



new wave  
federation



High

Aspirations



High Standards

High Attainment

Attendance  
Policy

20

17

## New Wave Federation Attendance Policy

This policy outlines procedures operating in school to monitor the attendance of pupils. It provides a basis for evidence, should the need arise, for children to be referred to the Attendance Officer (AO). It aims to complement the LEA's Attendance Policy, which outlines Attendance Officer Support.

### Rationale

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential components of a child's education. In order to make the most of the learning opportunities provided within school, children need to have the continuity of provision which consistent attendance allows.

School staff should set an example and ensure that they arrive to lessons on time and demonstrate the value given to time in school. They should also demonstrate an understanding of the individual's personal circumstances, while encouraging and expecting children to arrive punctually and ready for work. Good personal organisation and time-keeping is part of our school ethos.

### Aims

- ❖ To encourage prompt arrival at school.
- ❖ To encourage excellent attendance.
- ❖ To ensure that routines are in place for monitoring attendance and for early identification of any difficulties.

### Definitions and clarifications

For the purpose of clarity for all parties the Federation uses the following definitions when monitoring absences and punctuality:

- ❖ All lateness between 8.55am and 9.05am will be marked as L – Late Before Registers Close.
- ❖ All lateness beyond 9.05am will be marked as U – Late After Registers Have Closed. It should be noted that a U code counts as an Unauthorised Absence for the duration of that session.
- ❖ Pupils with attendance below 90% are considered 'Persistent Absentees' and will (in almost all circumstances) be referred to the Local Authority for intervention (Tier 3).
- ❖ 'Regular' attendance at school is considered to be 96% attendance or above. All pupils with attendance between 90% and 96% will be monitored by the school using Tier 1 or Tier 2 until attendance rises above 96%.
- ❖ All term time applications for holidays will be recorded as unauthorised.
- ❖ Pupils with attendance below 92% will have no absences recorded as authorised unless accompanied by medical evidence.
- ❖ Parents may be fined by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

### Responsibilities

All members of the school community have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

### Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- ❖ Ensuring their child attends school regularly and on-time. All children should be in the school playground and lined up at 8.55 a.m.
- ❖ In the case of an unavoidable absence, parents need to contact the school on the first day of absence and provide a reason; they need to maintain contact with school if the absence continues for more than one day.

## **New Wave Federation Attendance Policy**

- ❖ Parents should make every effort to make routine appointments (e.g. doctors' or dentists' appointments) outside of school hours. Absence for routine appointments in school hours will not be authorised.
- ❖ All hospital, GP and dental appointments will require an appointment card/letter/text and need to be booked in at the school office, children will not be released without the supporting documentation.
- ❖ All absences due to sickness for 5 or more days will need to be verified by a note from the GP. A copy of the appointment card or prescription medication is acceptable as evidence.
- ❖ Request any term time absence through the absence request form. Even if it is unlikely that the request will be authorised, it is vital that parents complete this form in advance of the absence, so that the school is aware of the nature of the absence and the whereabouts of the child.
- ❖ Failure to provide a reason for any absences will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

### **Class teacher**

Class teachers are responsible for:

- ❖ Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance, looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for absence offered by children and their parents/ guardians.
- ❖ Informing the Headteacher where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- ❖ Providing background information to support referrals.
- ❖ Monitoring impact once actions have been taken regarding attendance concerns.
- ❖ Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- ❖ Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation.
- ❖ Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings/days.
- ❖ Setting an example by arriving promptly to lessons.

### **Administration staff**

The School's Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- ❖ Following up specific requests from the Headteacher for information about individuals.
- ❖ Providing administrative support for the Headteacher in monitoring and managing attendance.
- ❖ Completing and submitting to the Headteacher, the Weekly Attendance Report (Appendix A).
- ❖ Contacting families, both formally and informally, where concerns are raised about absence.
- ❖ Follow the school's procedures for first day calling and reporting to the Headteacher where concerns are identified.
- ❖ Collating weekly attendance percentages.
- ❖ Monitoring individual attendance on a daily basis where concerns have been raised.
- ❖ Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's Leadership and Attendance team.
- ❖ Providing a point of contact between families, individual teachers, the Headteacher and the Local Authority AO.
- ❖ Informing the Headteacher on a formal and an informal basis of patterns of attendance noted.
- ❖ Processing and following up term time absence request forms.

### **The Attendance Team (Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Attendance Officer)**

The Attendance Team is responsible for:

- ❖ Including information about attendance trends and class percentages in the school bulletin.
- ❖ Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

## New Wave Federation Attendance Policy

- ❖ Use the persistent absenteeism framework for identification of pupils whose attendance falls below 90%.
- ❖ Ensuring that the attendance policy is followed and that the actions from AO and school attendance meetings are carried out.
- ❖ Liaising with and discussing with parents issues relating to attendance.
- ❖ Feedback and discussions with the class teacher over individual cases.

### The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ❖ Overall monitoring of school attendance and setting of challenging attendance targets for the school.
- ❖ Reviewing and setting actions resulting from the Weekly Attendance Report.
- ❖ Monitoring trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.
- ❖ Acting as a point of contact for teaching and non-teaching staff where concerns need to be raised or advice sought.
- ❖ Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- ❖ Ensuring that the attendance policy is followed and that the actions from AO meetings are carried out.
- ❖ Carry out home visits for identified pupils.
- ❖ Liaising with parents and discussing issues relating to attendance.
- ❖ Conducting half termly meetings with the Attendance Team.
- ❖ Feedback and discussions with the class teacher and School Attendance Officer over individual cases.
- ❖ Promotion of attendance issues during assemblies.
- ❖ Monitoring and distribution of class trophy awards and certificates for children being monitored.
- ❖ Report statistics to the Governors as part of the Executive Headteacher's Termly Report.

### Following up attendance issues – procedures

The school uses an attendance flowchart to inform decisions and actions in relation to attendance (Appendix B). Intervention with a pupil's attendance typically falls in to one of three tiers, outlined below:

#### The Weekly Attendance Review (Tier 1)

Each week the School Attendance Officer will submit to the Headteacher the *Weekly Attendance Report*, outlining an overview of attendance for the week, any actions taken and any concerns noted especially where attendance is falling below 96%. The Headteacher will then review the information and note any actions needed. Notification letters will be sent to pupils whose attendance is falling below 96% (Appendix C).

#### The Half Termly Attendance Meeting (Tier 2)

Each half term the Attendance Team will meet to discuss any concerns and follow up the progress of individuals. Prior to the meeting, the following information is collected:

- ❖ Attendance record for any child with less than 92% attendance.
- ❖ Attendance records for any child who is classed as a Persistent Absentee (below 90%).
- ❖ Attendance record for any child whose absence shows particular trends.
- ❖ Attendance record for any child who has been frequently arriving at school late.
- ❖ Class percentage totals.
- ❖ Attendance for any identified groups e.g. pupils with SEND or PPG.

## New Wave Federation Attendance Policy

Information is shared about previous cases and decisions taken about the next stages of intervention where this is appropriate. Decisions taken are recorded on the attendance monitoring sheet. It is expected that reasonable steps have been taken by the school prior to AO intervention. Following the meeting, class teachers are notified of the outcome and agreed actions are discussed with office staff and followed up as appropriate.

These meetings may result in a pupil/parent or family being referred to Tier 3 – Local Authority Intervention.

### School procedures in cases for intervention

Although a range of strategies and actions will be taken on an informal basis, a formal procedure is applied where an absence remains unexplained or is identified as pattern-forming. An example of the process is outlined below:

- ❖ Discussion on an informal level with the child/parent and reminder about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- ❖ Informal letter outlining attendance to date and comparing to expected/whole school attendance. (Appendix C)
- ❖ **If attendance continues to be a cause for concern a letter will be sent enclosing a pupil attendance grid highlighting a pattern of absence/punctuality and that they will be monitored for the rest of the term. (Appendix D)**
- ❖ If attendance falls below 90%, parents will be invited in to meet with the Headteacher and informed that failure to improve attendance will result in a referral to the AO. (Appendix E)
- ❖ A recognition certificate will be given to children who have significantly improved their attendance.

The Local Authority, Hackney Learning Trust, will implement a 12 week fast track system for any child currently not attending school regularly, to include the following: Penalty notice warnings and fines, Parenting Orders, Education supervision order, school attendance orders and prosecution for non-payment of fine or non-attendance.

*(Please refer to: The **Children Act 1989 (section 36)**, The **Education Act 1996 (sections 7.19,436a, 437-439,443-447)**, The **Education Act 2005 (section 115)**, The **Education (parenting contracts and parenting orders regulations 2007**, The **Education penalty notices (Amendment) Regulations 2013**)*

### Encouraging good attendance and punctuality

It is important to remember that the vast majority of children within the Federation Schools, arrive on time and every day. An important part of our attendance policy is that this good practice is commended and applauded publicly. In order to do this we:

- ❖ Publicise class attendance figures on a weekly basis in the school through assemblies and bulletins.
- ❖ Award a class certificate and reward for each class with 100% for all pupils' attendance in a week.
- ❖ Award a trophy for the class with the best attendance on a half termly basis.
- ❖ Award certificates half termly/termly and annually for children with 100% attendance.

### 100% Attendance Category

100% attendance is defined by the school register showing all present or statistically present marks. The two exceptions for 'authorised absence' are pupils whose absence marks relate to a recognised impairment (as the Equalities Act requires us to treat those with a disability 'more favourably') or those pupils granted leave for religious observance.

## New Wave Federation Attendance Policy

### Monitoring

The Headteacher will report to the governing body, in the 'Executive Headteacher's Report', the attendance percentage for the school and on any specific trends and/or difficulties with individuals.

<i>Policy reviewed</i>	<i>September 2017</i>
<i>Adopted by Governing Body</i>	<i>October 2017</i>
<i>Review date</i>	<i>September 2018</i>

Appendix A –

## Weekly Attendance Report

School: GB/SW/WD

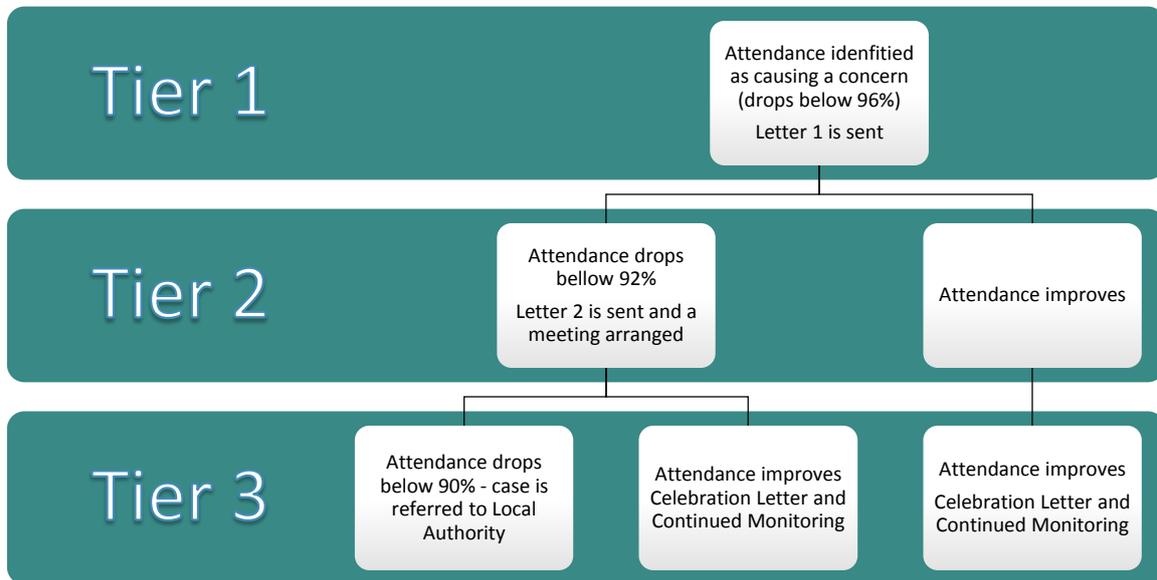
Date:

Focus	Figures and Comments
Weekly whole school attendance figure	
FSM Attendance	
Identified Pupil Attendance	
SEN Support Attendance	
EHCP Attendance	
Classes with 100 %	
Classes with attendance below 96%	
Classes with no lates	
Classes with highest lates	
<b>Monitoring Review of Pupils with Attendance Below 96%</b>	
Letters sent to-	
Meetings held with-	
Referrals to AO for-	
Home visits completed for-	
Penalty Notices served to-	
<b>Persistence Absence Review</b>	
Letters sent to-	
Meetings held with-	
Referrals to AO for-	
Home visits completed for-	
Penalty Notices served to-	
<b>Actions Resulting</b>	
Actions-	

**New Wave Federation Attendance Policy**

Appendix B –

Flow chart to demonstrate procedures



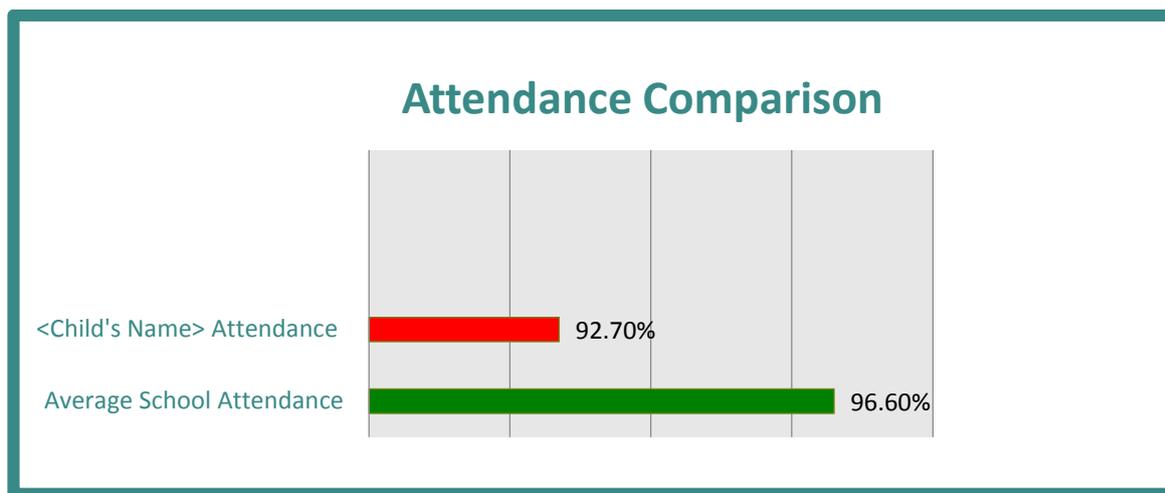
Appendix C – Letter 1

# New Wave Federation

«date\_of\_printing»

«address\_block»

<Child's Name> has missed more school than his/her classmates



Dear «salutation»

### Attendance Matters and You Can Help

<Child's name> has missed more school than his/her classmates.

<Child's name> has been absent for \_\_\_\_\_ days so far this school year. This means their attendance is currently \_\_\_\_\_%.

Pupils can fall behind when they miss school; whatever the reason for the absence.

You can have a big effect on <Child's name>'s absences this half term. Please help them to come to school regularly.

We appreciate your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Elaine King/Pamelah Sealy/Bilal Theodule

**Learning Mentor/Attendance Officer/Pastoral Support Leader**

*Appendix D – Letter 2*

# New Wave Federation

«date\_of\_printing»

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Dear «salutation»

As you are aware, we monitor the attendance and punctuality of the children closely at Woodberry Down/Shacklewell/Grazebrook Primary School.

It is our duty to inform you that your child's attendance is a cause for concern as it has fallen below 92% so far this academic year.

Having completed an analysis of your child's attendance, it has been brought to my attention that your child \_\_\_\_\_ has an attendance figure of \_\_\_\_\_ % for this academic year. This calculation includes sickness, medical appointments, authorised and unauthorised absences. I have enclosed a copy of your child's attendance grid that shows the absences or late marks.

We firmly believe that every child benefits from good and punctual attendance. We ask that you make every effort to ensure that \_\_\_\_\_ is in school as regularly as possible.

Woodberry Down/Shacklewell /Grazebrook School will be monitoring your child's attendance and expects to see an improvement for regular attendance and punctuality at school.

Please be aware that you risk a fine or prosecution if your child fails to attend regularly and punctually.

Should you wish to meet me to discuss this letter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

*Appendix E – Letter 3*

# New Wave Federation

«date\_of\_printing»

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

I am writing to you as «chosen\_forename»'s attendance remains a cause for concern and has now fallen below 90% so far this academic year.

As I informed you in my last letter, we have been monitoring \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance and he/she now has an attendance figure of \_\_\_\_ % for this academic year. This calculation includes sickness, medical appointments, authorised and unauthorised absences. I have enclosed a copy of your child's attendance grid that shows the absences or late marks.

This means that \_\_\_\_\_ is now considered to be a 'Persistent Absentee' as they are missing more than 10% of school.

I am concerned that there has been no significant improvement since my last correspondence and I would like to arrange a meeting with me at:

to discuss your child's attendance and how it can be improved. I must also politely inform you that I may now be referring this case to the Local Authority Attendance Officer who may also issue you with a fine.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher