not allowed to go home at lunchtime unless with the expressed permission of the Headteacher.

Students have to leave the school site following a fixed term exclusion (E). Students will only be allowed off site once contact with a parent/carer has been made.

### **Truancy**

Teachers take registers at the start of every lesson to determine lesson by lesson attendance. Staff will notify the Student Support Manager immediately if a child who should be attending that lesson, does not. The Student Support Manager will put a call out to 'on call' to see if that child is elsewhere in school. If the child cannot be located, the Student Support Manager or Year Manager will contact that child's parent or carer to notify them that their child is no longer on school premises. If the child has social care involvement, they will also be notified. The school will advise the parent/carer to contact the police to report the child as missing if appropriate.

Students will be recorded as Truanting on the SIMs behaviour system and will be expected to spend the rest of the day/following day in seclusion.

### **Authorising absences**

The Board of Governors delegates authority to a member, or members, of staff who may 'authorise' absences on their behalf. It is the school and not the parent/carer who authorise absences. The members of staff who have this delegated responsibility is the Student Support Manager, Assistant Headteacher (Personal Development, Behaviour and Wellbeing) or Headteacher.

Absences will not be authorised if:

Parents or carers do not contact school, within a reasonable time period, to inform us why their child is absent.

Students have been placed onto Stage 2 of the New Mills procedure or are at risk of becoming, or are, a Persistently Absent Pupil and have received written confirmation that medical evidence is required for authorisation of absences.

Parents or carers keep their child absent from school for longer than 3 continuous days. After the third day of absence medical evidence will be required for authorisation.

The school deems the child to be absent without an acceptable reason.

The child has truanted or has refused to come to school.

If the child's attendance is below 92% at the time of absence and medical evidence has not been received.

### **Trips and Visits**

Any member of staff who organises a trip/visit or any other event that means students are taken off site must provide a register of attendance and pass to the SSM before they leave site.

### **Children Missing from Education (CME)**

When a student fails to attend school for a fixed period of time with no contact from parents they will become classified as a Child Missing from Education. This occurs when a student does not attend for the first week of a new term with no contact from parents or when a student does not attend for 10 consecutive days with no contact from parents.

In the event of a student not attending school for 10 consecutive school days and there has been no contact from parents the school will make every attempt to contact the parents (phone calls, home visits, etc.). If this is not successfully the school will make a referral to the Education Welfare Service/MAT to report the student as a Child Missing from Education. The CME Officer will then attempt to trace the family and will report back to the school with an update after 4 weeks (following referral) and advise when the school can remove the student from the school roll.



### 3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

At New Mills School all staff are dedicated to ensuring students achieve to the very best of their abilities and as such contribute to the whole school drive to improve attendance and punctuality. All staff play a role in ensuring students' high levels of attendance and punctuality. The different roles and responsibilities are detailed below:

<p><b>Head Teacher</b></p>	<p>Leads by example by demonstrating a commitment to improving attendance and punctuality.          Provides regular reports to the Board of Governors, Department for Education, Local Authority and Ofsted about school attendance and punctuality.          Monitors the work of all staff in developing and improving school attendance and punctuality.          Is available to parents, carers and students who may wish to discuss specific problems or difficulties they are experiencing in ensuring good attendance and/or punctuality.          Considers requests for leave of absence during term time.          Provides opportunities to celebrate attendance in school.</p>
<p><b>The Board of Governors</b></p>	<p>Supports all stakeholders in the school in improving attendance and punctuality.          Challenges the school over poor attendance and/or high persistent absence figures.          Monitors the school's attendance and punctuality figures and the systems in place to combat poor attendance and punctuality.          Sets challenging attendance and persistent absence targets.          Delegate's authority to a member, or members of staff, for authorising absences.</p>
<p><b>Assistant Headteacher</b>          Personal Development,          Behaviour, &amp; Wellbeing</p>	<p>Demonstrates a commitment to improving attendance and punctuality.          Regular line management meetings with staff involved with SSM/YM/PL to monitor progress and develop ways in which the school manages attendance and punctuality.          Challenges staff with responsibility for attendance and punctuality matters.          Lead and support the implementation of this policy.          Monitor and evaluate the work of staff to ensure that specific responsibilities are carried out consistently.          Provides opportunities to celebrate attendance in school.          Facilitates attendance panel meetings and co-ordinates external agency involvement.</p>

<p><b>Student Support Manager</b></p>	<p>Supervises the whole school registration system, ensuring registers are completed accurately and on time and that registration records are accurate.                  Supervises the school's sims text message system.                  Takes responsibility for authorising absences.                  Administers requests for leave of absence during term time.                  Provides daily, weekly and half termly data to staff, students and parents.                  Liaises with SLT, Form Tutors, Progress Leaders, Year Managers and external agencies such as EWS, MAT Derbyshire County Council etc.                  Works with year managers to focus on a specific cohort of students, with the aim of keeping PA figures below and overall attendance above National Averages.                  Casework includes meetings with parents, pupils and other agencies, home visits, letters, etc.                  Responsible for executing the New Mills Attendance Procedures.                  Provides advice and guidance to stakeholders on all issues relating to attendance.                  Lead and support the implementation of this policy.                  Develops ways in which the school manages and improves attendance.                  Monitors the attendance of students attending provision off site.                  Ensures that any Children Missing from Education are identified and procedures followed accordingly.                  Identifies and requests Penalty Notice Warnings and Fines for poor attendance and unauthorised absence during term-time, in line with the Local Authority's Code of Conduct.                  Prepares case files for prosecution in the Magistrates Court for poor or non-attendance.                  Prepares case files for Education Supervision Orders where appropriate.                  Attends TAF and Child Protection Meetings as appropriate for allocated students.                  Manages the arrival and departure of students during the school day, including truancy.                  Attends attendance panel meetings and ensures that appropriate administration/paperwork is prepared.</p>
<p><b>Year Managers</b></p>	<p>Monitor the attendance of the students in their year group.                  Liaise with and support the school's Student Support Manager in tackling poor attendance by attending appropriate meetings and home visits.                  Provides opportunities to celebrate attendance in school. Via tutor programme/assemblies/rewards etc.                  Supporting and motivating Form Tutors.                  Arranges and attends attendance panel meetings.                  Will conduct home visits for specific students.</p>
<p><b>Form Tutors</b></p>	<p>Monitor the attendance of the students in their Forms.                  Liaise with and support the school's Student Support Manager in tackling poor attendance.                  Administer the school's registration system accurately.</p>

## Attendance Policy

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	Provides opportunities to celebrate attendance in school.
<b>Teachers</b>	<p>Take an accurate register within the first 10 minutes of each lesson.</p> <p>Students arriving late being recorded immediately with the minutes that they arrived late added.</p> <p>Returning paper registers to the SSM in the event of SIMs being down.</p> <p>Report concerns with absence/punctuality to the Faculty Team Leader (FTL) and/or Year Manager (YM)</p> <p>Promoting good attendance/punctuality through the delivery of challenging, pacey and differentiated lessons.</p> <p>The reintegration into a class of students after prolonged absence with appropriate support to facilitate the catching up of missed work.</p> <p>Supplying appropriate work for students if they are absent for a prolonged period through ill health.</p>
<b>Parents</b>	<p>Ensure their child attends school regularly and only keeps them off for legitimate reasons.</p> <p>Contact the school if their child is going to be absent.</p> <p>Support and work with the school in improving their child's attendance, i.e. actively respond to school concerns, attend meetings etc.</p> <p>Discuss issues and concerns with staff to avoid escalation.</p> <p>Avoid taking their child away during term time.</p> <p>Make medical appointments for their child outside of school hours.</p> <p>Use the Sims Learning Gateway (SLG) to check child's attendance/punctuality regularly.</p>
<b>Students</b>	<p>Ensure they attend school each day and only stay off for legitimate reason.</p> <p>Support and work with the school in improving their attendance.</p> <p>Discuss issues and concerns with staff to avoid escalation.</p> <p>Not leave the school site without permission during the school day.</p>

### 3.3 New Mills Attendance Procedures

The school has a dedicated Student Support Manager, who is supported by the school's senior leadership team, pastoral team and Local Authority Education Welfare Service, to ensure all students attend school regularly. Through work with students and parents the school will endeavour to remove any barriers to good attendance. The school has developed the following procedures to do this:

**Stage 1: 100 - 99% Attendance** – Celebration/Rewards and recognition for good attendance. Through various pastoral events, letters, texts and assemblies. Students receive attendance badges/certificates and rewards based around excellent attendance. Weekly and half termly information will be disseminated amongst, staff, students and parents.

**Stage 2: 98% - 96% Attendance** - A text message every half term will be sent to parents informing them that their child's attendance has dropped below 98%. Minimum attendance target is 97% Form Tutors will discuss attendance with the student and ensure the student is aware that their absence has been noted.

**Stage 3: 95% - 92% Attendance** - When attendance falls below 95%, initial support will be offered to parents in order to improve attendance. A letter will be sent to the parent or carer explaining that the school expects to see improvements in their child's current level of attendance and offering support. Parents will be informed they need to provide medical evidence for all future absences. Having received a letter, if the child's attendance hasn't improved, the parent will be invited to meet with the school's Students Support Manager, Year manager or Senior Leadership link to discuss the reasons why and how to improve. Referrals to other agencies may be made at this stage. Parents will be reminded they need to provide medical evidence for all future absences.

**Stage 4: Below 91%** This is classed as **Persistent Absence (PA)** and maybe liable for a **Fixed Penalty Notice Fine** by the local authority if there is no improvement in attendance. The school will invite the parent in again to attend an Attendance Panel meeting with the local authority present and discuss an Improvement Contract, where a set of targets and action points will be agreed. Parents will receive a pre-legal letter outlining attendance requirements in a week period. The student will have their attendance monitored during a maximum of a four week period. During which time the school will make telephone calls, home visits and arrange review meetings where appropriate. Parents will be reminded they need to provide medical evidence for all future absences.

If the pupil's attendance fails to show significant and sustained improvement after **Stage 4**, The Education Welfare Service will begin prosecution proceedings against the parent under Section 444 (1) or 444 (1a) of the Education Act 1996. Prosecution may result in a fine of up to £2,500, community service or even a prison sentence of up to 3 months.

### 3.4 Fixed Term Penalty Notices

The school works closely with the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and MAT at Derbyshire County Council who have responsibility for issuing Fixed Term Penalty Notices to parents/carers for non attendance at school and unauthorised leaves of absence during term time. The school will, on a half termly basis, request the EWS issue Penalty Notices for students who meet the requirements laid out by the EWS.

### 3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

The School's attendance procedures and outcomes are monitored and evaluated annually.

Individual student attendance concerns are monitored weekly and the graduated response is discussed with the MAT worker and, where appropriate, their manager. The effectiveness of implemented strategies is evident in the overall change in percentage attendance, considered at the weekly review meetings.

The MAT worker is a member of the School's Multi-Agency Team who work together to share information and identify strategies to support young people struggling to access their education. Actions identified in these meetings are evaluated monthly, including those around attendance.

Regular attendance data is provided to all stakeholders including daily data, weekly, half termly, termly.

### 3.6 Reporting

Data is reported to students and staff weekly.

SLT receive weekly updates and discussed in briefings and shared with staff.

Attendance statistics are shared on a half-termly basis with the Leadership team and the Board of Governors.

The Local Authority provide absence and persistent absence data in the summer term (including terms 1-4) and annual attendance data for the previous academic year in January.

### 3.7 Policy Amendments

It is important to note that the Headteacher reserves the right to make changes to the policy should the need arise. A number of factors could influence change including but not limited to: Government legislation, procedural changes at authority level, OFSTED recommendations. Governors, parents and other relevant stakeholders would be notified of any policy amendments.

### 4. Legislative Compliance

The School is required to manage its policy documentation within a legislative framework. The legislation directing this policy is the:

[The Education Act 1996](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)

[The Education Act 2002](#)

[The Education \(School Day and School Year\) \(England\) Regulations 1999](#)

[The Changing of School Session Times \(England\) \(Revocation\) Regulations 2011](#)

[Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)

[The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003](#)

[The Education Act 2005](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

[Magistrates' Courts \(Parenting Orders\) \(Amendment\) Rules 2007](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

[The Education and Skills Act 2008](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2012](#)

[Copy of Attorney General's Guidelines for Crown Prosecutors](#)

[Police and Criminal Evidence \(PACE\) Act 1984](#)

[The Children Act 1989](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 \(External link\)](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 \(External link\)](#)

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### 5. References

This policy should be read in conjunction with the other following New Mills Policies, which can all be found on the shared drive under school policies Child Protection

- Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- First Aid
- Child Protection & Safeguarding

### 6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Protocols for attendance at New Mills School

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