



# Attendance Policy

## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT:

**Purpose:** This policy outlines how Daventry Hill School supports students to be in school and so ensure they are safe and available for learning.

The aim is to ensure that all children at Daventry Hill School are safe. It is our duty to ensure that we know the whereabouts of our students, if not at school, and this policy will support staff to manage this safeguarding procedure.

Compiled by V Bond, Tracy McKay, September 2024

Agreed by Governors

Review Date      September 2025

## Vision and Values of the School



Our vision and values are at the heart of everything we do and are used to inform our taught curriculum, decisions and priorities.

There is an expectation that our values are the foundation on which we base our interactions with our students, families, staff, visitors, professionals and wider community.

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## 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Early intervention and support for families, working in partnership with other agencies.
- We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality.

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## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) applies from 19 August 2024  
[.pdf](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. School procedures

### 3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all students are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The register for the first session will be taken at and will be kept open until 9.15am

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### 3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health by 8.40am or as soon as practically possible. This can be done via phoning the school and leaving a voicemail, or informing the class teacher via dojo. If no such communication has been received, the school office will call parents/carers in the first instance. If there is no answer, the absence will be recorded as unauthorized until a valid reason is given.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

### 3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

### 3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

### 3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to ascertain the reason for absence and identify whether it is authorised or unauthorised. We will do a 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> day absence call and then home visit on day 10. Home visits may be carried out prior to day 10 if safeguarding leads or the leadership team feel it may be necessary. All contact will be documented on our online system.

### 3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance figures will be sent to families each year.

## 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known
- Exceptional circumstances-please note new guidance below from the DFE "Working together to improve school attendance", in place from 19.8.24.

*"If you take your child out of school for an accumulative total of 5 days or more (10 sessions) (90%) over a period of ten weeks, the school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local authority for consideration of legal action. This could include,*

- A Penalty Notice payable up to £160 fine.*
- Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.*
- Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment."*

### 4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

Local authorities have the power to prosecute:

- Parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order issued by the local authority to require a parent to get their child registered at a named school (under section 443 of the Education Act 1996). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).
- Parents who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school, for which there are 2 separate offences: section 444(1) where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision (under sections 444 and 444ZA). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000), or if the parent is found to have known the child was not attending regularly and failed to ensure that they did so, a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents who persistently fail to comply with directions under an Education Supervision Order (under Schedule 3 to the Children Act 1989) or breach a Parenting Order or directions under the order (under section 375 of the Sentencing Act 2020). These may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

## 5. Rewarding Good attendance

Students will receive an award for 100% attendance and personalised achievements.

## 6. Attendance monitoring

The SLT monitors student absence on a daily basis and records the issues with actions in fortnightly identified meetings.

If after contacting parents a student's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

If individual student attendance drops below 90%, this will be discussed with SLT and action decided. The first action would be a letter to parents informing of concerns about their child's attendance and offering support. A period of monitoring would then take place (up to 4 weeks) and if there was no improvement, a further letter would be sent, with a meeting to discuss concerns. At this meeting, a target would be set for student attendance. If this target was not met, further discussion would take place with the School Attendance Support Officer from the local education authority.

Student-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

## 7. Roles and responsibilities

### 7.1 The Governing Body

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### 7.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### 7.3 The Safeguarding officer (acting as attendance officer)

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### 7.4 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### 7.5 Office Staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system and alert the SLT.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration



<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>C2</b>	Agreed part time timetable	Student on agreed part time timetable
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
<b>J</b>	Interview	Student attending an interview for an educational establishment or job

<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport issues	Student unable to attend as transport provided by local authority is not in place.
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not attending in circumstances related to Covid19	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school

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#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day
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