



# STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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Trust Key Reader	KB
Approved by Trust Board	October 2023
Review Date	October 2024



This policy applies only to Dinnington High School

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## **1.0 Aims and Principles of Good Attendance**

1.1 The School is committed to maximising the achievement and attainment of all students. There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement. Regular and punctual attendance is vital if students are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the School.

- Parents/carers play an important role in supporting the School and encouraging students to reach good attendance levels.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at the School.
- The School will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance.
- The School expects all students to strive to achieve 100% attendance.
- Please refer to Appendix A for further guidance on the impact of attendance.

## **2.0 Statement of Expectations**

### **2.1 What you can Expect from the School**

- We will promote 97-100% attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
- We will work closely with parents/carers where a student's absence is cause for concern.
- We will support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality.
- We will support students returning to school after prolonged absence.

### **2.2 What the School Expects of the Parents/Carers**

- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their child/children attend the School on time and every day, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To inform the School of any reason that will prevent their child/children from attending via:
  - Telephone communication: 01909 550066 press 1 from the menu offered or use the following extension numbers 408/418
  - Email using the attendance email: [attendance@din.leap-mat.org.uk](mailto:attendance@din.leap-mat.org.uk)
- To ensure that they contact the School by 8.15am on each day their child is unable to attend and that their child returns to the School with a valid reason for absence.
- To contact the School in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from the School.
- To inform the School of any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, arrange appointments outside of the School day.
- To provide at least two up to date contact telephone numbers to ensure the School are able to contact you (parent/carer/family member).
- Contact school if your contact details change
- Attend meetings when requested to discuss attendance.
- Provide medical evidence to enable the School to provide appropriate support for students following illness/medical conditions.
- To avoid arranging holidays during term time.

- As per statutory guidance all schools have legal powers to address poor attendance in school. This may include where required (but not exhaustive):
  - Parenting contracts
  - Parental orders
  - Fixed penalty notices

### **3.0 Registration**

- The law requires the register to be taken twice a day.
- Each day counts for two (am/pm) marks of attendance or absence.
- Students who are late at Dinnington High School will attend a 'next day' detention session. Parents will be informed of this. Students are expected in the School by **8.25 am** as at **8.30am** the entrance gates will be closed. They should be arrive for tutor time no later than **8.35am**.
- Students can enter the building from **8.30am**.
- Tutors take registers electronically at **8.35am**. A mark is added for every student present (/). Students who are absent are recorded as (N) no reason yet provided for absence. The attendance team will then proceed to investigate any absence for safeguarding reasons.
- Once a reason for absence is established, appropriate absence codes are recorded in the register. These codes may be pre-entered where the School has received prior information from parents/carers.
- Registers are taken at the start of every lesson throughout the day.
- If a student arrives after **8.30am**, they will go to the late gate and a 30-minute next day detention will be issued.
- After 8.30am, if a student does not arrive late and parents/carers have not made contact safeguarding checks will be put in place.
- If a student arrives after 9:05am a student will not receive their morning mark and will be coded as unauthorised (U). This will affect the student's attendance.
- Sanctions, including detentions, operate for late arrivals. Parents will receive texts, phone calls and letters regarding punctuality and may even be invited into the School for a meeting if punctuality remains an issue.
- Please see Appendix D for DfE attendance coding list.
- Guidance on applying the Education (pupil registration) Regulations 2006 can be found in 'School Attendance' published September 2018 by the DfE.

### **4.0 Understanding Different Types of Absence**

Only the School can certify absence as authorised or unauthorised, not parents.

This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required to ensure a student's attendance is correctly categorised.

#### **4.1 Authorised absences**

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the School for an acceptable reason. Illness will be reviewed according to the following criteria (but not exhaustive):

- Medical documentation
- Illness (that cannot be treated with over the counter medication)

- and/or medical/dental appointments, which unavoidably fall in the School day, emergencies or other unavoidable reasons.
- Patterns of attendance / absence

See Appendix B for details regarding requesting a leave of absence and Appendix C for more information on absences for medical reasons.

## 4.2 Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences are those, which the School does not consider to be reasonable and for which no leave of absence has been approved. This type of absence can lead to the local authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Minor illness i.e. headache, period pain, stomach ache, sore throat, cold/sniffles. (These can all be treated with over the counter medication).
- Parents keeping children away from the School unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the School day.
- Absence that has never been properly explained.
- Students who arrive in the School too late to receive their mark.
- Shopping, looking after other children, or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time that have not been agreed.

Where a child's attendance level gives cause for concern, which the School deems to be below 95% or a total of 8 days of absence, the School may choose not to authorise any further absence(s), whatever the reason given unless supported by medical evidence from a medical professional.

Whilst most students will be away from the School because of illness, some individuals can be reluctant to attend.

Any such problems with irregular attendance are best resolved between the School, the student and parents/carers.

If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend the School then we encourage the family to work with all involved to understand the root problem. When necessary we engage the support of other agencies such as the School Nurse and Local Authority Early Help Team.

## 5.0 Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All members of School staff have a role to play in improving attendance and reducing absence.

### 5.1 Subject Teachers

- Welcome and value the attendance of all students to lessons and link to progress.
- Will ensure all students are accurately registered.
- Will ensure that students know the register is being taken.
- Will identify student absence to lessons and take appropriate action.

- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

## 5.2 Form Tutors

- Will discuss absence and attendance weekly with students using the attendance tracker.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff (Attendance and Welfare Officer).
- Will work with identified students, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets
- Will ensure that any absence notes or verbal messages are sent to the Attendance Office/Reception.
- Will reward students for 100% attendance by following a whole school attendance rewards strategy

## 5.3 Pastoral Leaders and Heads of Year

- Will monitor absence and attendance of their cohort.
- Will undertake home visits where applicable.
- Will discuss attendance and absence in weekly meetings with the Head of Achieve
- Will discuss absence and concerns with students, and where appropriate, implement an 'attendance support plan'
- Will contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified.
- Will support students to improve their attendance.
- Will support in attendance meetings with students, parents/carers and other agencies
- Will promote attendance through the pastoral curriculum, including assemblies and tutor time programme
- Will work with other members of staff to share information and support students and their parents/ carers to improve attendance.

## 5.4 Principal Attendance Officer

- Will take the lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the School, including improving attendance and reducing persistent absence.
- Will monitor absence and attendance regularly.
- Will undertake home visits daily where appropriate.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will liaise with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified and provide support to improve their child's attendance.
- Will lead attendance meetings with students, parents/carers and other agencies
- Will support students to improve attendance.
- Will work with outside agencies, including Early Help and the Local Authority, where appropriate, to improve attendance of individual students.
- Will monitor students who are dual registered, including those students who are undertaking managed moves or alternative provision.

- Will provide data to the Headteacher, Senior Leaders and other relevant members of staff on a regular basis.

#### Student Support Officer

- Will monitor absence and attendance regularly with a specific, identified cohort and work to remove barriers to attending school regularly.
- Will undertake home visits daily where appropriate.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will liaise with the appropriate members of staff.
- Will contact parents/carers where attendance concerns have been identified and provide support to improve their child's attendance.
- Will lead attendance meetings with students, parents/carers and other agencies
- Will support students to improve attendance.
- Will work with outside agencies, including Early Help and the Local Authority, where appropriate, to improve attendance of individual students.
- Will monitor students who are dual registered, including those students who are undertaking managed moves or alternative provision.

#### 5.5 Attendance Officer

- Will monitor registration on a daily basis (attendance and punctuality) and ensure the appropriate registration marks are recorded accurately.
- Will receive calls and messages from parents/carers regarding student absence.
- Will contact parents/carers regarding student absence where no information is received for an absence (Please note the expectation is that parents/carers should make contact with the School). This is for safeguarding reasons.
- Will issue attendance and punctuality reports to Pastoral Leaders and other relevant staff on a daily and weekly basis.
- Will identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the Principal Attendance Officer

#### 5.6 Senior Leadership Team

- Will ensure the School attendance policy is implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Will ensure the whole School ethos promotes excellence in attendance and punctuality.
- Will monitor the curriculum to develop ways of improving the provision of educational experience.
- Utilise attendance data to inform strategic planning.

#### 6.0 Response to Attendance Issues

- The School's action plan to improve attendance will be reviewed constantly.
- The School will identify and monitor students whose attendance gives cause for concern.
- Returns on persistent absences (90% and below) will be made to the Local Authority each half term.

- Appropriate strategies will be employed in order to address the attendance of individual students.
- Attendance data will be collected, analysed and monitored. The School will respond to any areas of concern identified.
- After an extended period of absence (5 or more days), re-integration procedures will be followed. This will include an initial consultation meeting with student and parent/carer and close monitoring by a key member of staff. A personalised programme of return may be considered if appropriate.

Please see DfE statutory guidance 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/269469/health\\_needs\\_guidance\\_-\\_revised\\_may\\_2013\\_final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269469/health_needs_guidance_-_revised_may_2013_final.pdf)

## **7.0 Statutory Requirements, the Law and the Local Authority**

- Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible to ensure their child receives a suitable education.
- Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a parent who fails to ensure their child attends the school at which they are registered, is guilty of an offence.
- The School works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders, or referral to the Magistrates Court, which can recommend fines (up to £2500), or up to 3 months in prison.
- All sanctions are used to improve attendance and punctuality and reduce absence.

### **7.1 The School will follow the guidelines set out by the Local Authority below:**

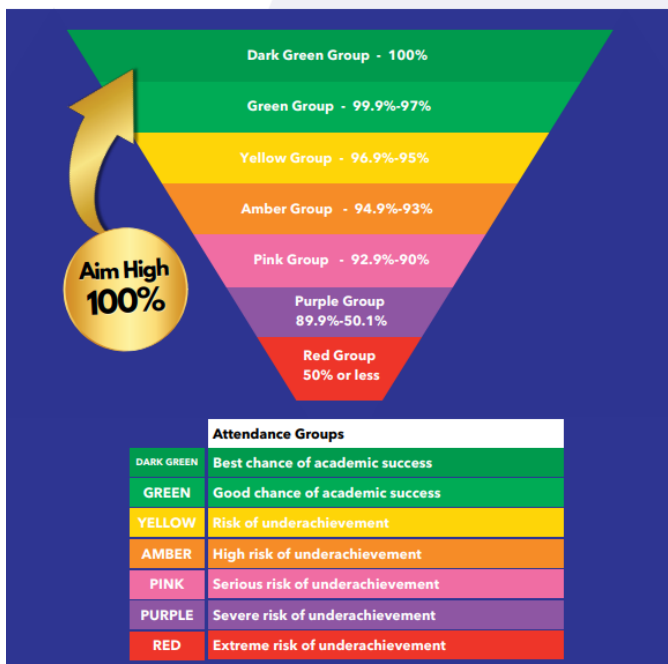
- A broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at the School.
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance.
- Efficient and accurate recordings of attendances and punctuality.
- First day contact with parents when a student fails to attend the School.
- Any barriers to attendance are dealt with efficiently.
- Close liaison with the attendance team to assist and support families where needed.
- Notification to parents/carers of attendance through reports and letters home.
- When a student's attendance raises a cause for concern, parents/carers will be notified of this concern via the Local Authority letter (Attendance Pathway letter 1) and a meeting scheduled with appropriate professionals in the School, to plan for improvement. Early Help will be offered at this time.
- Where a student's attendance continues to raise cause for concern, parents/carers will receive a letter inviting them to meet with appropriate professionals in the School, to plan for improvement (Attendance Pathway letter 2) and Early Help will be offered.



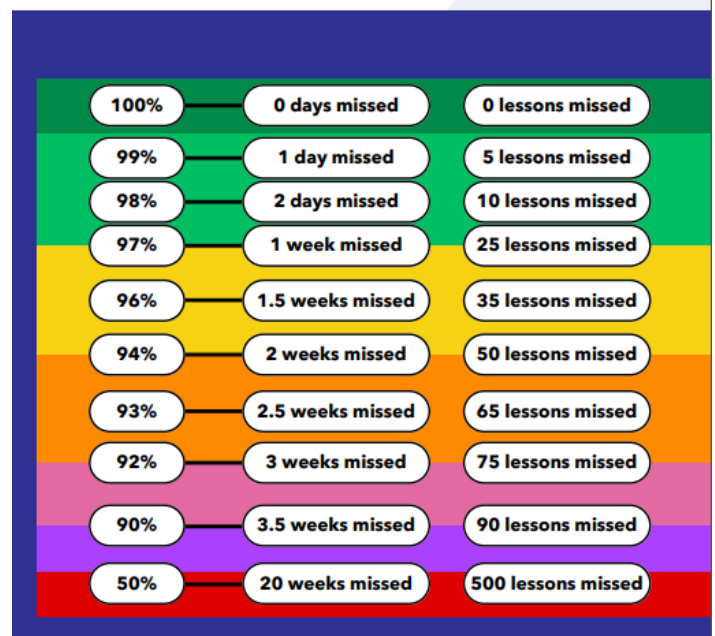
- Where absence continues to be an issue, parents/carers and students will be notified by letter that the matter will be referred to the Local Authority School's Attendance Pathway, LASAP (Attendance Pathway letter 3). A further meeting will be arranged with Local Authority representatives, legal representatives, the Attendance and Welfare Officer, a senior leader and other professionals that may support improvement.
- A student becomes a Persistent Absentee (PA) when they miss 10% of their schooling across the Academic year, for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we require parents/carers full support and co-operation to tackle this. Any student whose attendance has reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards this, is given priority for intervention. This can include personal action plans, referrals to other agencies and implementing the Attendance Pathway (above). Please refer to the Local Authority School Attendance Pathway policy:
- When attendance is consistently good, and in cases where there has been significant improvement, students will be rewarded. This can include postcards, certificates, events in the School and visits out of the School, as well as regular prize draws. (please refer to the School rewards policy for further details).

## Appendix A – Impact of attendance

### ATTENDANCE PYRAMID



### ATTENDANCE MATTERS



## **Appendix B – Leave of Absence**

### **Holidays**

#### **Request for leave of absence**

1. The document attached should be completed and returned to the School reception in time for the request to be considered well before the discussed period of absence.
2. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the School decision regarding the request.
3. The School cannot authorise leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins. The only time the School will authorise is exceptional circumstances, such as:
  - Leave for a bereavement of a close family member. Funeral service only. Not extended leave.
  - Time to visit seriously ill relatives.
  - Leave for important religious observances, to only include ceremony and travel time.
  - Leave for families of service personnel returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during the school holidays.
  - Reasonable adjustments for students with SEN or disabilities.
  - Leave for families who may need time to recover from trauma or crisis.
4. The Department of Education makes it clear that the schools may not grant leave of absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The School will determine the number of school days a child/student can be away from school, if leave is granted.
5. There is no automatic right to leave in term time.
6. We understand the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays, particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects; they should be in school during term time.
7. Each case is considered individually and on its own merits. The School will take account of:
  - Exceptional circumstances stated.
  - The stage of the child's education, progress, and the effects of the requested absence.
  - The current and previous attendance pattern of the child.

**THE SCHOOL EXPECTS EVERY STUDENT TO STRIVE TO ACHIEVE  
100% ATTENDANCE**

## **Appendix C - Medical Appointments and Illness**

I would like to remind parents of the protocols relating to medical appointments and related absence:

- Ensure your child attends before/following the appointment. School is open from 8.15 and the attendance office is open from 8.00am. Inform the Pastoral Leader and Attendance team of the appointment. Students to leave via the attendance office/reception.
- Ensure your child returns to school after the appointment via the attendance office, even if it is for the last part of school, the student will still receive their mark and can collect any missed work.
- We will not authorise medical appointments if there is full day absence and the whole day is not required.
- Try to ensure regular appointments e.g. orthodontist, are arranged during the school holidays or after school where possible.
- We do understand that some appointments cannot be changed, however always request an alternative or later appointment that day eg after school.
- Please obtain proof of medical appointments. For example, this could be an appointment card from the Doctor's receptionist, a copy of the prescription, or sight of the medication issued, as medical appointments will NOT be authorised without evidence being provided.
- Talk to any member of the inclusion team about medical help offered in the School. You may not be aware that medication can be administered and stored securely at the School for your convenience.

There are some misconceptions about illnesses, please note the following:

In Secondary Schools:

- Students with conjunctivitis can attend unless they are feeling very unwell.
- In cases of sickness and diarrhoea, please allow 24 hours after the last episode before returning to school.

If in doubt, please check with the School Health and Mental Health Lead Practitioner.

Finally, your child's attendance will be affected by time off for medical appointments but more importantly; this will have a negative impact on learning and progress. Thank you for your continued support in ensuring your child's attendance and commitment to their education.

Further information provided by the NHS is available from the School. Please contact us if you require an information booklet provided by the NHS which gives advice on what medications are available to buy over the counter for minor conditions. You may find this helpful.

## **Appendix D – DfE attendance coding list**

<b>Register Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
/	Present AM **
\	Present PM **
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present **
I	Authorised absence due to illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) – A positive covid result
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
H	Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday
E	Authorised absence as student is excluded, with no alternative provision made
C	Authorised absence as student is absent due to other authorised circumstances
B	Approved education activity as student being educated off site ( NOT dual registration) **
D	Dual registered (at another establishment) - NOT counted in possible attendances **
J	Approved education activity as student is attending interview **
P	Approved education activity as student is attending an approved sporting activity **
V	Approved education activity as student is away on an educational visit or trip **
W	Approved education activity as student is attending work experience **
G	Unauthorised absence as student is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
U	Unauthorised absence as student arrived after registers closed
O	Unauthorised absence as student missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
N	Unauthorised absence as student missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
X	Non-compulsory school age absence - not counted in possible attendances **COVID related isolation period
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances **
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances **