



## Pupil Attendance Policy

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An academy within:



“Learning together, to be the best we can be”



# 1. Aims

## 1.1 This Policy aims to:

- Set out our approach to promoting good school attendance allowing all our young people to reach their full potential
- Outline the legal duties ensuring that children and young people receive efficient full-time education
- Explain when an absence is authorised or unauthorised
- Share our absence procedures
- Give details of our graduated approach to persistent and severe absentees
- Provide links to related policies and further information

# 2. The Importance of Attendance

2.1 For all our children and young people to be able to achieve their full potential it is vital that they attend school and are on time each day, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

2.2 All children have the right to a full-time education. However, for children with SEND this can be more difficult to achieve. Despite this, our attendance ambition must be the same as any other child but with the correct support and reasonable adjustments in place.

2.3 We understand that achieving attendance rates above 90% can be challenging for some pupils with significant needs. However, we aim to work together with these families to get as close to this as possible.

2.4 Promoting good attendance is a group effort and the foundation of this lies with establishing an exciting curriculum, positive relationships and supporting everyone's individuality.

2.5 Children and young people who are able to achieve attendance rates above 90% will be celebrated at the end of each half term. Class bases may also apply their own attendance rewards to encourage children and young people to attend regularly.



## 3. Legal duties

- 3.1 The Education Act (1996) states that parents/carers must ensure that children and young people of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- 3.2 For pupils registered at a school, this means that pupils must attend regularly and punctually; failure to do so may result in their parents/carers committing a criminal offence.
- 3.3 The government guidance 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' (2024) states that improving attendance is everyone's business. It acknowledges that barriers to accessing education are wide and complex; therefore, schools need to work in partnership with parents and pupils to remove these barriers.
- 3.4 Regular attendance is essential to allow pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including attainment, wellbeing and wider life lessons.
- 3.5 As a school, we are required under The Education Regulations (2006) to take attendance registers and share data of attendance with the DfE.

## 4. Types of Absences

- 4.1. Each absence from school needs to be classified as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. Therefore, it is vital to contact school to give information regarding the cause of an absence.
- 4.2. Absences can only be classified as authorised by school not by parents/carers. Authorised absences may include a range of reasons: illness, medical/dental appointments (which unavoidably fall in school time), emergencies or other unavoidable causes.
- 4.3. Where school does not consider an absence to be reasonable, it will be classified as unauthorised. This type of absence occurs regularly, it will trigger our graduated approach to severe and persistent absence. This type of absence includes:
  - Parents/carers keeping their child off unnecessarily
  - Absences which haven't been properly explained
  - Taking time off for birthdays



- Keeping a child off to look after other children
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed

4.4. If you are unsure as to whether your child should stay off school, you can find more information on the NHS website ([Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)).

## 5. Our Absence Procedure

5.1. Parents/carers should advise the school office that their child will be absent via telephone or Class Dojo as soon as possible or before 8:45. Office staff will then inform class teams that the pupil is absent.

5.2. We operate a first day response policy, therefore the office will contact you if a pupil is absent and no adequate reason has been provided. The office will contact you with a telephone call to establish the reason for absence and an expected return date.

5.3. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to keep school informed when a child is expected to be absent for a long period of time.

5.4. It is advised that medical and dental appointments are made outside of the school day where possible. Where this is not possible, the school office should be informed as soon as possible and proof of appointment may be requested. If this is the case, pupils are expected to attend for part of the day.

5.5. In the case where a pupil is absent and there is no contact from parents/carers we will conduct a home visit after 3 days. For more information on our absence procedure see Appendix 1.

## 6. Graduated Response to Persistent and Severe Absence



6.1. To enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential we aim for every child to achieve attendance above 90%. In the case where a child misses 10% or more of school, this will be defined as 'persistent absence'.

6.2. If a child becomes persistently absent, we are committed to working together with families to identify any barriers that are preventing children/young people from attending. This process will begin by meeting a member of the Family and Behaviour Team to discuss next steps (See Appendix 2).

6.3. Severely absent pupils are those that miss 50% or more of school and will need more intensive support. Where this is the case, ongoing communication between school and families is essential to support the child/young person integrating back into school.

6.4. We understand that each case of absence is different and endeavour to work with each family to support them. However, if attendance continues to decline and regular contact between school declines, school may begin to follow local authority guidance which may include steps towards prosecution.

## 7. Related Links

7.1. Further information and policies can be found at the following links.

- [Nexus Trust Attendance Policy](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Resources for families | Children's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Promoting Good Attendance & Punctuality - City of Doncaster Council](#)
- [Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service - City of Doncaster Council](#)



## Appendix 1 – Absence Procedure

### First day of absence

- parent/carer to contact the office before the start of the school day
- details of reason for absence and expected return date

### If NO contact is made from parent/carer

- school office to phone home
- dojo message sent if no answer
- If still no further action, extended family and friends to be contacted.

### Second day of absence

- parent/carer to contact the office before the start of the school day
- update on pupil and expected return date

### If NO contact is made from parent/carer

- office to follow up with phone call, dojo message and e-mail
- ELT informed of no contact
- Next steps to be considered

### Three or more days of absence

- parent/carer to contact the office daily
- FAB team to contact families if absences is not due to illness to discuss concerns

### If NO contact is made from parent/carer

- office to follow up again and inform of home visit if contact is not made
- FAB team to assess circumstances. Possible home visit following dynamic risk assessment.

**If NO contact is made after 15 days school will follow procedures to report child as missing in education.**

Days 4-7 continued contact via phone/dojo.  
A home visit between 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> day regardless of contact or not. Safe and well check.  
Attempted contact to continue if no contact from Home visit until CME deadline.

CME referral to be submitted on 15<sup>th</sup> school of absence.



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## Appendix 2 – Graduated Response

If absence drops to 90%, we will begin the graduated response to support child and young people in improving their attendance and reintegrating into school. We understand that absence can happen for a number of different reasons. Therefore, responses will be individualised to support the needs of the children/young people and families involved. At each stage of the approach, a minimum of 15 days will be given to show an improvement.

