

THE NAIROBI WALDORF SCHOOL TRUST



Nairobi Waldorf School Trust (NWST) Pupil Absence and Attendance Policy

This Policy is issued on the authority of the Board of Trustees, Nairobi Waldorf School Trust.

Effective Date of the Policy: **12 November 2025**

Execution Date of the Policy:

Chairperson, Board of Trustees

Name: Pooja Patel

Signature:


Date:17th November 2025.....

POLICY AMENDMENTS

Serial No. 001
 Amendment
 Date of Policy 12th November 2025
 Nature of Change New Policy
 Name & designation of the authorized person Pooja Patel - Chair of the Board

POLICY AMENDMENTS

Serial No.	Amendment	Date of Amendment	Nature of Change	Name and designation of the authorized person	Signature of the authorizing person

1. Purpose

The Nairobi Waldorf School is committed to providing a stable and continuous learning environment. The purpose of this Pupil Absence and Attendance Policy is to:

1. Ensure the safety and well-being, and social and emotional development of all students through timely notification of absences.
2. Maximize educational continuity, as consistent attendance is foundational to the Waldorf pedagogy and academic success.
3. Establish clear, consistent, and equitable procedures for reporting, authorizing, and managing student absences and tardiness.
4. Fulfill the school's duty of care and compliance within the Basic Education Act regarding school attendance. [all relevant local regulations .]

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at NWST, their parents/guardians, and all school faculty and administrative staff responsible for recording and monitoring attendance. It sets out the standards, procedures, and consequences relating to pupil absence, and the school's approach to managing absences due to non-payment of school fees.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Excused Absence	Absence from school for a legitimate reason (e.g., illness, emergency) that is reported to and approved by the school administration.
Unexcused Absence	Absence from school without the prior consent of the school administration or failure to report the reason for absence within the stipulated time.
Planned Absence	Any absence for reasons other than unforeseen illness or emergency (e.g., travel, family events) that is known in advance and requires formal pre-approval.
Tardiness	Arriving at the classroom after the scheduled start of the school day or arriving late to any

	scheduled class period.
Habitual Absence/Tardiness	A pattern of frequent unexcused absences or tardiness that interferes with the student's education and requires administrative intervention.
Unpaid School Fees	When a student's tuition or other mandatory fees remain unpaid.

4. Absence Reporting Procedures

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring timely and proper notification of a student's absence.

4.1. Notification for Illness or Emergency

1. **Timing:** The school office **must** be notified by a parent/guardian (not the student) before **8:00 AM** on the day of the absence.
2. **Method:** Notification should be made via the designated school communication channel (e.g., WhatsApp to the class teacher and email to the school office (Karen Campus info@nairobiwaldorfschool.ac.ke; Lavington Campus lavington@nairobiwaldorfschool.ac.ke), or a phone call Karen Campus 0722823463 | - Lavington Campus 0728617423.
3. **Information Required:** The notification must include the student's full name, class/grade level, the reason for the absence, and the anticipated date of return.

4.2. Unreported Absence (Safety Check)

If a student is absent and the school has not received notification by **9:00 AM**, the following safety protocol will be initiated:

1. The Class Teacher will contact Admin by WhatsApp, who will then contact the parent/guardian via the primary emergency contact number.
2. If contact is unsuccessful after two attempts, the school will proceed to contact secondary emergency contacts.
3. Failure to establish contact within a reasonable period (e.g., 10:00 AM) may result in the school escalating the matter according to established Child Protection procedures to ensure the student's welfare.

5. Excused vs. Unexcused Absences

5.1. Excused Absences (Approved)

The following reasons, when properly reported, generally constitute an excused absence:

- Student Illness: Including infectious diseases requiring quarantine (see NWST HEALTH AND

ILLNESS POLICY).

- Medical/Dental Appointments: Only those that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours.
- Bereavement: Attendance at a funeral or critical family bereavement.
- Religious Holidays: Recognized holidays when observance requires absence from school.
- School-Authorized Events: Participation in official school activities, competitions, or field trips.
- Quarantine: As directed by a medical professional or public health authority.

5.2. Unexcused Absences

Absences are considered unexcused if they fall outside the categories listed above or if the proper notification procedure (Section 4.1) is not followed. Examples include:

- Oversleeping, traffic issues (unless extreme and reported immediately).
- Non-emergency private travel or family vacations taken during term time without prior approval (see Section 6).
- Personal convenience (e.g., shopping, recreational activities).

6. Procedures for Planned Absences (Leave of Absence)

NWST strongly discourages planned absences during term time, as continuity is paramount in the child's education, well being, and their understanding of the curriculum.

- **Request Submission:** Parents/guardians must submit a formal, written Request for Leave of Absence to the Administrative Director (AD) **at least two weeks** prior to the start of the planned absence.
- **Approval:** The PD, in consultation with the Class Teacher, will review the student's academic standing and attendance history before granting or denying the request.
- **Consequences:** If a student is withdrawn from school for a planned, unapproved absence, the time missed will be recorded as unexcused. Extended unapproved absences may necessitate a review of the student's enrollment status.

7. Tardiness Policy

1. **Definition:** Students are expected to be in their classroom and ready to begin their lessons at the stipulated starting time.
 - Kindergarten: 8:10 am
 - Primary school: 8:10 am
 - High school: 7:55 am.
2. **Recording:** Individual instances of tardiness will be recorded by the Class Teacher.
3. **Intervention:**
 - **Three (3) instances of unexcused tardiness** in a term will result in a warning letter to the parents/guardians.
 - **Five (5) or more instances** will require a mandatory meeting with the Class Teacher and a member of the Management Team to establish strategies for punctual arrival.

8. Academic Responsibilities for Absences

8.1. Teacher Responsibility

- Teachers are responsible for providing the necessary support and resources for the student to catch up on missed work upon their return.
- Teachers are not expected to prepare extensive lessons or tutoring services for planned absences.

8.2. Student/Parent Responsibility

- For excused absences, the student (supported by the parent/guardian) is responsible for completing all missed assignments, tests, and academic material within a timeframe agreed upon with the Class Teacher.
- For planned, pre-approved absences, the student/parent must consult with the Class Teacher prior to the absence to understand the scope of missed work and the expectation for completion.

9. Management of Habitual Absence/Tardiness

9.1 Habitual Absence

The school will intervene when a pattern of concern is identified:

1. **Threshold:** The Management Team will review the case of any student who accumulates **five (5) or more unexcused absences** in a single term, or ten (10) or more in an academic year.
2. **Intervention:**
 - **First Review:** Mandatory meeting with the Management Team, parent/guardian, and Class Teacher to identify the underlying causes and develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.
 - **Further Non-Compliance:** Continued habitual absence without improvement may lead to further disciplinary action, up to and including the non-renewal of the student's enrollment contract, as determined by the Management Team in consultation with the Board of Trustees.

9.2. Abandonment of Enrollment

1. **Definition:** If a student is absent from school for a continuous period exceeding **one (1) calendar month** without any formal notification to the school office or without an approved Leave of Absence (Section 6), the student will be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn from NWST.
2. **Enrollment Status:** The student's enrollment will be immediately terminated, and their place may be offered to a student on the waiting list.
3. **Readmission:** Should the family later wish for the student to be readmitted, they must re-apply through the full standard NWST admissions process, which includes the payment of all applicable admissions fees (including the application and enrollment fees, and the new student deposit) in effect at the time of re-application.

10. Management of Unpaid Fees

1. **Action for Non-Payment:** If a student's tuition or other mandatory fees remain **unpaid past the due date and any subsequent grace period** defined in the NWST Debt Management Policy, the school reserves the right to withhold admission to class. The parent/guardian will be formally notified in writing, specifying the outstanding amount, the reinstatement procedure, and the required payment deadline.
2. **Payment Deadlines (NWST Debt Management Policy)**
 - **Day 14** (Initial Reminder): An initial "overdue payment" reminder is sent, typically in the form of a soft copy of the account statement.
 - **Day 30** (Second Reminder): A formal reminder letter is issued. This step is designated as crucial for documenting the school's attempts to recover the debt promptly.
 - **Day 45** (First Demand Letter): The first demand letter is issued, formally notifying the parent/guardian that interest will accrue at a rate of 5% from the original due date until the outstanding debt is fully cleared.
 - **Day 60** (Final Demand Letter): A second and final demand letter is sent. This letter demands that payment be made within 10 days from the date of the letter, after which the debt will be transferred to an external debt collector or advocate for further action.
3. **Absence Recording:** The period during which the child is excluded from school due to fee arrears will be recorded as **authorized absence (financial)** but will still count toward the student's overall attendance record.
4. **Enrollment Termination:** If the outstanding fees are not settled within the timeframe specified in the NWST Debt Management Policy (See Point 4), **Day 70** (termination of enrollment letter), the student's enrollment contract will automatically be terminated. The student will not be permitted to attend classes until the financial obligation is met in full or a binding payment plan is agreed upon with the Finance Manager and Administration Director. Failure to make payment within the stipulated timeframe may lead to the replacement of the student's place.
5. **Reinstatement and Readmission:**
 - **Reinstatement (Prior to Termination in accordance with the policy):** Upon clearance of fees **within the stipulated timeframe**, the child shall be readmitted without prejudice, and arrangements made for an assessment or academic catch-up where possible.
 - **Readmission (Following Termination):** Reinstatement of a student following **enrollment termination** for unpaid fees requires settlement of all outstanding balances, payment of any applicable late fees, and re-entry into the school through the formal **admissions process**, including the payment of current admissions fees, an assessment to understand where to place the child, and shall be subject to space availability and approval by the Management Team and the Director of Administration.

11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

This policy is grounded in and guided by the following Kenyan statutes and regulations:

- **The Constitution of Kenya (2010):** Article 53 (1)(b) guarantees every child the right to “free and compulsory basic education”, placing an obligation on the school and parents to ensure attendance.
- **The Children Act (2022):** Defines the responsibilities of parents and educational institutions regarding the protection and welfare of children, including the right to education without discrimination.
- **The Basic Education Act (2013):** Governs the provision and management of basic education in Kenya and mandates compulsory school attendance for children of school-going age.
- **Basic Education Regulations:** Provides detailed operational rules for implementing the Basic Education Act, including provisions relating to pupil attendance registers and adherence to school rules.

This policy will be communicated to the entire school community at the start of each academic year.