

New Monkland Primary School



Getting it Right for Every Child

Attendance Policy



*Written: October 2025
Review Date: October 2027*

Pupil Attendance Policy

The school policy is in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines with ***Included, Engaged and Involved: Part 1: Attendance in Scottish Schools*** and NLC Management Circular B1 and the NLC Operational Policy for Managing Attendance and Absence April 2024.

Pupil Attendance at School

Section 30 of the 1980 Education Act places a duty on every parent of a child of school age to provide for him/her education either by regular attendance at a public school or some other means.

Pupils are marked present if they are in school.

They also should be marked present if they are directed by the school for various activities out of school. Reasons for being marked present out of school include:

- (a) Work experience
- (b) Educational visits
- (c) Day and residential visits to outdoor centre
- (d) College/consortium school study
- (e) Interviews and visits regarding higher and further education
- (f) Debates, sports, theatrical activities etc
- (g) Psychological services interviews
- (h) School medical examination
- (i) Home tuition

Pupil Absence from School

Parents are asked to inform the school by letter, telephone or email if their child is absent from school, confirming the reason for absence. The child would then be marked as Self Certified for the period of the absence.

Reasons for an authorised absence may include:

1. Illness, where no learning provision is made (including mental health and wellbeing concerns).
2. Medical and dental appointments (parent/carer and children and young people should be encouraged to arrange appointments outside school hours).
3. Meetings prior to and during court appearances and other legal processes.
4. Attendance at, or in connection with a Children's Hearing or Care Review, or appointment with another service working with the child or young person or family.
5. Religious observance.
6. Bereavement.
7. Weddings or funerals of close friends and family.
8. Arranged absence in relation to child or young person in Gypsy/Traveller families.
9. Participation in non-school based debates, sports, musical or drama activities agreed by the school.

10. Lack of transport (including due to bad weather).
11. Family recovery from exceptional domestic circumstances or trauma.
12. Authorised parental holiday.
13. Extended leave with parent/carer consent including some young carer activities.

Children will be marked as an unauthorised absence until a reason for the absence has been provided. If a child has a series of unexplained absences, the school and local authority has a duty to put a plan in place to support the child to engage more fully with school and promote good attendance.

Schools will record an absence as unauthorised when they perceive that there is no valid reason for the child being absent from school. Such absence may be:

1. Family holiday during term time.
2. Occasional absence without parent/carer awareness.
3. Longer term absence (home, community and school related issues).
4. Absence relating to substance and alcohol misuse.

Family holidays and the comparative costs relating to these is not accepted as a reason for these absences to be authorised. Family holidays during term time will be recorded as unauthorised, other than in exceptional circumstances which may include where a parent/carer's employment is of the nature where school holiday leave cannot be accommodated, such as the armed services, emergency services or professions where parents/cares are required to work away from home for prolonged periods.

For some children and young people reluctance to attend school can be related to a range of social and emotional issues such as:

1. Challenging family circumstances.
2. Coping with adversity or trauma.
3. Care experience.
4. Anxiety or mental health difficulties.
5. Bullying.
6. Issues relating to social media.

Schools will investigate to determine any underlying causes and take corrective action to address these barriers.

Implications for School Staff

(a) If a child does not report for school by 09.30am and there has been no notification to inform the school of the absence, then the school office will be informed, and a text message will be sent to ascertain the cause of absence.

(b) If an absence is longer than one week then a telephone call will be made to the parent/carer to discuss.

(c) If a child's absence exceeds 4 weeks then they will be classed as missing in Education and the relevant authorities will be notified.

Pattern/Frequent Absence Procedures

- (a) A Pupil Attendance Record will be issued to all parents with final reports at the end of the school year.
- (b) The Head Teacher will monitor attendance monthly to detect frequency or patterns of lateness and/or absence.
- (c) Where there are concerns, a (staged) letter advising parents of their responsibilities in line with the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. will be sent home. This will highlight the attendance figure and invite parents/carers in to discuss any supports that may be required.
- (d) If absence continues to be persistent, support may be requested from partner agencies and the Cluster Family Engagement Support Assistant (FESA).
- (f) Assessment of wellbeing and associated multi-agency planning will help to ensure that the right support is offered at the right time to improve attendance at school.

UNCRC Links

Article 3: All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

Article 4: The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family to protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.

Article 28: You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.