



Dinnington First School Draft Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Rationale

Ideally, school should be a place to which pupils wish to come. They should be interested in what is on offer and be able to contribute to the school as a community. It is essential that a school's effectiveness in terms of curriculum delivery be maximised through a high rate of attendance.

Aims

- 1) To ensure the presence and participation of all children at all times.
- 2) To ensure that high priority is given by the school to good attendance and that all stake holders take responsibility for it.
- 3) To ensure that where attendance is not good pupils, parents and the school work together to improve it.

Guidelines

Registers

1. Registers are legal documents and are marked twice a day using an electronic system.
2. Parents must always give reasons for absence to the school.
3. The school determines whether absence is authorised or unauthorised in exceptional circumstances, considering factors such as frequency, duration, attendance patterns, i.e. within reason. Staff must be observant of situations where absence is continually condoned by parents. The guidelines below clarify possible actions.

AUTHORISED	UNAUTHORISED
Illness.	Absence without valid reason.
Medical/ Dental Appointment	Latecomers beyond 30 mins after session starts.
Family Bereavement.	Persistent lateness within the first 30 minutes of the day
Religious observance	Minding the children, brothers or sisters.
Excluded children	Shopping during school time.
Sport/ Music/ Exams	Special occasions, e.g. birthday.
Agreed other educational reasons at the discretion of the Headteacher	Holidays other than for exceptional circumstances.
Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances (unique and/or one off situations) following permission from the headteacher. (see detail below)	Any other activity not authorised by the school.

Holidays during Term Time

Parents are not entitled to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. Any application for leave can only be in exceptional circumstances and an application

form must be completed at least four weeks before the expected absence. The headteacher will consider the application and consult with governors when necessary.

Governors will consider whether parents will be fined by means of Penalty Notices or Prosecutions in the Magistrates Courts by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school. The decision to do this will be at the discretion of the governors following an assessment of each case.

The school seeks to improve general class attendance and to improve attitude of persistent absentees by:-

- a) Informing parents of our expectations and ways of helping combat poor attendance in the form of information provided letter
- b) Present 100% attendance certificates to pupils, when possible.
- c) Other incentives used at the schools discretion
- d) Following up persistent offenders with parents and allocated attendance officer from safeguarding support.

To support this the school has daily and weekly systems:

Daily Admin Attendance Routines

- List the pupils who are late
- Check pupils are in school against on line registers
- Ring parents when pupil is not in school
- Contact attendance officer when requested to do so.
- After having received phone call/ made contact with parents mark missing pupils on line with appropriate reason e.g ill or medical appointment
- Mark online register for the pupils who have approved holiday
- Print attendance information when requested by Head Teacher /attendance officer.

Weekly Lead Professional Attendance Routines

- Deal with any concerns reported by teaching, classroom or adult staff.
- Check attendance of all pupils where attendance is less than 95% - check reasons for absence and follow up with the attendance officer.
- Check attendance of all pupils where more than 3 sessions have been entered as late – check reasons for lateness and follow up with the attendance officer. Check holiday requests against late and absence lists and liaise with class teacher re impact upon education before a decision is made. Complete paper work and return to Admin to update systems and send copy to parents. Where holidays not agreed ensure parents have a clear understanding of reasons and actions needed
- Where attendance /lateness does not improve after attendance officer contact arrange in school meetings, these to be followed up with Parenting Contract.
- Monitor impact of Parenting Contract and thank parents for their collaboration where improvements achieved or move to legal proceedings where child's education continues to be detrimentally affected by attendance / lateness.
- Take appropriate actions after unauthorised holidays taken including, if necessary asking attendance officer to arrange an attendance panel.

Reintegrating Long Term Absentees

Following a long period of absence, a child may feel vulnerable, so staff may wish to arrange a phased or gradual return, allocation of a 'Key Worker', consider whether Special Needs support is appropriate, ensure that all staff are aware of the situation and nominate a key person to monitor the child's reintegration into school. All children must feel welcomed back and know from whom they can seek help. Never leave children sitting in corridors or outside an office for long periods.

Improving Punctuality

Repeated absence at the beginning of a school session can amount to failure to attend regularly for the purpose of 1993 Education Act. The school seeks to improve general punctuality and to improve attitude of persistent offenders by:-

- a) Informing parents of our expectations and offer ways of helping combat lateness.
- b) Contacting parents and informing the attendance officer about persistent latecomers.
- c) Acknowledging and praising latecomers who improve.
- d) Ensuring that staff set a good example by arriving punctually for lessons.
- e) All children and parents must understand that lateness is actively discouraged and parents and pupils are aware of this.
- f) Using incentives to improve levels of punctuality e.g wrist band for achieving monthly target

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of all these issues through the traffic light system, will be the responsibility of the Headteacher, the class teachers and the attendance who will all work together to resolve these issues with the family.