



# Dorothy Barley Infant School

## Attendance Policy

**This policy was reviewed on:**

**Date: October 2022**

**By: P. Koniotes & A. Ratford**

**This policy was ratified/reviewed by Governors on:**

**Date: November 2022**

**Policy will be reviewed on: Sept 2024**

**Frequency of review: Every 2 years (or sooner as necessary)**

**Lauren Pearce**

(Executive Headteacher )

**Sue Matthews**

(Chair of Governors)

**Paula Koniotes**

(SLT Attendance Lead)

**Donna Scammell**

(School Attendance Officer)

**Karen Watch**

(BDSIP Attendance Officer)

Note: This policy has been written in line with the following guidance:

- *DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance May 2022)*
- *DfE ' Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022): Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges.*

**Overall Vision / Aims:**

- Maintain an attendance rate of a minimum of 96%.
  - Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.
- Maintain good punctuality.

**Good attendance is important because:**

- Statistics show a direct link between underachievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders settle into school more easily.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Parents:**

- Parents can check our Attendance Policy and procedures via our website.
- Parents will sign our Home School Agreement on enrolment and will receive annual reminders.
- Ensure their child attends school regularly. Absence should only happen when the child is significantly ill and therefore unfit to attend school, or if there is an unavoidable/unforeseen reason or circumstance which is causing a difficulty/period of difficulty.
- Parents should inform the school on the first morning of any absence to give us the reason for the absence. This can be done via telephoning the school office or emailing the school.
- Arrange all non-emergency medical appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- Frequent absence claimed as illness must be supported by medical evidence.
- Keep us updated daily by telephone.
- Inform the school if there is a problem that might lead to absences.
- Make sure we always have current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers, child minders and at least one emergency contact.

**Pupils:**

- Attend regularly
- Be in school on time

Nursery – 8.30am or 12.30pm start

Reception to Year Two- 8.50am start

**Dorothy Barley Infant School:**

- Follow up unexplained absences by texts, phone calls and letters as necessary.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in letters, the school prospectus, parents' evenings, open evenings, Home school agreement and pupils annual reports.
- Report our attendance rate to parents in weekly newsletters.
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance and punctuality. Good attendance is promoted in weekly assemblies and using a range of incentives such as certificates, badges and end of year rewards.
- Publish your child's attendance rate on their annual school report.

**Attendance Lead/Officer:**

- Attendance and punctuality are regularly monitored. Poor attendance/ punctuality will lead to formal letters/ parents' meetings.
- Inform parent/carer if we have concerns regarding a child's attendance and punctuality. This may include meeting in school to discuss barriers to attendance and offer support. The meeting will be minuted with outcomes for future reference and relevant staff made aware of their role.
- If we continue to have concerns, we will refer to our Attendance Officer or may involve other agencies such as Early help/ Social Care.
- Please see Appendix B, guidance for monitoring pupils' attendance.
- Oversee the accurate registration of pupils.
- Set attendance targets.
- Follow up long-term absences or persistent absence.
- If after 3 days school staff do not receive notification of a child's absence and staff are unable to contact the parent, the AO (Attendance Officer) will be contacted to carry out a home visit.
- If the AO cannot locate the child after carrying out a home visit, a tenancy audit will be processed and the LA's Child Missing Education officer will be informed. The AO will determine if a police welfare check is necessary at this point in liaison with the school.

**School Office:**

- First Day calling for pupils on the PA (Persistent Absence) list by 11.00am each day.
- First Day calling for pupils with attendance/other concern.
- Contact parents daily on each and every day of absence if the parent has not informed the school of the reason for absence.
- Report any concerns/information to Attendance Lead/Officer (see above for non-contact which could be fewer days for specific pupils).
- Support parents in liaison with Attendance Lead/Officer and refer as necessary to appropriate agencies where attendance is an issue.

**Class Teachers will ensure that:**

- They are aware of the attendance policy and their role within the process.
- They build and promote good relationships with parents and families and are aware of any barriers to attendance, refer as necessary.
- Support pupils and families following attendance meetings with SLT Lead as required/ after prolonged periods of absence due to illness.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently (registers close at 9.05 am)
- Pupils' attendance is recorded for each session.
- Any concerns around attendance are reported to SLT Lead/ Attendance Officer.
- They inform parents of the importance of attendance and punctuality at meet the teacher meetings, parents' evenings, induction meetings etc.
- They report on attendance and punctuality in end of year reports.
- They follow up with parents about absence/welcome back and ensure parents are made aware where the impact on their education is being affected. For example, they are regularly missing a lesson/ session.

**Authorised Absence**

Some absences may be authorised at the discretion of the school.

Following DfE guidance, the X code will be used for certain absences relating to Covid-19.

## Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent that the school will not authorise. These are known as 'unauthorised' absences.

### Request for Leave of Absence, inclusive of holidays in term time

*The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 has been amended. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed, together with rights for parents to apply for up to 10 days holiday during term time. Head Teachers are no longer permitted to grant leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances.*

If this leave is not authorised, the Local Authority may issue a penalty notice to each parent of £60 for each child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the time scale, the penalty will increase to £120. If the higher penalty notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority will consider legal proceedings.

### **A SPECIAL LEAVE FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE HEADTEACHER AT LEAST 14 DAYS BEFORE THE PERIOD OF ABSENCE.**

- The form is available from the school office.
- Tickets etc. should not be booked before permission is granted by the Headteacher.

**If a child has unauthorised absences without good reason, legal action can be taken in regard to these, this can either be a Penalty Notice Fine and/ or Prosecution through the courts.**

## Punctuality

It is important for children to be on time for school, so they do not miss valuable learning time, targeted intervention groups and reading groups.

### Pupils should arrive at school:

Nursery	8.30am (Morning and 30-hour Nursery) 12.30pm (Afternoon Nursery)
Reception, Year One and Year Two	8.50 am
Gates Close	9.00 am
Morning registration is completed	9.05 am
Late marks issued (L)	9.06 am- 9.30 am
Unauthorised Absence (U)	After 9.30am for the remainder of the morning session

- Pupils arriving after 9.00am should enter through the school office.
- Parents must then sign their child in and give a reason for being late.
- All lateness is recorded daily. The information is reviewed at attendance meetings and appropriate action will be taken.
- Children should be collected promptly at the end of the day.

### End of the day arrangements:

End of Morning Nursery	11.30am
Gates open	3.08pm
Reception	3.10pm
Years One & Two	3.15pm
Afternoon and 30-hour Nursery	3.30pm

- Where late collection is persistent, parents will initially be invited to a meeting. If late collection continues, parents will be invited to meet with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who may refer to Children's Services, should the late collection not be resolved.
- If a child is not collected from school and we are unable to contact parents, the school will share concerns with Safeguarding Agencies.

### Leavers

- When a child leaves our school ( other than at the end of Year Two to go to Dorothy Barley Junior Academy) parents are asked to give the school comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and the new address and telephone numbers, their child's new school and the start date when known.
- When a pupil leaves and we do not have information about where they have gone, the child is considered to be a 'Child Missing Education'. The school will endeavour to locate the child but failure to do so means the child will be reported to the Attendance Officer and the Local Authority.
- The Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies, to try and locate the child.

### School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning sessions, and again during the afternoon session. Since 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (see Appendix A).

## Appendix A

### The following national codes will be used to monitor attendance

/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved Education activity
C	Other Authorised circumstances	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil is attending another establishment)	Approved Education activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family Holiday (Not agreed)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (Not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education activity
L	Late (before register closes)	Present
M	Medical/ Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence	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 trip or visit	Approved Education activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non- compulsory school age pupils /COVID related absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils (Planned whole or partial school closure)	Not counted in possible attendances

## **Appendix B**

### **Absence Notification**

- Parents are informed they must contact the school on the first day of absence and every day thereafter, if their child is unable to attend school and provide a reason for the absence- only the school can authorise an absence.
- Parents can notify the school in one of two ways: via phoning the school office or emailing the school office.
- The school will contact the parent of any pupil who is absent from school where a reason has not been provided. This will happen on a daily basis.
- If the school has not received a reason and have been unable to contact the parent for three days, the pupil will be referred to the school's attendance officer who will follow up with a home visit and if necessary referral to the LA's Child Missing Education Officer.
- There may be times when a vulnerable pupil is referred earlier than three days.
- If there is social care involvement the social worker will be informed as necessary.

### **Monitoring Pupils' Attendance**

- Fortnightly meetings will take place with the Attendance Officer where pupils' attendance that is of concern will be discussed.
- Prior to this fortnightly meeting, the Attendance Officer (Admin) will monitor all pupils' attendance and add to a monitoring spreadsheet, where applicable.
- A pupil may be added to the spreadsheet at any time, i.e. when a concern is raised or identified through the daily phone calls.
- The percentage level for adding to the spreadsheet will be 90% or below although this may vary at different times of the year and if there are particular patterns of absence, e.g. absent on a certain day of the week or any other concerns.
- Monitoring of children whose attendance is between 93% and 91% will also be monitored and kept on a spreadsheet.
- Before each meeting the current level of attendance will be monitored alongside a printout of the attendance since the previous meeting.
- When a pupil's attendance initially becomes a concern, a letter will be sent from school expressing our concerns ( including Nursery).
- If the poor attendance is not usual for a particular child, a phone call may be made to enquire if there are any issues that the school need to be aware of.
- If the attendance does not improve, the parent will be invited in to meet with the attendance Lead/Officer when the barriers to attendance will be discussed and outcomes recorded.
- If following this meeting there is no improvement, the parent will be contacted by the school's external Attendance Officer (AO) who will write and/or meet with the parent.
- The parent may be sent a letter stating that all absences must be accompanied by 'medical evidence' for the school to authorise the absence.
- If the poor attendance persists the pupil will become an official referral to the AO who will carry out regular home visits with a view to taking further action in there is no improvement.
- Support and guidance will be offered and plans put in place to assist with improving the attendance.
- If following this there is no improvement, the AO may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or consider court action.
- If the attendance remains an issue the school and/or the AO will consider making a referral to Early Help/Children's Services.

- If engagement with Early Help/Children's Services fails, a parenting contract will be discussed with the parent in liaison with the External Attendance Officer.