

# NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL

## POLICY DOCUMENT



# Attendance

<b>LAST UPDATED</b>	(by) School & Community	(date) Nov 2011
<b>LAST REVIEWED</b>	(by)	(date)

<b>POLICY TYPE</b>	
<b>REVIEW FREQUENCY</b>	

<b>RESPONSIBLE</b>	
Management Team	
Governing Committee	

*At Newlands we create confident and responsible young women equipped with the skills they need for the twenty first century. We empower all students to realise their potential as part of a community committed to lifelong learning.*

## **NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL**

### **GOVERNORS' POLICY ON PUPIL ATTENDANCE**

#### **1 Principles**

In framing this policy, the Governors have borne in mind the following principles:

- the need to comply with statutory requirements on school attendance
- the need to minimise the disruption to the education of pupils, both individually and collectively, which is caused by absence
- a casual attitude to school attendance is detrimental to the individual's education and a bad preparation for the world of work
- leave of absence may legally only be granted by the Headteacher.

#### **2 Authorised Absence**

In accordance with the Education Act 1944 and the Education Act of 1996, a pupil's absence will be authorised when it is:

- through illness or other medical grounds eg hospital appointment. Pupils should only be out of school for the time required for the actual appointment.
- for recognised days of religious observance of the faith to which her parents/carers belong.

In addition, the Headteacher may authorise absence for:

- approved educational activities, such as work experience or field trips (these are not shown as absences on the pupil's record)
- one annual holiday. This is for students to take one holiday that is pre-booked for unavoidable and exceptional reasons. This is up to a maximum of 10 days per girl and can only happen once. We will also not authorise any holiday leave at the start of the term 1.

Discretionary leave of absence may also be granted for other reasonable reasons by written application to the Headteacher.

### **For example**

- study leave prior to public examinations
- to participate in National/International sporting event
- to attend the funeral of a close relative or friend
- attendance at external examinations eg musical examinations, driving test, college entrance examinations.
- interviews
- career related activities.

### **3 Unauthorised Absence**

A pupil's absence will be recorded as unauthorised if permission has not been sought in advance (except in cases of illness) or when permission has been refused.

Leave of absence will not be granted for non-essential reasons or visits which could be arranged outside school hours

Permission cannot be given for pupils to miss school in order to stay at home to look after younger siblings or sick relatives

If parents/carers request leave of absence which is refused and their daughter fails to attend school on the day(s) in question such absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

In view of the demand for places, Governors reserve the right to remove a pupil's name from the school roll in cases of lengthy unauthorised absence (LA guideline is currently 30 consecutive school days). Parents/carers will then have to re-apply to the LA for re-admission if they wish their daughter to return to Newlands.

Truancy is recorded as unauthorised absence and will automatically incur a detention(s) of an appropriate duration.

### **4 Contact with Parents**

Governors are conscious of the need to work in partnership with parents/carers in ensuring good attendance. Accordingly, we have standard procedures which are followed in the case of absence which is not known in advance.

Parents/carers are reminded that they have a statutory duty to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. Where an absence is known in advance, parents/carers are requested to write to the Headteacher for leave of absence well in advance of the anticipated date. Ideally at least 4 weeks.

In accordance with the statutory requirements laid down in the Education Act 1996, parents/carers will be informed of their daughter's attendance record, including the number of authorised and unauthorised absences, with their school reports.

Parents/carers are expected to call the attendance line on the first day of absence. Should a message not be received the Attendance Office will call the parent/carer to ascertain the reason for the absence. On return to school, the parent/carer is asked to confirm this absence. Acceptable forms of correspondence include a written note, a text reply to the Keep Kids Safe text from the school and a signed note in the student's planner.

If a girl returns after a period of absence and does not bring a note from parents, they will be sent our standard letter giving details of the absence and asking the reason.

Where there is concern about a girl's length or pattern of absence the school will write to the parents/carers expressing their concern and outlining the nature of the problem. If necessary, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be asked to follow this up through a home visit.

Unauthorised absence without good reason will be dealt with through the EWOs standard procedures and may leave parents/carers liable to receive a penalty notice and fine; extreme cases may lead to prosecution of parents/carers. This is in accordance with the Education Act of 1996 (sections 444, 444A and 444ZA).

Signed .....

Chair of School and Community Governor's committee

Date .....

Review Date .....November 2011.....