



Newton International School
West Bay

Pupil Attendance Policy

2023-24

Page | 1 Our Mission

We aim to provide the highest quality of education possible for students of all abilities. In doing so, we aim to positively encourage each student to achieve academic excellence, enjoy creative diversity, develop critical thinking skills and become lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

To achieve this, we will provide a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes self-discipline and motivation. We will provide and maintain a calm, trusting and caring atmosphere where teaching and learning are meaningful and developed. We will work in partnership with our staff, students, parents and wider community to achieve our vision.

Attendance

Good punctuality and attendance are key to us achieving our mission as we recognise the correlation between school attendance and academic performance. Essentially, **the more that a pupil comes to school and on time, the more academic progress they will make.**

'Research shows that missing 10 percent of the school, or about 18 days, negatively affects a student's academic performance. That's just two days a month and that's known as persistent absence.'

Our Target

We have established a target of **97%** attendance throughout the school from Foundation 1 to Year 6. Newton International School West Bay works for approximately 184 days per academic year. We expect that all children will **not miss any more than 13 days** over the school academic year, 3 days per term in order to meet this target and maintain our high standards.

You will receive a letter of concern from your class teacher once your child has reached 8 days of absences.

Requiring Improvement 90% to 95% (9-18 days absent)

If a child's attendance drops below 95% but remains greater than 90%, we will monitor



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as the attendance requires improvement in order to meet our target.

Persistent Absence 80% to 90% (18- 37 days absent)

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If a child's attendance drops below 90%, they are considered to be persistent absentees, which is proven to reduce their chances of success in school.

Chronic Absence <80% (37 days and more absent)

If a child's attendance drops below 80% this is considered chronic absence, which will trigger a meeting with the Principal where the need for urgent improvement will be discussed.

Please note that if your child's attendance is significantly below 80% in a term, we reserve the right to prevent them from sitting end of term assessments and successfully completing the term. Please note that if your child is absent for more than 36 days in the school year, they may not be offered a place in the following academic year at this school. Year 6 students stand the risk of not being offered a position in a Secondary School.

Purpose of the Policy

To ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities.

To ensure high levels of attendance, for students to achieve outstanding levels of achievement, progress and personal growth.

Rights & Responsibilities

Improving attendance at Newton International School West Bay is the responsibility of all stakeholders in the school community: pupils, parents and all staff as outlined in the Home School Agreement (see appendix 1).

Pupils

All pupils are expected to attend school and all their lessons regularly and punctually.

Pupils who do experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support if approaches are made to the school management to explain the circumstances that have created the attendance problem. This will be initially from the class teacher, and if the need should arise, from the Team Leaders, Deputy Principal & Principal. Full attendance on a termly and yearly



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basis will also be celebrated by the school.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) attend(s) school

regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is going to be late or is prevented for any reason from attending, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible. A pupil's absence from school must be considered unauthorized until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent.

Parents should avoid, if possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

Students should not be collected before the end of the school day.

School

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and administration staff). Newton International West Bay will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will investigate promptly all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents. Staff will respond to all absenteeism consistently and supportively.

Morning Punctuality

Registration will be called at 7.00am for Years Foundation1 to Year 6 using Sims and paper emergency registers.

After 7.10am students are classed as **late** as registers will be closed at this time. Pupils arriving after registers close, will be marked as absent unless they arrive in their class with a late sticker received at Gate 1 or Gate 3.

When the child attends the class, the teacher will accept the sticker and mark the register with an L for late in the emergency fire evacuation register.

Late arrivals are recorded term by term on school reports.

COVID-19

During the blended or rotational learning programmes or where pupil attendance in school is reduced to 50%, the following amendments will be made:

Registration will be called at 7.10am for Years Foundation1 to Year 6 using Sims and paper emergency registers.

After 7.10 am students are classed as **late** as registers will be closed at this time. Pupils arriving after registers close, will be marked as absent unless they arrive in their class with a late card from administration in Villa 3.

From 7:10am, late children will proceed to Gate 3, where they will receive an



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orange circle sticker on their collar.

When the child attends the class, the teacher must see the orange sticker and mark the register with an L for late in the emergency fire evacuation register.

Late arrivals are monitored monthly and recorded term by term on school

reports.

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Procedures for following up lateness

Punctuality will be monitored at the end of each calendar month by the attendance officer.

If a child arrives late 5 times or more in a month, his or her parents will receive an **Initial Punctuality Concern (Appendix 2)** in writing from the school principal.

If a child is late 5 times or more in a subsequent month, his or her parents will receive a **Continuing Punctuality Concern (Appendix 3)** in writing from the school principal.

If a child's punctuality still does not improve, then the principal will convey an

Urgent Punctuality Concern (Appendix 4), in writing. Parents will be expected to meet with the principal if we have an urgent punctuality concern involving their child(ren).

Procedures for following up absences

COVID-19

During the blended or rotational learning programmes or where pupil attendance in school is reduced to 50%, we will continue to manage absenteeism as outlined below:

Persistent Absence 80% to 90% (18-37 days of absence)

If a child's attendance drops below 90%, they are considered to be persistent absentees, which is proven to reduce their chances of success in school.

Parents will be phoned and an inquiry made by our admin team, if a child has been absent for 3 days.

Parents will receive an **Initial Absence Concern** in writing if their child is absent 3 or more days in a calendar month.

Parents will receive a **Requiring Improvement Concern (Appendix 3)** in writing if their child is absent 9 or more days in a subsequent calendar month.

Parents will receive a **Persistent Absences (Appendix 4)** in writing if their child is absent 18 or more days for 3 calendar months.

If a child is absent for 37 days, the parents will receive a **Final or Chronic**



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Absence Concern (Appendix 5) providing written notification that their child's place in this school is under review for the following academic year due to very low attendance.

If a child is absent more than 37 days, a letter noting the absences may be

sent to the Ministry of Education. The child will not be able to return to school in the new academic year without the approval of an official at the Ministry of Education.

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Truancy

If any pupil absents themselves from the school without permission, then the parents/guardians shall be contacted by telephone or letter and the pupil will be detained after appropriate notification.

If the truancy happens more than once, then the parents/guardians shall be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal or Head of Primary, to discuss the problem.

If the truancy becomes chronic, then a referral will be made to the Parents' Affairs Officer.

Holidays

There are only 184 school days in an academic year, therefore families are discouraged from taking vacations during term time. All vacations or any unnecessary trips taken during term time will be registered and will count towards the limit of 37 days of unauthorised absence for that academic year.

Absenteeism

Pupils should always bring a note from parents/guardians explaining an absence. This should be given to the class teacher on the first day of return to school.

Authorised Absence

An authorised absence is when a leave request has been approved by the principal or a written explanation (medical) offered on the child's return to school. The request letter, together with supporting evidence, must be submitted to villa 3, at least 7 days prior to travel or absence.

Unauthorised Absence

Where either no written explanation has been provided by parents or in cases when the principal has not approved the absence request e.g. in the case when a family takes a vacation during term time.



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Health

A parent is permitted to sign their child off school for the first 2 days of absence.

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This should be in the form of a medical or personal note being given to the child's teacher on the child's return. Absences of 3 days or more, a medical note must be provided. If a child misses a test because of such absence, it will not be re-scheduled without a doctor's note/certificate.

On the third consecutive day of absence, the school will telephone the parents to enquire as to the child's well-being. If your child is genuinely ill, the case will be considered on an individual basis. Medical notes or referral forms from a relevant specialist are always useful for referral purposes in long term illness absences.

Religious absenteeism

If a child needs to have time off during the school year for religious reasons, then this should be requested in writing by the parents at least 1 week before the absence is due to start. However, as much as possible, trips should be confined to weekends.

Traffic in Doha

If you are held up in traffic, please write a note in your child's homework diary or home/school book explaining this to be the case. Traffic congestion or road works are not legitimate excuses for continued tardiness. However, isolated incidents will be taken into consideration.

Appointments in the day

Children may only leave during the school day if collected by a parent or nanny/driver. Children should not be removed from a class before 1:00pm, it causes unnecessary disruption to the rest of the class, unless the parent presents a medical certificate for an appointment. Early exit from school counts in the same way as absences. The principal or head of primary holds the right to refuse students from leaving early if it becomes regular. Parent meetings and drivers not available for pick up are not legitimate reasons for a child to be absent. Dental appointments, travel, traffic, non-availability of a driver – do not count as reasonable excuses.



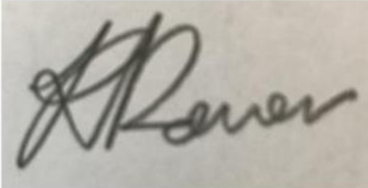
Once permission has been granted by the Principal or Head of Primary on the white administration record note, then a runner will collect the child from the classroom and deliver them to the Villa 3 administration area. Parents, drivers or nannies are **not permitted to collect children directly from classrooms.**



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Previously Reviewed: April 2022
Reviewed By: Ms. Mari Wiid – Principal
Next Review Date: September 2023

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Principal's Signature	Head of Primary's Signature	EYFS Coordinator
		



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Appendix 1

Home & School Agreement 2023/24

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All members of the Newton International School, West Bay community: staff, parents and children will commit to working together to achieve the following mission.

To provide the highest quality of education possible for students of all abilities. In doing so, we aim to positively encourage each student to achieve academic excellence, enjoy creative diversity, develop critical thinking skills and become lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

To achieve this, we will provide a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes self-discipline and motivation. We will provide and maintain a calm, trusting and caring atmosphere where teaching and learning are meaningful and developed. We will work in partnership with our staff, students, parents and wider community to achieve our vision.

We will do everything to ensure that:

- Positive relationships are promoted at all levels to reduce any barriers to learning;
- Teaching is of the quality that leads to outstanding progress for all children;
- The curriculum will be inspiring, meaningful, and relevant helping all children to develop aspiration, achieve their potential and prepare them for later life.

We will:

- Care for your child's well-being, learning and enjoyment;
- Contact you if we have any concerns with your child's attendance and punctuality;**
- Inform you of any concerns we have related to your child's well-being, learning or behaviour;
- Have the highest expectations of your child.

Parents will do everything to ensure that:

- They uphold the school values at all times, whilst here at Newton International School, West Bay;
- Their child attends this school every day and on time;**
- Their child wears their NIS West Bay uniform correctly every day;
- Their child is prepared and attends NIS West Bay with the correct equipment e.g. pencils, rulers etc.;
- Their child is provided with a nutritionally balanced and appropriate amount of food each day which will not include chocolate, cakes, biscuits, chips, fizzy drinks and flavoured milk; Their children are well-rested and ready to learn;
- Their child completes all home-learning tasks within the timeframes given;
- Their children only bring with them the books that they need each day;



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- Their children attend educational field trips and excursions organised by the school;
- They attend the NIS West Bay Parents' Meetings and will accept the advice and guidance offered by teachers;
- They support the NIS West Bay's Behaviour for Learning policy and approach;
- They will use the correct procedures to raise any concerns regarding their child's education;
- They will ensure that the school is provided with current emergency contact numbers and email address.

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Children will:

- Consistently give their best and help others to do the same;
- Read regularly and practice their spellings and tables;
- Politely, ask for help when they need it;
- Wear their uniform correctly, with pride;
- Adhere to their NIS West Bay's Behaviour for Learning expectations;
- Complete all home-learning to the best of their ability and on time;
- Work with NIS West Bay to eradicate all forms of bullying.

_____ Class teacher _____ Child

_____ Parent 1 _____ Parent 2

Previously Reviewed: April 2022
Reviewed By: Ms. Mari Wiid – Principal
Next Review Date: September 2023



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Appendix 2

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Initial Punctuality Concern – Requiring Improvement

Date:

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you as your child _____ has been absent from school 8 or more times up to date.

I am sure that you understand the importance of good punctuality in supporting your child's academic progress and performance in school.

Essentially, the more that a pupil comes to school on time, the more academic progress they will make.

Please be reminded of the commitment that you made when registering your child at Newton International School West Bay when you agreed that you **would do everything to ensure that your child attends this school every day and on time.**

Please be reminded that a copy of this letter will be kept in your child's student file however I trust that you will take the necessary measures in order to improve this situation.

Thank you in advance.

Class Teacher

Ms. Wiid – Principal

Mari Wiid



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Appendix 3

Requiring Improvement

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Date:

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you as your child _____ has been absent school 9 or more times.

I am sure that you understand the importance of good punctuality in supporting your child's academic progress and performance in school.

Despite writing to you on _____, your child's punctuality continues to require improvement. Please be reminded of the commitment that you made when registering your child at Newton International School West Bay when you agreed that you **would do everything to ensure that your child attends this school every day and on time.**

Please be reminded that a copy of this letter will be kept in your child's student file however I trust that you will take this matter seriously and take the necessary measures in order to improve this situation as a matter of priority.

Thank you in advance.

Administration

Ms. Wiid – Principal

Mari Wiid



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Appendix 4

Persistent Absences Concern

Date:

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Dear Parents,

I am writing to you as your child _____ has been absent school 18 or more times.

I am sure that you understand the importance of good punctuality in supporting your child's academic progress and performance in school.

Despite writing to you previously about your child's punctuality, it continues to require improvement. Please be reminded of the commitment that you made when registering your child at Newton International School West Bay when you agreed that you **would do everything to ensure that your child attends this school every day and on time.**

Please be reminded that a copy of this letter will be kept in your child's student file however I trust that you will take this matter seriously and take the necessary measures in order to improve this situation as a matter of priority.

Thank you in advance.
Administration

Ms. Wiid – Principal

Mari Wiid



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Appendix 5

Chronic Absences Concern

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Date:

Dear Parents,

Despite writing to you on previous occasions to convey our concerns, your child's punctuality continues to fall below our expectations, which is more than 37 days. Please be reminded of the commitment that you made when registering your child at Newton International School West Bay when you agreed that you **would do everything to ensure that your child attends this school every day and on time.**

I am writing to you as _____ has been absent from school on more than 37 times, which is a cause for urgent action.

I am sure that you understand the importance of good punctuality in supporting your child's academic progress and performance in school. **Please be reminded that a copy of this letter will be kept in your child's student file** however I understand that there could be an explanation therefore **I would urge you to make an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible in order to discuss this matter further.**

Please be reminded of the school's clear Policy for Pupil Attendance as your child's education and place at this school could be jeopardised if things do not improve as a matter of urgency.

Thank you in advance.

Ms. Wiid – Principal