

**Pupil Attendance Policy**

<b>Policy Title</b>		Pupil Attendance Policy			
<b>Author / Reviewer</b>		Senior Leadership Team			
<b>Trustee Committee</b>		Delegated to the Headteacher			
<b>Signed by Tom Pegler (Headteacher)</b>					
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**Policy Statement**

Dove House School Academy believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Regular school attendance supports pupils in achieving their full potential enabling them to become confident, resilient young adults.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling good attendance.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Early intervention and the development of a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

We follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which sets out the parents' duty to cause their child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to age, ability, aptitude and special needs.

Dove House School Academy will work with our families to identify the reasons for any unsatisfactory attendance and will try to resolve any difficulties.

Dove House School Academy's attendance target is 94 percent this year

## 1. Legal Framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2019) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pupils with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

## 2. Definitions

Where students of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

2.1. Dove House School Academy defines "absence" as either:

- Not attending school for any reason.

2.2. Dove House School Academy defines an "authorised absence" as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments, which **unavoidably** fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

2.3. Dove House School Academy defines an "unauthorised absence" as:

- Parents keeping pupils away from school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences, which have not been properly explained.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

2.4. Dove House School Academy defines "persistent absenteeism (PA)" as:

- Missing 10 per cent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

### 3. Key Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1. The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of Dove House School Academy. The Board of Trustees will also agree attendance targets with the school and where appropriate, will link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school.
- 3.2. The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Attendance Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 3.3. The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy.
- 3.4. The Headteacher has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- 3.5. The Headteacher will ensure there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- 3.6. The Headteacher will ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those educated off-site.
- 3.7. The Headteacher that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- 3.8. The Headteacher will ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and also evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- 3.9. The Headteacher will ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department of Education as required, to meet statutory obligations.
- 3.10. Staff, including teachers and support staff will be responsible for following the Attendance Policy, and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 3.11. Staff, including teachers and support staff will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 3.12. The school will ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- 3.13. The school will inform the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:
  - Are being educated from home.
  - No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
  - Have an authorised medical note.
  - Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
  - Have been permanently excluded.

- 3.14. Parents will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time.
- 3.15. Parents will be expected to promote good attendance and ensure that pupils attend school every day.
- 3.16. Pupils will be expected to attend school every day unless they are ill.
- 3.17. Pupils will be expected to attend lessons punctually.
- 3.18. Pupils will be expected to report any absence immediately to the relevant member of staff.

#### **4. Training of Staff**

- 4.1. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Attendance Policy as part of their new starter induction.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

#### **5. Absence Procedures**

- 5.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of any absence.
- 5.2. Parents are required to send a note on the first day their child returns with a signed explanation as to why they were absent unless they have phoned or e-mailed to explain.
- 5.3. Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the school office where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.
- 5.4. A phone call/text message/email will be made to the parent of any pupil who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- 5.5. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Headteacher and/or Parent Partnership Officer.

#### **6. Contact Information**

- 6.1. Parents must provide accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- 6.2. Parents are responsible for updating the school if the details change.

#### **7. Attendance Register**

The designated person will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion, they will record whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

7.1. Dove House School Academy will use the national attendance codes to enable the school to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Authorised absence
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site educational activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- S = Study leave
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- W = Work experience
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- J = At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- D – Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z – Pupil not on admission register

7.2. When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who

are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, for example: induction days.

- 7.3. All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment, and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

## **8. Persistent Absence**

- 8.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the Headteacher who will attempt to resolve the situation through a parent agreement.

## **9. Lateness**

- 9.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance, and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 9.2. The school day starts at 8:50am; pupils should be in their classroom at this time.
- 9.3. Registers are marked by 9:15am; pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 9.4. The register closes at 10:00am; pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- 9.5. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.

## **10. Truancy**

- 10.1. Truancy means any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
- 10.2. All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of pupils, and the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.
- 10.3. All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 8:50 am and 2:50 pm, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically.
- 10.4. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return.
- 10.5. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting.
- 10.6. If truancy is suspected, the Pastoral Team is notified, who will contact the pupil's parents, in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.
- 10.7. In the first instance of truancy, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them, of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.

## **11. Missing Children**

- 11.1. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the Headteacher.
- 11.2. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing during the school day:
  - The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the Headteacher immediately.
  - The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
  - A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Headteacher.
- 11.3. The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - Changing rooms
  - Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
- 11.4. Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted. If a pupil cannot be found, parents will then be called.
- 11.5. If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, then the police will be contacted.
- 11.6. The missing pupil's teacher makes a note on SIMS and CPOMs, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- 11.7. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has any special educational needs and/or disabilities, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- 11.8. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- 11.9. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located
- 11.10. The Headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupil understands they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- 11.11. The Headteacher will carry out an investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- 11.12. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

## **12. Term-Time Leave**

- 12.1. At Dove House School Academy, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 12.2. Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- 12.3. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be considered.
- 12.4. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
  - During Year 7 when a pupil is settling into the school
  - Immediately before and during assessment periods
  - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
  - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10** percent for any reason
- 12.5. If term time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice.

## **13. Religious Observances**

- 13.1. Dove House School Academy will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- 13.2. Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.
- 13.3. The day(s) of absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.

## **14. Appointments**

- 14.1. As far as possible, parents should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 14.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the school.
- 14.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, the pupil must be signed out by a parent.
- 14.4. Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

## **15. Young Carers**

- 15.1. Dove House School Academy understands the difficulties young carers face, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school, as well as throughout their time at the school.
- 15.2. Dove House School Academy takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

## 16. Exceptional Circumstances

- 16.1. When absence is due to exceptional circumstances, the 'Y' code will be used on the attendance register.
- 16.2. Exceptional circumstances include when a pupil is unable to attend because:
- The school is fully or partially closed.
  - Transport provided by the school or LA is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance.
  - There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the pupil from attending.
  - The pupil is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.
- 16.3. The use of the 'Y' code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

## 17. Support Systems

- 17.1 Dove House School Academy recognises that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a pupil's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make the school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, this will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.
- 17.2 The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance, strategies used may include:
- Discussion with parents/students
  - Parenting Contracts
  - Referrals to support agencies
  - Learning mentors
  - Friendship groups
  - Family learning
  - Reward systems
  - Additional learning support
  - Behaviour support
  - Written warning to improve
- 17.3 In the case of long-term absence, please refer to the Pupils with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School Policy.
- 17.4 Any support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Dove House School Academy will consider the use of legal sanctions.

## 18. Rewarding Good Attendance

- 18.1. Dove House School Academy acknowledges 100 percent attendance through pastoral reward trips.
- 18.2. Good attendance and punctuality will be rewarded in the following ways:

- Certificates
- Badges
- Star Cards

18.3. School trips and events are a privilege. Where attendance drops below 90 percent, these privileges may be taken away.

## **19. Sanctions**

19.1 Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- There is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive unauthorised absence, excessive holidays in term time and persistent late arrival at school.
- A pupil has accrued unauthorised absence following a written warning to improve.

19.2 Penalty Notices will be issued in accordance with the Local Authority protocol.

19.3 Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance the Local Authority will be advised, which in turn may lead to prosecution.

## **20. Monitoring and Review**

20.1. Dove House School Academy Trust Board will monitor the school's attendance levels and related issues through termly reporting at their Board meetings.

20.2. The policy will be reviewed every two years by the Senior Leadership Team and will be approved by the Headteacher.

20.3. Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all members of staff.