



## Attendance Policy

Dussindale Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

The school will follow the Local Authority system where any pupil who has an attendance of 85% or less with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period **OR** 10 consecutive sessions (5 days) unauthorised absence will meet the criteria for legal intervention which could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education

Each year the school will set attendance/absence targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

### **Promoting attendance**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. We will ensure that our pupils and parents are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

### **Leave of absence in term time**

Leave of absence during term time is discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorise the absence in **exceptional** circumstances; parents must apply **in advance** for permission for their child to have leave of absence. Leave of Absence forms are available on the school website or from the school office.

If a child is absent on the fifth day of a week in which 4 days unauthorised holiday leave has been taken, the school will expect to have evidence that the child is absent for medical reasons on the fifth day, such as a response to a phone call to the home.

### **School Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education.

### **Registers**

Registers are completed on paper by the class teacher, or by any person providing cover for the class teacher. These are then entered on to the management information system by office staff.

### **Lateness**

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50am. The registers will remain open for ten minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.15pm.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be coded as late before registers close.

### **First Day Absence**

Parents are asked to telephone or e-mail the school before 9.20am to report a pupil's absence. If the school has not had contact from the parents of an absent pupil by 9.20am, the school administrator will attempt to contact the family by telephone, e-mail or text. The school administrator will transfer any information to the register through the e1 system. Teachers can access this information through their class computer.

### **Third Day Absence**

If a child is still absent on the third day and no contact has been made by the parents, a letter will be sent or e-mailed asking them to contact the school immediately upon receipt.

### **Continuing Absence**

If unexplained absence continues, a second letter will be sent home informing parents of the school's obligation to notify the Local Authority after ten days consecutive unexplained absence, and repeating the request to contact the school immediately.

### **Ten Days Absence**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be reported to the Local Authority by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. The school will include details of the action that has been taken.

### **Frequent Absence**

It is the responsibility of the office staff who manage the register to be aware of, and bring to the attention of the headteacher, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Health Adviser if the problem appears to be a medical one, or ask for medical evidence in the form of a medical certificate, prescription, doctor's note, etc. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO).

### **Persistent Absence [PA]**

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90%, unless due to known medical issues, will be subject to an action plan to support their return to full attendance. These action plans will be set up by the headteacher in collaboration with the AIO.

### **A Welcome Back**

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome, and that as far as possible, they are given an opportunity to catch up on missed work.

## **Categorisation of Absence**

**Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.**

#### **1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

#### **2. Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

#### **3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

- Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. These could include:
  - Work experience placements
  - Field trips and educational visits
  - Sporting activities
  - Link courses or approved education off site

If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered with, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

### The registration system

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorized absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

### Record preservation

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years.

Computer registers are printed out every half term and are also preserved as electronic back-ups.

### **Register Security**

Registers are taken to the school office at the end of every registration period, and the information is entered on to the management information system immediately.

### **Attendance Targets**

The school will set attendance targets each year based on an analysis of performance by the Senior Leadership Team towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work. The school will make use of the attendance data available on the "RAISEONLINE" system, when setting its target. Targets will relate to national averages.

**Our schools targets are:**

**Attendance rate of 96.5% or above**

**Persistent absence rate of 1.9% or less**

Any pupil with attendance below 85% over the school year is known as a persistent absentee, whatever the reason for the absences. The DfE has indicated that the level of absence that defines a child as being classed as PA may be reduced in future years.