

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE POLICY

Issued: March 2016

Review: March 2019

Rationale

- To encourage staff, parents & pupils to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- To provide clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. Pupils need full access to the curriculum and valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Roles & Responsibilities

Parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children at Dunstone Primary School receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority (LA) to ensure that parents meet these responsibilities. Attendance enforcement is usually carried out by the LA Education Welfare Service who provide an important link between schools and families.

Headteachers are required to tell the LA if a pupil fails to attend regularly or has been absent for a continuous period of four days and the absence is treated as unauthorised. Headteachers can, of course, notify the LA earlier if there are areas of concern.

Guidelines

Every ½ day absence is classified by the school. Information about the cause of each absence is always required from parents, preferably in writing. If this is difficult please see the office staff. Parents are asked to inform school by 9.30 am on the day of absence, the cause of the absence. Where no information is received the school secretary will contact parents on the first day by phone to ask why children are absent.

Attendance Absences

Absences will be categorised as either authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised Absences

Exceptional Circumstances

This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Illness

In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill is acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Excluded (No alternative provision made)

Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school.

Religious Observance

Absence authorisation will be given to a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence will be unauthorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation that has been accepted by the school as meeting our authorised absence criteria. Parents whose children are classified as having an unauthorised absence may be subjected to a financial penalty.

Family Holidays or Extended Leave

Family holidays are not considered exceptional circumstances. Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time and should be aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year.

Punctuality

Late Arrival

Registration is at 8.50 am, pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late. The register will close at 9.10 am, pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late, this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.

On arrival after the close of register, pupils must immediately report to the school office to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

- Lateness can be very unsettling for most pupils and often the crucial introduction to a lesson is missed. Even when lessons have not started lateness must not be seen as acceptable. Poor life skills will stay with the child throughout adulthood.

The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment.

The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they wake up late or the family took a long time to get ready.

Responsibility

The person responsible for attendance in this school is the Head Teacher. School office personnel will implement the policy under direction from the Head Teacher.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Signed (Headteacher)

Signed..... (Chair of Governors) Date.....