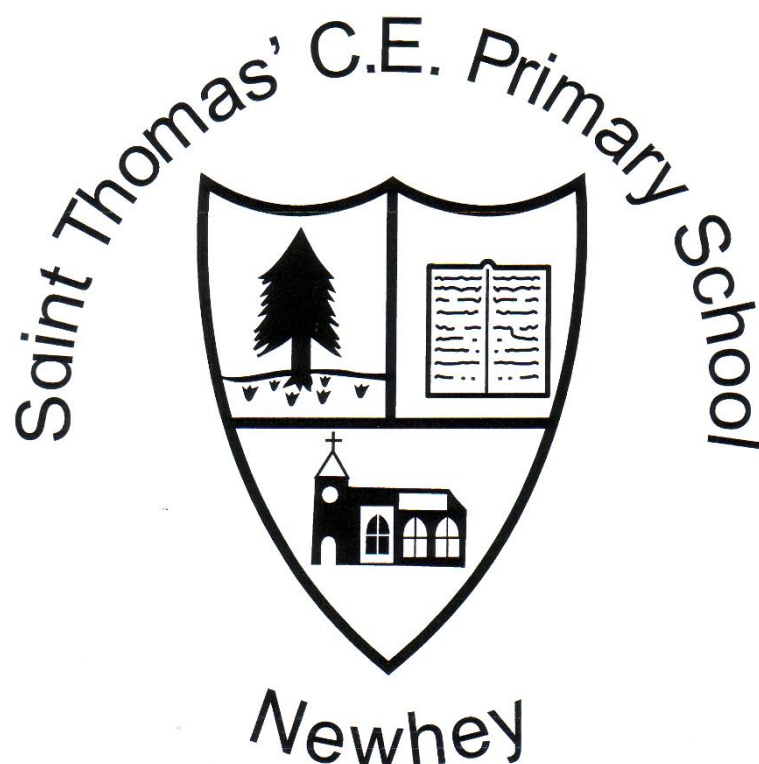


Attendance Policy



Revised: June 2016

All members of the school community have a responsibility to ensure that children attend school regularly. We work closely with parents and children, in connection with attendance to ensure that children attend school regularly and on time. In order for children to gain the greatest benefit from the education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be in school on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Why regular attendance is so important

Any absence affects a child's schooling and regular absence not only disrupts the education of your child, but their friendships in school and their self-esteem too.

Ensuring your child's attendance at school of your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Recording of attendance

The class teacher is responsible for taking the register twice a day. This happens at the start of the day and after the lunch break. This is done electronically via SIMS (School information management system). If a child is absent for no reason an 'N' is recorded so that the school administrator can then apply the correct code according to local authority guidelines. A fire register is also completed and remains in the classroom. If a child is not present and no explanation has been received a phone call will be made to enquire why the pupil is absent from school. The appropriate code will then be put onto the SIMS system.

Monitoring of attendance

The entry of attendance data on SIMS allows for pupil attendance and absence to be closely monitored. Over time a profile of individual pupil's attendance and absence patterns can be built up which may lead to a

pupil being identified as being 'at risk' and to monitor closely. This is any pupil whose attendance is **less than 95%**.

Appropriate actions may include one of the following:

- Phone call to parents.
- Phone call to Education Welfare Officer requesting a home visit.
- Phone call to school health practitioner.

Where there is an ongoing concern regarding attendance over a period of time, parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the Headteacher, Education Welfare Officer and possibly the School Health Practitioner. When a pupil has a poor attendance record and absences are due to illness, parents may be requested to provide school with medical certificates/information from the Health Service. School will refer pupils with persistent absence issues to the EWO for support/intervention. This may lead to the issue of Penalty Notices and Court appearance.

Parental Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the pupil's parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school on a daily basis and that the child is punctual. Parents are requested to make medical appointments where possible for school holidays or outside school hours. If this is not feasible the child is still expected to attend school for the majority of the school day.

When a child cannot attend school due to illness parents are required to contact the school office before 9.30am. A message can be left on the answer phone if there is no one to take the call.

If a call is not received, school will contact the parent/carer to find out why the child is not in school. Failure to make contact may result in school contacting the Education Welfare Officer and requesting a home visit to ensure the child is safe.

The Governing Board of St Thomas' C.E. Primary School will not authorise any holidays taken during term time. Only exceptional circumstances will warrant an authorised absence from school which is at the discretion of the Headteacher and in line with DfE school attendance guidance. School will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts

and circumstances and relevant background information, including the child's attendance record.

In the case of leave for performance licences, the Governing Board will authorise up to 5 days per year taking into account the child's attendance record.

Penalty notices are issued when unauthorised absences exceed 20 sessions over a 12-week period.

School Responsibilities

School will contact parents where there are concerns relating to attendance and punctuality with a phone call or via a letter.

School will work alongside parents and outside agencies to address the issues relating to a child's attendance/punctuality.

Children whose attendance falls below 94% are closely monitored. If a child's attendance falls below 90%, parents will receive a letter from school.

To encourage good attendance children will receive termly attendance certificates

Bronze – 97% and above attendance for the term

Silver - 98% and above attendance for the term

Gold - 100% attendance for the term

At the end of the school year, children with 100% attendance will be awarded an attendance badge at the leaver's service.

In addition, weekly attendance figures for classes will be published on the newsletter.

Setting of work during periods of absence

When children are off due to long term illness or recovering from a medical condition that results in an increased absence from school, work may be sent home.

Target Setting

The school sets annual attendance targets, following consultation with the Local Authority. The target is shared with governors via the termly Headteacher's report.

Persistent Absence

A pupil who has attendance of 85% or less is classed as Persistently Absent. For such pupils there will be close monitoring by the Education Welfare

service and the strong possibility of court appearances. Further information is available in school.