

Danecourt School

Attendance and Registration Policy



Danecourt School
VALUED, RESPECTED,
SAFE & SUCCESSFUL

Approved by:	Cathryn Falconer	Date: March 2019
Last reviewed on:	March 2018	
Next review due by:	March 2020	

Rationale

This policy was written using DfE Guidance (updated September 2018), the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 together with later amendments and the requirements of the Education Act 1996, the Children Act 1989, the latest Ofsted Framework (September 2015). and the Code of Practice for Schools and Education Welfare on Attendance Matters (Medway 2000).

It is reviewed with the school's allocated Attendance Advisory Practitioner, to reflect good practice. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school and arrives on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Irregular attendance undermines their education and sometimes, puts pupils at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour. Reasons for lateness and non-attendance may be complex and outside the control of the school, but school must actively pursue the goal of regular attendance.

The school has a legal duty to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. School staff are committed to working closely with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance and punctuality as possible. Your commitment and support is appreciated.

Parents/Carers should ensure: -

- Children arrive on time
- Children are properly dressed
- Children are in a condition to learn
- That any reason for absence is reported as soon as is reasonably practicable
- They know the school's arrangements for notifying absence

Danecourt School should ensure: -

- A prompt start to the school day
- A suitable learning environment
- That the school's Attendance and Registration Policy is known and available to all parents
- That all messages reporting reasons for absence are passed to the right person

Attendance expectations

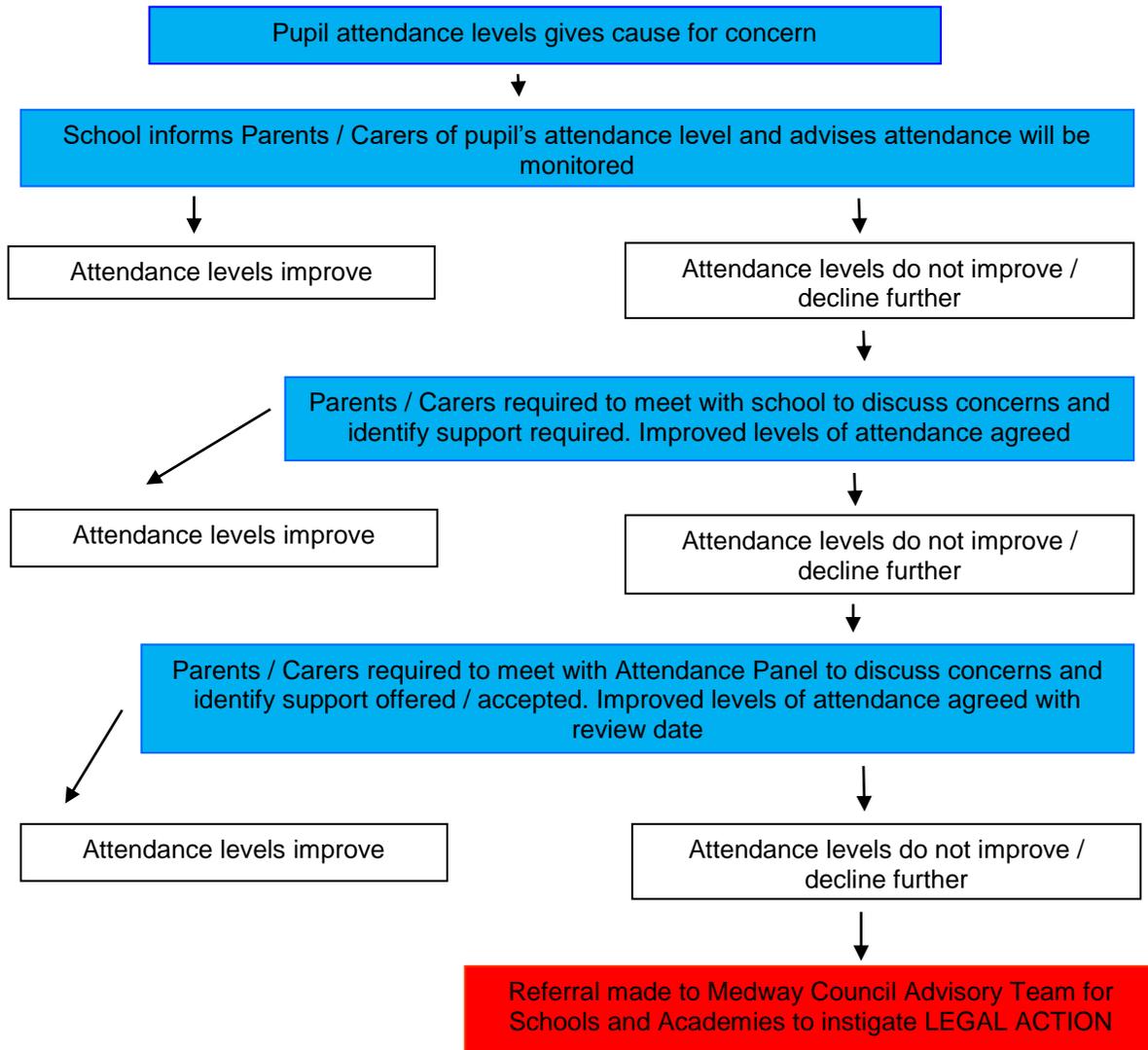
Children are expected to attend school daily. They are expected to arrive at the start of the school day at 9.00am via the school transport or delivered by parents and not before the stated time.

Lateness

Children who arrive late, but before 9.10am will be marked present in the normal way. Those arriving after 9.10am, but before 10am will be marked late, but counted as present for the morning session.

In responding to lateness, the Headteacher will take into account individual circumstances and, where there are genuinely unavoidable problems, the appropriate adjustments will be made to the register.

Action taken by the school is a pupil's attendance levels give cause for concern



Persistent Absence

The school has a special responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. This adds up to missing almost half a term. These are called "persistent absentees" by the Government,

whatever the reason for their absence. Special procedures may be applied to children at risk of falling into this category.

The Daily Routine

All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually.

In the event a pupil is unable to attend school, parents are expected to contact the school each day of absence by 09:00 via the absence email; attendance@danecourt.bptrust.org or by telephone 01634 232589

The following information should be included:

- Name of pupil
- Class
- Reason for absence

As part of our safeguarding responsibilities, if a child is absent and the school has not received contact from a parent with an explanatory reason for absence, a member of staff will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.

Monitoring Lateness and Attendance

The school takes lateness and absence very seriously and will monitor and take action accordingly by way of:

- Telephoning and / or emailing parents
- Sending letters of concern to parents
- Conducting home visits
- Inviting parents to the school to discuss their child's attendance
- Close monitoring of attendance registers
- Inviting parents to an attendance clinic
- Referring pupils with low attendance to the Attendance Panel
- Referring from the Attendance Panel to the Local Authority leading to the maximum penalty in accordance with Medway's Educational Welfare System

Requests for Leave of Absence

The school follows guidance set by the DfE and the local authority. Only the Head of School, on behalf of the governing body, can authorise absence. Holidays or other absences during term will not be granted unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. The school will determine what are exceptional circumstances and the number of days the child can be away from school should leave be granted. Therefore, we ask that holidays are not booked during term time. If you wish to request leave for any reason other than medical grounds, you **must** put the request in writing before the leave takes place. The Absence Request form can be downloaded from the school website or a hard copy requested from the school office.

If unauthorised holiday or leave is taken during term time, the matter will be passed to the Attendance Advisory Service for consideration for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

A Fixed Penalty Notice issued by the Attendance Advisory Service is a fine to each parent/carer who has day to day responsibility of the child(ren). This is a

£60 fine if paid within 21 days rising to £120 thereafter, which is payable to the Local Authority. A failure to pay the fine will result in court action being taken.

Medical / Dental Appointments

We ask that medical or dental appointments are booked outside of the school day. However, if an appointment during the school day is unavoidable please contact the school via; attendance@danecourt.bptrust.org attaching a copy of the appointment card or letter. Alternatively, you can send a copy of the appointment letter / card into school. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, a 'present' mark may still be awarded if the child attends for as much of the session as they can. It is always better to attend for some of the session, than missing the whole day. We expect pupils to be collected as late as possible (allowing for any travel time) and returned to school immediately following the appointment.

Rewarding Good Attendance

The school celebrates good attendance. This is celebrated on a termly basis with pupils getting to choose an activity of their choice.

The Attendance Advisory Service for Schools & Academies

The school has a dedicated Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP). The AAP will closely monitor the attendance registers. Where children have an undue amount of absence, unauthorised or authorised, the following action will be taken:

- Parents will be sent a letter of information advising them of the number of missed sessions and reminding them of their responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to ensure their child's regular and punctual attendance. Parents will be sent a first warning letter if the absence has not improved or an acceptable reason been given (i.e. Medical notes received) requesting parents meet with school staff. The purpose of this meeting is identify any support that can be offered in order to improve attendance.
- Parents will be sent a second warning letter if the absence has not improved confirming the date of the Attendance Panel Meeting to attend and advising the parents of possible court action.
- Attendance Panel Meeting convened termly to discuss and review selected pupil's attendance and determine next steps including taking court action. If Attendance Panel members decide court action is required, parents will be sent a letter outlining legal proceedings.

Categorising Absence

Absences are either **authorised** or **unauthorised**.

Authorised Absence

This is an absence with permission from the Head of School or other authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absence for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided e.g.

- Sickness
- Family bereavement
- Public performance

If your child suffers with sickness and/or diarrhoea, then they will need to be kept from school for 48 hours following the last bout of illness.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is recorded as Unauthorised "O" when a child is away from school without school's permission. Parents / Carers cannot authorise absence.

Absence will not be authorised if:

- Another member of the family is ill
- The family have over slept or had a late night
- There are problems with uniform / clothing
- There is a family event such a birthday/family treat
- School dates have been forgotten
- You take your child shopping

The public sector equality duty of the Equality Act 2010 has been considered in the writing of this policy. A Discrimination Impact Assessment concludes that through this policy Danecourt seeks to:

- ***Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.***
- ***Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.***
- ***Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.***

Protected Characteristics: age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.