



## Dallimore Primary and Nursery School

### Attendance Policy

#### Good Attendance

The Department for Education states: **‘Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and the most effective schools recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset.’**

#### **We believe:**

Good attendance is essential if children are to take full advantage of opportunities offered to them at school and to develop the educational and social skills which are to equip them for life.

We aim to achieve good attendance by implementing this policy through the ethos of the school whereby parents and carers, staff, children and the local authority can work together in partnership.

We encourage good attendance by liaison with families, consulting with other agencies when this is appropriate and we regularly monitor attendance and work to solve any identified problems quickly.

Our attendance policy is based on equal opportunities for all.

Our Attendance Target is **96%**

#### We aim to:

- Promote good attendance as the norm, encouraging the government recommended rate of 95% or above for each child
- Help every child to reach their maximum potential unhindered by unnecessary breaks in their school life
- Demonstrate that good attendance is valued by the school
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement in increased attendance and dealing with difficulties

#### To achieve this we:

- Help children to be more aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality by classroom discussion and reward systems
- Identify barriers to good attendance and punctuality and provide appropriate interventions for families who we are working with to improve attendance
- Communicate with parents in relation to their child’s attendance

- Recognise and support the key role of all staff in promoting and monitoring good attendance
- Continue regular contact with outside agencies when necessary

### **We reward good attendance by:**

- Rewarding both good and improved attendance through treats and certificates eg
  - all children over 95% are entered into a prize draw.
  - children with 100% for the whole year are again given a treat at the end of the academic year
  - children are rewarded for improved attendance and punctuality

### **Communication with Parents**

The school communicates regularly with parents about attendance issues through newsletters and parent consultations. A copy of this policy is available on the school website & all parents are issued with a summary and leaflet when their child is admitted to school (including Nursery). Copies are also available in the school office and on the school website.

If a child is absent from school and no notification has been received, parents are contacted on the same day by text or message on Dojo to ascertain why their child is absent. If no response is received then a follow up phone call is made and, if still no response, a formal written letter is sent to the parents to ascertain the reason why their child has been absent from school.

At least once a term an attendance review is carried out to ascertain overall attendance levels and individual attendance levels. A report is created to track progress and trends and children whose attendance is a cause for concern are contacted. At this stage formal attendance meetings can be triggered and help identified. This may include liaising with other agencies, meetings with parents and attendance targets set.

### **Responsibilities**

The Head Teacher is the attendance co-ordinator and is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school has a robust attendance policy and is reviewed regularly
- Organising rewards for good attendance
- Supporting staff in monitoring and dealing with problems
- Supporting families and children in sorting out difficulties
- Publicising the school's attendance record when required
- Ensuring that the information is entered into the MIS from registers is accurate and up to date.

### **The Business Assistant is responsible for:**

- Undertaking **First Day Response** for children who are absent:
  - by text before 9.30am
  - If no response from parent/carers contact should be made by telephone by 11.30am

- If no response contact is also tried via Class Dojo
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will inform the Office of any children who require communication with Social Care or Multi-Agency Team in relation to attendance ie the family are subject to a child protection/ child in need plan/ Multi-Agency work. If such a child is absent, DSLs will decide whether the relevant worker should be contacted to inform them of the absence/ lack of response and make the call.
- If no further communication is received, then an absence letter is sent to the parents/ carers by post. These are sent out weekly for absences from the previous week.
- Collating an evacuation report following the submission of the electronic registers, entering the appropriate codes for children who are absent and those arriving late, after the gates have closed at 8.55am and when the registration period has closed at 9.10am.
- Recording verbal and telephone messages from parents in writing and passing on this information to class teachers (via the electronic registration system), School Business Manager, Headteacher, designated safeguarding lead or outside agency as necessary. Notes are also entered on the daily register/ week view screen.
- Producing various reports required by the Headteacher, governors and the Local Authority.
- Liaising with Learning Mentors to ensure that any parents of absent children on their caseload are contacted to establish the reason for this and offer any support and advice

**The class teacher is responsible for:**

- Ensuring that the registers are completed accurately at the beginning of each session
- Liaising with the Headteacher/ School Business Manager with regard to any concerns regarding attendance and patterns of absence or punctuality
- Ensuring, along with colleagues, that the ethos in the class and the school is supportive of good attendance

**The family is responsible for:**

- Making sure that their child attends school regularly and punctually, unless prevented by illness or medical appointments
- Letting the school know as soon as possible, why their child is absent
- Providing medical/ dental appointment information as necessary
- Talking to the class teacher or Headteacher as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school, so that problems can be identified quickly and dealt with

**Regulations and guidance for Schools in dealing with requests for Leave for Exceptional Circumstances**

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These Regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.

On 6th April 2017 there was a Supreme Court challenge and subsequent appeal, in relation to the Platt v Isle of Wight case, determined that under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 attending school

'regularly' means "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school"

Therefore, the School can consider the issue of a penalty notice for **any period of holiday absence** which has not been authorised by the Headteacher **regardless of a child's wider school attendance**.

Each request is reviewed on an individual basis alongside the child's attendance level in order to assess if there are exceptional circumstances. All requests must be made in writing on the application form (see Appendix 1) with reasonable notice – where possible at least two weeks in advance

Only the Head Teacher or Deputy has the authorisation to grant leave in term time.

### **The school governors have issued this statement.**

As a general rule:

- Absence requests will only be authorised if there are exceptional circumstances.
- It is likely that you will be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised (If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996).
  
- Additionally, as a general rule, please note:
  - If, at the time of any unauthorised absence being taken, **attendance is below 90%** then a penalty notice will be issued
  - If the period of absence/ holiday is greater than **5 days** then a penalty notice will be issued
  - If more than one period of absence has been taken in an academic year, and the total is greater than 5 days, then a penalty notice will be issued
  - If it is suspected that a holiday has been taken and parents/ carers have not been honest about this (eg have called to say their child is unwell) then a challenge will be made and it is likely that a penalty notice will be issued
  - If unauthorised leave is taken and, in the previous academic year a child's attendance was less than 90% or they have been on attendance monitoring, then it is likely that penalty notice will be issued

### **GDPR and Data Protection**

Data will be processed in line with the General Data Regulations Policy and Data Protection Regulations.

**Date of policy: July 2023**

**Review date: Summer 2024**