

Dalton School

Attendance Policy

School Vision

To inspire an aspiration for individual and community success, through hard work, bold endeavour, respect, resilience and partnership.
From little acorns, mighty oaks will grow.

Effective schools convey their positive regard for regular attendance to parents, pupils and teachers. Children quickly pick up the message that their presence is important. The twice-daily requirement to register pupils can and should be perceived as an opportunity for the school to receive children formally from home, and serve as an introduction to the session.

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (Where the school approves pupil absence e.g. medical reasons)
- Unauthorised (Where the school will not approve absence e.g. holidays)

If a child is absent, parents should call the school on each day of the absence stating a reason (before 9am if possible). Any family not notifying school of the absence will receive a telephone call from a member of our Honeysuckle team. *In some cases* a home visit may be carried out. A note should be sent on the day the child returns to school explaining the absence. The school will then decide whether to authorise the absence. If authorisation were to be refused, for instance if a child were kept off school for a birthday or a holiday, then the parents would be informed. A note is essential for authorisation of absence.

N.B from February 2012 following advice regarding safeguarding, all nursery children will be monitored daily in the same way as the rest of the school.

The school will reward classes with the best attendance with a certificate in weekly assemblies and individual children with 100% attendance in July.

Completing the register

The marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that its importance is lost. However, incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are documents that may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school. They also contribute to pupils' end of term reports and records of achievement. For these reasons it is very important our computerised registers are correctly completed twice a day, during morning and afternoon registration.

Family holidays during term time

- Holidays during term time will not be authorised. An absence record of 90% represents 10% of missed teaching and learning time.
- If parents still decide to take their children away on holiday during term time they must avoid examination periods e.g. SATs in May
- They will receive a letter not authorising the holiday.

- The school reserves the right to issue a Penalty Notice in line with Kirklees Code of Conduct should unauthorised holidays take place.
- A letter G will be entered for unauthorised holidays.

A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement, which we, and you, must seek to avoid.

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Leave

Leave of absence for pupils will not be authorised by the headteacher unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is at his/her discretion to determine what is considered to be "exceptional" and advice may be taken from the local authority.

If you do intend to take your child out of school during term time, for any other reason other than medical, you MUST make a request in writing, well in advance of the absence.

You also need to be aware that if your child fails to return to school following 20 days of absence, he/she is at risk of losing their school place

Penalty Notices may be issued:

- Where parents have not sought permission from the head teacher before taking their child out of school for leave during term-time
- If the head teacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway
- If a child has not returned by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation

AND

- Where the individual leave of absence has been recorded by the school as unauthorised in the attendance register on at least 10 consecutive session (5 School days)
- Until the conclusion of an appeal in the Supreme Court (2016) relating to a legal challenge around the definition of 'regular attendance' the child's overall school attendance will be taken into consideration

Consequences of unauthorised absence

- The possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued (to each parent for each child)
- The possibility of losing the school place, and the likelihood of being re-admitted to the school
- The possibility of prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for repeat offences of unauthorised leave of absence
- The possibility of a fine up to £2,500 or 3 months imprisonment for non-payment of a penalty notice should the case go to court

Lateness

School begins at 8.55am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time. Any child arriving later than 8.55am should enter via the main entrance reporting to the school office. If accompanied, a parent or carer should give a reason for the lateness, which will be added to the register. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

The role of the Community Liaison Officer

Our Community Liaison Officer closely monitors attendance and lateness along with Learning Mentor. It is their role to contact parents following unexplained or persistent absence or lateness. They work with families to determine whether there are underlying problems and encourages parents to ensure that their child(ren) maintain prompt and regular attendance. All families where attendance is 90% and below will receive a letter, usually at the end of the half term or sooner if necessary should she deem it appropriate. The Community Liaison Officer may report any concerns relating to attendance to the Attendance and Pupil Support department who will decide if further action is needed.

What can parents do to help?

- Let the school know as soon as possible why your child is absent
- Try to make appointments outside school time (or only take the part of the day off that is needed, not the whole day).
- Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary.

If you are worried about your child's attendance at school what can you do?

- Talk to your child, it may be something simple.
- Talk with our Community Liaison Officer.
- Talk to the class teacher or the Head teacher.

If it continues...

- The school may refer to the Attendance and Pupil Support Officer
- The Attendance and Pupil support Officer's role is to print out absence lists and prioritise home contact to ensure that any unexplained absence is followed up as soon as possible.
- Amend pupil records on the system once reasons for absence have been discussed to designate an absence authorised or unauthorised.
- Provide a weekly attendance printout showing whole school, year group and class averages.
- Liaise with monthly meetings with the School Liaison Office, Learning Mentor and Office Manager to agree priorities/strategies re individual student's attendance.
- To complete attendance referral forms based on highlighted major school concerns.
- Help the school to achieve its annual attendance target.

You may also be referred to the school nurse should absences due to ill health become lengthy. You may contact the Attendance and Pupil Support Worker, Family Doctor/School Nurses who will work with you and the school to resolve the situation.

Useful Numbers

School Number: 01484 538729

Community Liaison Officer (as above)

Learning Mentor (as above)

Office Manager (as above)

Attendance and Pupil Support Officer: 01484 221919

School Nurse: Mill Hill 01484 347895

Next review date: Autumn 2018