

NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT



Attendance

LAST UPDATED	(by) School & Community	(date) June 2017
LAST REVIEWED	(by)	(date)

POLICY TYPE	
REVIEW FREQUENCY	Every 3 years

RESPONSIBLE	
Management Team	Deputy Headteacher - Andy Wellman
Governing Committee	School & Community

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
- that a casual attitude to school attendance is detrimental to the individual's education and a bad preparation for the world of work
- that a 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 e.g. a hospital appointment. If at all possible, routine dental and medical appointments should be arranged outside school hours. If this is not possible, then 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.
- discretionary leave of absence may also be granted following a 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
- to attend external examinations e.g. musical examinations, driving test, college entrance examinations etc.
- 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.

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

b) 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.

Unauthorised absence, without good reason, will be dealt with through the Education Welfare Office's standard procedures and may leave parents/carers liable to receive a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN); extreme cases may lead to the prosecution of parents/carers. This is in accordance with the Education Act of 1996. (sections 444, 444(1) and 444(1a)).

Parents should not take their child on holiday in term time. Any application to the Headteacher for a term time holiday will only be authorised under very exceptional circumstances. A letter will be sent stating whether the holiday has been authorised or not. Parents may be issued with a FPN, through the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), if their child is absent due to an unauthorised holiday.

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 and there is no guarantee that a space will be available.

Truancy is recorded as unauthorised absence and will automatically incur a detention(s) of an appropriate and related 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 that 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 a 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, twice per academic year with their school Progress Reports.

Parents/carers are expected to call the attendance line on the first day of absence. Should a message not be received, the Attendance Administrator 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 for parents to provide 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 EWO will be asked to follow this up through a home visit.

Signed

Chair of School and Community Governor's committee

Date

Review Date