

Tom Newby School

Policy Document



Attendance, late arrival and absenteeism

TOM NEWBY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE, ABSENTEEISM, LATE ARRIVAL AND TRUANCY POLICY

Date of 1st Implementation	January 2013
Dates of Review	November 2014; April 2016; May 2017; January 2018; March 2018; March 2019; February 2023; May 2023; February 2024; February 2025; January 2026
Effective date	1 February 2026
Date of Next Review	January 2027
Approved by	Approved by the Tom Newby School Governing Body on behalf of the parents at Tom Newby School in accordance with a resolution taken at the Annual General Meeting.
Custodians	Principal and SGB Chairperson
References and Legislation	1. South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 2. Constitution of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996 3. Gauteng Schools Education Act, No 6 of 1995 4. National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996. 5. Manifesto on Values, Education & Democracy. Pretoria. 2001 6. Education Law Amendment Act, 2002 (The Amendment of Section 5 of Act No.84 of 1996). 7. Provincial Gazette Extraordinary No. 187. Transforming ECD in Gauteng 8. Circular 4 of 2016 9. Department Attendance register completion guidelines 10. Any amendments to the above Legislation
Application and Scope	1. Principal 2. Parents, including the School Governing Body 3. Educators, including the School Management Team 4. Learners

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide reasonable and clear guidelines for the monitoring and control of learner attendance, late arrival and absenteeism. It reflects the constitutional responsibility of government to provide quality school for all. Furthermore, the policy aims to ensure that Tom Newby School provides a quality learning experience for its learners in conjunction with the existing infrastructure and facilities.

2. Interpretation

In this policy document, unless the context indicates otherwise:

- 2.1 **the Act** means the South African Schools Act No.84 of 1996 (as amended);
- 2.2 **educator** means any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains learners at the School who has not been appointed by the Governing Body of the School;
- 2.3 **Feeder Zone** means areas defined as such in the schedule to SASA No. 84 of 1996 known as the 'Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools' which areas are determined as being geographically closer to this school than any other school. Feeder Zone refers to a 5 kilometre radius of Tom Newby School. Where two or more schools are located within the same 5 km radius, the nearest school shall be prioritised if capacity has not been reached.
- 2.4 **learner** means any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of the Act;
- 2.5 **Parent** means:
 - a. the parent or guardian of a Learner;
 - b. the person legally entitled to custody of a Learner; or
 - c. a person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in **Paragraphs 1.5.1 and 1.5.2** towards the Learner's education at the School;
- 2.6 **language of teaching and learning** (LOLT) refers to the language of instruction offered at Tom Newby School – determined by the SGB to be English.
- 2.7 **the School** means Tom Newby School.

2.8 **TNS means Tom Newby School.**

2.9 **Absenteeism** refers to a learner who is at school for less than 2 hours.

2.10 **Late arrival** refers to a learner who arrives at school more than 5 minutes after the official school starting time.

3. **Legislation**

Where the Legislation is silent on any particular attendance aspect, the relevant provisions of this Policy will apply in so far as it is not inconsistent with the Constitution and/or other Legislation. In cases, where the legislation is silent on any particular aspect, Tom Newby School will make a ruling based on:

- a. The spirit of the Constitution and/or relevant education legislation;
- b. The specific situation surrounding the Learner;
- c. The current infrastructure and capacity of the School;
- d. Consideration based on the “best interests of the Child”.

4. **Monitoring Learner Attendance**

- 4.1 Learner attendance must be established during the registration period (07:30 – 07:45) and data submitted to the Principal via the Administration Department. The Principal or delegated staff member must submit the daily stats to the GDE via the GDE Reporting Platform of the School Tablet;
- 4.2 Daily learner attendance must be noted on the register page in the school Tracking Sheets;
- 4.3 The information on the Tracking sheet must be entered on the official school class register on a Friday morning and submitted to the Administration department by no later than 10:00. Procedures for completion of weekly and quarterly attendance, as set out on the inside page of the register, must be adhered to. Educators must remember that the class register is an official document and that tippex may not be used.;
- 4.4 At the end of each term, the quarterly attendance totals must be calculated and submitted to the Administration Department by no later than 10:00;
- 4.5 The Period Register of attendance in the Tracking Sheet must be signed by each subject teacher in the Intersen Phase, as learners move from class to class in order to determine whether all children who started the school day are still present and accounted for.

5. **Submission of Statistics**

- 5.1 The Administration Department is responsible for collating and submitting data on a weekly and quarterly basis as required to the Principal and District Office. The school uses Edupac to capture this data. The format of this capturing must be aligned with departmental requirements. Ref Annexure A of Circular 4/2016 or current submissions documents provided by District Office.
- 5.2 The Administration Department is responsible for collating and submitting data to the Principal when information is required for Blitz or School readiness purposes.
- 5.3 The Administration Department is responsible for collating and submitting a copy of the consolidated annual register summary to the Principal for verification and then to the Cluster Leader, at the end of the Academic Year..
- 5.4 Register teachers and Administrative Personnel are responsible for alerting the Principal in the event of excessive absenteeism.

6. **Absenteeism and procedures**

- 6.1 Absence for 1 day - Illness
 - a. Parent to submit note to register teacher OR
 - b. Parent to enter reason for absence in Homework Diary.
 - c. All notes to be retained and transferred in Learner Profiles at the end of each Term.
- 6.2 Absence for 2 or more days - Illness
 - a. Parent to submit note to register teacher OR
 - b. Parent to enter reason for absence in Homework Diary.
 - c. All notes to be retained and transferred in Learner Profiles at the end of each Term.
- 6.3 Absence for any number of days for Formal Assessment - Illness
 - a. Parent to submit note to register teacher with a doctor's note OR
 - b. Parent to enter reason for absence in Homework Diary and attach a doctor's note.
 - c. All notes to be retained and transferred in Learner Profiles at the end of each Term.

- d. Formal Assessment or Examination to be re-scheduled if possible.
Consult Management Team with regard to re-scheduling or the need to make alternative arrangements.

6.4 Absence for religious purposes or private matters

- a. Parent to submit a request to the Principal OR
- b. Parent to enter a request to the Principal in Homework Diary.
- c. Approval is subject to relevant legislation and is granted by the Principal or a Departmental Official with the authority to approve such absence.

6.5 Absence for extended periods of time

- a. If a learner is absent for 3 or more days without notification from a parent/guardian, then the register teacher must contact the parent to determine the reason for the absence.
- b. If the register teacher is unable to contact the parent or the reason for absence is not valid (illness, bereavement, etc.), then the teacher must escalate the matter to the Deputy Principal, in writing.
- c. If the Deputy Principal is not able to resolve the matter, then the Principal should be consulted.

7. **Excessive Absenteeism Procedures**

Refer Appendix 7

8. **Late Arrival Procedures**

Front Office staff: Entry in late-arrival book, at reception.

Receiving teacher: Entry in late-arrival page of homework diary.

9. **Repeated Late Arrival Procedures**

10 days:

Register teacher to request Appendix 2 from the principal and hand it to the learner for delivery to the parent.

15 days:

Phone call to parent from register teacher and Appendix 5 to be completed and submitted to principal.

20-40 days:

Register teacher to complete Appendix 6 and submit to the principal for School Management team intervention meeting with parents.

More than 40 days:

Register teacher to complete Appendix 6 and submit to the principal for referral to Department of Education and/or Social Services.

10. **Truancy Procedures**

All instances of truancy must be reported to the Principal and disciplinary action, in terms of the school Code of Conduct, must be taken.

A report on truancy must be included in the quarterly staticstics report.

11. **Reports and Procedures**

- a. The admin clerk in charge of late arrival and absenteeism must keep track of learners who infringe the code of conduct for points 6 to 9 and ensure that the required communication reaches parents or appropriate members of the Management Team or Department.
- b. The admin clerk must generate a quarterly report of absenteeism and late arrival and action taken and submit it to the Principal on the last Monday of each Term.
- c. The Principal must include a report of truancy in the quarterly staticstics report.

Signatures

Recommended by: (Principal)	G Mynhardt	Signature:	
Date:	22 February 2026		
Approved by: (SGB Chairperson)	A Naicker	Signature:	
Date:	22 February 2026		
Verification by GDE: (District Director/IDSO)		Signature:	
Date of Verification:			
Certified by :		Signature:	
Date:			

Appendix 1: Letter for Excessive Absenteeism



TOM NEWBY SCHOOL

P O BOX 13077, Northmead, Benoni, 1511
 Tel: 011 849 5311 Fax 011 849 7316
 Email: info@tomnewbyschool.co.za
 Website: www.tomnewbyschool.co.za

SUBJECT: Level 1 Parent Notification Letter – Learner absenteeism

Dear Parent

Notification Period

Term: _____ Year: _____

Your child, _____, in class _____ has been absent for _____ days in the academic cycle indicated above.

We acknowledge that some of these absences may have been due to illness, but policy requires us to communicate our concern that the excessive absence may impact on both the academic progress and social well-being of your child.

Your child's attendance in the next school term will be monitored. Should your child's attendance be cause for concern again, then you will be required to attend a meeting with the School Management Team to identify the reasons for absence and to find a way to ensure that regular attendance is achieved.

Your support and co-operation in this regard is sincerely appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Miss G Mynhardt
 PRINCIPAL
 Date: _____

Reply Slip: Excessive Absenteeism

I, _____, parent of _____ in class _____ acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's absenteeism.

Parent comment (if required): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Route: Register teacher → Principal

Appendix 2: Template Letter for Excessive Late Arrival



TOM NEWBY SCHOOL

P O BOX 13077, Northmead, Benoni, 1511

Tel: 011 849 5311 Fax 011 849 7316

Email: info@tomnewbyschool.co.za

Website: www.tomnewbyschool.co.za

Dear Parent

Your child, _____, in class _____ has arrived late for ____ days in the current academic year.

It is incumbent on the members of the School Management Team to communicate their concern that the excessive late arrival is likely to impact on both the academic progress and social well-being of your child.

As per the South African Schools Act and Tom Newby School Policy the School Management Team is required to ensure that all learners arrive at school on time and to report excessive late arrival to the Department of Education and/or Social Services.

Should your child arrive late again in the current academic year, then you will be required to attend a meeting with the School Management Team to discuss the reasons for late arrival and to find a way to ensure that your child arrives at school on time. Should this intervention not produce a constructive outcome, then the matter will be referred to the local GDE District Office for further action.

Your support and co-operation in this regard are sincerely appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Miss G Mynhardt

PRINCIPAL

Date:

Reply Slip: Excessive Late Arrival

I, _____, parent of _____ in class _____ acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's late arrival.

Parent comment (if required): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Route: Register teacher→Principal

Appendix 3: Quarterly Report on Excessive Absenteeism, Excessive Late Arrival and Truancy

Truancy

Learner's Name	Class	Action Taken

Excessive Absenteeism

[illegible]

Excessive Late Arrival

Learner's Name	Class	# days	Action Taken

Date: _____

Period of Report: Term ____ of 20 ____

Completed by: _____

Signature: _____

Principal Signature: _____

Date: _____

Comments and Trends

Appendix 4: Instructions for completing registers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Responsibility.** The register is an official document which may be used in legal proceedings. The principal of the school is responsible for its safety. The register must be managed as follows:
 - 1.1 **Daily management.** The register must be kept safely by the class teacher and locked up in the school office when not in use.
 - 1.2 **Archiving.** The principal must keep the register securely for at least three years after the last entry has been made.
 - 1.3 **Inspection.** The principal must produce the register for inspection if requested by a duly authorized official of the Provincial Education Department or by a duly authorised judicial officer.
 - 1.4 **Compiling and marking.** The class teacher is responsible for compiling and marking the register in a professional manner. The class teacher must mark the register during the designated class registration period (or periods) each school day. A learner may not mark the register.
 - 1.5 **Additions and alterations.** Additions and alterations must be made only by the class teacher. An error must be crossed out neatly so that the underlying text is legible and an alteration must be written clearly and initialled and dated. Correcting fluid may not be used.
2. **Compiling the register.** The register must be compiled as follows:
 - 2.1 **Gender.** In a co-educational school, list boys and girls on separate pages, first boys then girls. Write 'Boys' or 'Girls' in the space provided at the top of the page.
 - 2.2 **Multi-grade class.** In a class with more than one grade, a separate class register may be used for each grade.
 - 2.3 **Grade & Class.** Example: 'Grade 6B'
 - 2.4 **Quarter.**.....insert 1,2,3 or 4
 - 2.5 **No.** Give each learner a number starting with 1.
 - 2.6 **Surname/ First Name.** List the learner's names in alphabetical order by surname. **NB:** If a class teacher cannot accommodate the names of all learners on the register, a second register may be used.
 - 2.7 **Admission No.** Insert the learner's admission number. *TNS - Use class list.*
 - 2.8 **Week-Ending.** Insert the date of the last school day of the week.
 - 2.9 **Learner's biographical details.** This section is optional and is for use by the school for administrative and management purposes. Schools are free to add additional columns.
 - 2.10 **New learner.** The name of a learner who is admitted after the register has been compiled must be entered at the end of the class list. Rule a horizontal line in the row across the days that the learner has not attended. *Write 'N' in the square for the learner's first day of attendance.* **TAKE NOTE. This is new policy.**
 - 2.11 **De-registered learner.** Write 'D' in the square for the day that a learner is de-registered. Rule a horizontal line in the row from the following school day until the end of the quarter. A de-registered learner who is re-admitted during the same school term must be treated as a new learner and the class teacher must make a note to that effect against the original entry.
3. **Marking the register.** The register must be marked in black ink as follows:
 - 3.1 **When a learner is present.** Leave the square blank except on a new learner's first day, when 'N' must be written in the square.
 - 3.2 **If a learner is absent.** If the register is marked once a day, write a single 'a' in the square. If the register is marked twice a day, write a morning 'a' in the top-left corner and an afternoon 'a' in the bottom-right corner.
 - 3.3 **Temporary school closure.** If the school is officially closed on a school day, write the reason in capital letters in the column for the day (for example, EMERGENCY, RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY).
 - 3.4 **Public holiday.** When the school closes for a public holiday, write in capital letters in the column for the day 'PUBLIC HOLIDAY'. *TNS. Give description of holiday*
 - 3.5 **NSC Exams.** A horizontal line and the words 'NSC EXAMS' in capitals must be inscribed on a Grade 12 class register for the period from the start of the study leave period until the end of the school year.
4. **Daily summary.** The class teacher must each day compile a daily summary at the bottom of the page as follows:
 - 4.1 **Number of learners absent.** Add the column for the number of learners absent on that day and insert the sum in the correct space. *If the register is marked twice a day, add only whole day absences.*
 - 4.2 **Number of learners enrolled.** Insert the number of enrolled learners listed on the page. This number will remain the same from day to day except when a new learner is admitted or a learner is de-registered.
5. **At the end of each quarter.** The class teacher must fill the last column of the register as follows:
 - 5.1 **Days absent per learner.** For each learner add horizontally the number of days absent in the term and insert the sum in the correct space in the last column. *If the register is marked twice a day, add only whole day absences.*
 - 5.2 **Total number of learner absentee days.** Insert the total of all the figures in the correct space in the last column.
6. **Signatures**
 - 6.1 **Class teacher's signature.** The class teacher must sign the register at the end of each quarter to indicate that it is complete and correct.
 - 6.2 **Principal's signature.** The principal must sign the register at the end of each quarter to indicate that it is complete and correct. *TNS. Control teacher and Deputy to sign at the end of each week.*
7. **Biographical details (optional)**
 - 7.1 In the columns headed 'Mother deceased', 'Father deceased', 'Both parents deceased', 'Repeater', and 'Child support grant', write 'Y' if applicable.
 - 7.2 In the columns marked 'Home language' insert the code for the language or languages spoken most frequently in the learner's home.

Appendix 5: Parent Contact Sheet - Record of communication absenteeism/late arrival

Period of report	Term: _____ Year: _____
Number of days absent during period	_____
Number of days late during period	_____ (Attach time sheets)
Learner's name	
Class	
Staff member's name and surname	
Parent's name	
Contact number	
Date of call	
Reason given for absenteeism/late arrival	
Suggested solutions/ course of action to be taken	

Teacher's signature: _____

Date: _____

Principal's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 6: Register teacher's notification slip - absenteeism.

Period of report	Term _____
Learner's name	
Class	
Register teacher	
Parent's name	
Contact number	
Number of days absent during period OR Number of days late during period	_____ _____ Avg. late arrival time: _____
Details of previous action taken	

Teacher's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 7: Procedure for dealing with excessive learner absenteeism – Term 1

Term 1

Days absent	Action	Procedure
10-19	Letter to parent: Reminder of impact of absence on learning and appeal to ensure attendance.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the deputy principal. 2. Deputy principal requests admin to generate parent letters (Appendix 1). 3. Admin send letters to register teachers and places a copy in the Learner Profile. 4. Register teacher places letter in report envelope.
20+	Phone call to parent/Meeting with parent to determine contributing factors and to find a solution.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the deputy principal. 2. Deputy principal requests admin to generate a parent contact sheet (Appendix 5). 3. Admin sends parent contact sheet to register teacher and places a copy in the Learner Profile. 4. Register teacher contacts parent/schedules a meeting to discuss a solution to the absenteeism. 5. Register teacher records the content and outcome of the meeting/discussion on the contact sheet and attaches it to the blank contact sheet in the Learner Profile.

Appendix 8: Procedure for dealing with excessive learner absenteeism – Term 2

Term 2

Days absent	Action	Procedure
20-29 (2x10)	Letter to parent: Reminder of impact of absence on learning and appeal to ensure attendance.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the deputy principal. 2. Deputy principal requests admin to generate letters (Appendix 1). 3. Admin send letters to register teachers and places a copy in the Learner Profile. 4. Register teacher places letter in report envelope.
30-39 (2x15)	Phone call to parent/Meeting with parent to determine contributing factors and to find a solution.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the deputy principal. 2. Deputy principal requests admin to generate a parent contact sheet (Appendix 5). 3. Admin sends parent contact sheet to register teacher and places a copy in the Learner Profile. 4. Register teacher contacts parent/schedules a meeting to discuss a solution to the absenteeism. 5. Register teacher records the content and outcome of the meeting/discussion on the contact sheet and attaches it to the blank contact sheet in the Learner Profile.
40+ (2x20)	Request for meeting to determine contributing factors and to find a solution. Warning of referral to Social Services for support.	1. Register teacher uses the register totals from Friday in the last full week of the term to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and send it to the deputy principal. 2. Deputy principal schedules a meeting with parents and generates a parent contact sheet (Appendix 5). 3. Deputy principal meets with parent to discuss a solution to the absenteeism and the possibility of requesting Social Services to intervene/support. 4. Deputy principal records the content and outcome of the meeting/discussion on the contact sheet and attaches it to the blank contact sheet in the Learner Profile.

Appendix 9: Procedure for dealing with excessive learner absenteeism – Term 3

Term 3

Days absent	Action	Procedure
30-44 (3x10)	Phone call to parent/Meeting with parent to determine contributing factors and to find a solution.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the deputy principal. 2. Deputy principal requests admin to generate a parent contact sheet (Appendix 5). 3. Admin sends parent contact sheet to deputy principal and places a copy in the Learner Profile. 4. Deputy principal contacts parent/schedules a meeting to discuss a solution to the absenteeism. 5. Deputy principal records the content and outcome of the meeting/discussion on the contact sheet and attaches it to the blank contact sheet in the Learner Profile.
45-59 (3x15)	Request for meeting to determine contributing factors and to find a solution. Warning of referral to Social Services for support.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the deputy principal. 2. Principal schedules a meeting with parents and generates a parent contact sheet (Appendix 5). 3. Principal meets with parent to discuss a solution to the absenteeism and the possibility of requesting Social Services to intervene/support. 4. Principal records the content and outcome of the meeting/discussion on the contact sheet and places the contact sheet in the Learner Profile.
60+ (3x20)	Referral to Social Services for support.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the SBST. 2. SBST contacts social services for guidance and support.

Appendix 10: Procedure for dealing with excessive learner absenteeism – Term 4

Term 4

Days absent	Action	Procedure
45-69 (4x10)	Request for meeting to determine contributing factors and to find a solution. Warning of referral to Social Services for support.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the principal. 2. Principal schedules a meeting with parents and generates a parent contact sheet (Appendix 5). 3. Principal meets with parent to discuss a solution to the absenteeism and the possibility of requesting Social Services to intervene/support. 4. Principal records the content and outcome of the meeting/discussion on the contact sheet and places the contact sheet in the Learner Profile.
70+ (4x15)	Referral to Social Services for support.	1. Grade controller uses the register totals from Friday in the week before reports are issued to complete a notification slip (Appendix 6) and submits it to the SBST. 2. SBST contacts social services for guidance and support.