

## Attendance Policy

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# ATTENDANCE POLICY

Dursley C of E Primary Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. In order to do this we will:

- promote regular attendance, thus offering all pupils equal access to learning
- safeguard the wellbeing of pupils
- meet Government attendance targets
- create a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents
- ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days possible.

There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when we have received a reasonable explanation for the absence of a child, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when we have not received a reason for absence or have not approved a pupil's absence after a parental request.

We will monitor all pupil absence, including trends or patterns of absence. This will be taken into consideration before authorising absence.

## A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

## Compliance

Dursley Primary Academy is fully compliant with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended in 2013. For further information, please visit: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure that pupils attend school. Permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Failing to attend school on a regular basis may be considered a safeguarding matter.

### **Responsibility for Attendance**

Attendance is the shared responsibility of parents/carers, Dursley Primary Academy and the Local Authority.

#### Academy Responsibilities:

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and our expectations
- To maintain appropriate attendance data
- To have appropriate registration processes in place
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents have not communicated with us - initially with a first-day absence telephone call by 10.00am at the latest
- To inform parents of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences
- To maintain systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness
- To report to the Governor who supports and challenges Attendance
- To report to the Education, Performance and Inclusion Advisor
- To report to Local Government on attendance as and when required
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance.

#### Parent/carers Responsibilities:

- To ensure pupils are in class ready to learn by the start of the day
- To inform us by 9.30am on the first day of absence
- To work with us to improve lateness and attendance
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

The Attendance Officer will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss these regularly with the class teacher and Principal. They will also meet regularly with the Governor who supports Attendance. The teachers will use every opportunity to speak to parents/carers about any concerns before or after school and at Parent Consultation Evenings.

Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

*Stage 1:* Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality we will make verbal contact with parent/carers and they will be invited to an extended parents' meeting to discuss the issue.

*Stage 2:* If the concerns persist we will write to the parents/carers and arrange a meeting with them.

*Stage 3:* If the concerns persist we will arrange a further meeting between the parent/carer, a Dursley Academy representative and the Education Welfare Officer.

*Stage 4:* If the concerns persist we will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Education, Performance and Inclusion Advisor to deal with the on-going issues.

Should concerns persist we will reluctantly take legal action.

Whilst 100% attendance is clearly ideal, in many cases legitimate illness or other factors can prevent it. Attendance which falls below 90%, where a child is known to be in reasonable health and there is no other extenuating circumstances gives cause for concern. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark will be investigated.

### **Absence during term time**

Please note that Regulation 7 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 regulation states that it prohibits Dursley Primary Academy granting leave of absence to a pupil except where there are exceptional circumstances.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Local Authority. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, by the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides.

Leave of absence will only be granted where the Principal considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Any term time holidays over 10 school days must be reported to the Education, Performance and Inclusion Advisor.

There are approximately 195 academy days (390 sessions) a year which pupils are expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that family holidays are taken during this period.

## **Fixed Penalty Notices**

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate notice would be issued to each parent for each pupil. As of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, the rate per parent per pupil will be £60 within 21 days and rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

## **Lateness**

Morning registration takes place at the start of school at 0855. Our registration period has been agreed with the Local Authority Support and Challenge Advisor as 0855 to 0920. Any pupil arriving after 0920 will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed, poor weather conditions making travel dangerous etc. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Lateness will be monitored and we will follow any pattern of lateness up with parents and, if the academy deems it appropriate, the Education Welfare Officer.

Parents should be aware that consistent lateness is disrupting not only their own child's education but also that of the other pupils and therefore lateness is considered to be equally serious to absence.

## **Governance and the monitoring of attendance**

The performance indicator for attendance will be set to at least match national attendance each year. The Governing Body will take into consideration the Ofsted desired target for all schools. We will aspire to meet this target as a minimum. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. The Governor who supports and challenges Attendance will monitor this and report to the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

In order to ascertain the levels of individual pupil's attendance, regular checks are undertaken and where there is cause for concern appropriate action shall be taken.

## **Absence notes**

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Dursley Primary Academy is part of the Diocese of Gloucester Academy Trust (DGAT). The Trust is an organisation with a Christian foundation. The ethos, values and relationships of the Trust, and its associated academies, are central to witnessing to the value of the foundation. The Academy Trust values the contribution that every pupil can make to the life of each academy. Further information can be found in the DGAT Attendance Policy.

### **Policy Cross Reference - Safeguarding**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies below, in order to ensure full statutory safeguarding requirements are met:

Child protection, behaviour, anti-bullying, first aid and medication, positive handling and restraint, health and safety, sex and relationships education, complaints, acceptable users policy, SEN, transport, School/setting trips, attendance.