



Children First

Dovecote Primary School

Attendance Policy

October 2021

Good attendance and punctuality help our pupils to make good, consistent progress in all areas of learning. We provide a caring, stimulating and challenging environment to optimise learning .

Dovecote Primary School expects good attendance from its pupils in order for them to make the most of the opportunities that the school has to offer. We also expect our pupils to arrive on time. We rely on our partnership with parents and carers to ensure that this is achieved.

Times/Register

Our school day starts at 8.50am when the register is taken. The doors will open at 8.35am. and will close at 8.50am. The register is taken electronically, using the School's Information Management System (SIMS). If for any reason the system isn't working, paper copies will be provided by the office. Any pupil arriving late has to report to the school office and sign in using the electronic system. Any pupil arriving after 8.50am and before 9.20am will receive a late mark. If a pupil arrives after 9.20am they may receive an unauthorised absence.

When a pupil is absent;

- **Parents' Responsibilities**

It is the parents' / carers' responsibility to let the school office know the reason for all absences and when the pupil is likely to return to school. This should be on the first day of absence, soon after 8.30am. Reasons for absence, given by parents, are recorded on the school's electronic register system. Parents/carers are expected to notify the school beforehand if an absence is known in advance. Parents will be asked when the child is likely to return to school.

- **School's Responsibilities**

If the school has not received notification of absence by 9.30am on the first day of absence, we contact parents/carers by text. If school doesn't receive a reply, contact is made by phone. School will call all contacts until a reply is received. If we are unable to contact parents by phone a letter will be

sent informing the parents that we have been unable to do so. If we are concerned about the welfare of a pupil and have not been notified of their absence, the school's Safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Children Missing from Education

If a child goes missing from school we will inform the appropriate person in the Education Welfare Service and follow the school's safeguarding procedures if we feel that the child's welfare is a concern. Pupils will remain on the school register following DFE guidance and only removed when the local authority can be provided with the relevant information.

Lates

If a child is late, it often has a negative effect on their learning for the rest of the day.

We want to prepare our children for life outside school where being on time is important in so many situations.

Lates are monitored by school on a weekly basis and if there is a cause for concern or a pupil has a significant number of lates within a certain time, parents will be informed by letter.

Monitoring

Attendance is continually monitored by the Attendance Lead, Ruth Guy-Clark supported by Michelle Cochrane-Smith. Attendance is monitored daily by the school admin team.

It is the class teacher's responsibility to raise any concerns they may have around a pupil's attendance with the Attendance Lead .

The School monitors attendance on a regular basis. If there is a concern about the number of absences of a pupil (authorised or unauthorised), a pattern of absences e.g. every Friday, or repeated lateness, school will contact parents/carers by phone and letter. If attendance continues to be a concern school will contact the parents again and may request medical evidence to authorise absence. At all stages parents will be given the opportunity to discuss concerns with school and agree on ways of improving attendance and arranging any support. Meetings will be arranged when attendance continues to be a concern. School works closely with the Education Welfare Service. When a pupil's number of unauthorised absences reaches certain levels, a referral to the Education Welfare Service will be triggered. In certain circumstances unauthorised absences may lead to court proceedings or a penalty notice (including lates after close of register and holidays). Poor attendance may be as a result of neglect. If this is deemed to be the case the School's Safeguarding Procedures will be followed.

The attendance of groups of pupils is also closely monitored: gender, Pupil Premium, additional needs and ethnicity. Attendance of these groups is compared to pupils not in these groups and to National figures. This is reported to Governors.

Support for Pupils

Some pupils and families require specific support to ensure good attendance and punctuality. This could involve Meet and Greet, sessions in Treehouse (Nurture Unit), support from a specific adult in school, use of Breakfast Club, The Attendance Lead works closely with the SENDCO as some pupils with poor attendance may have additional needs which are relevant to this. There may be Safeguarding concerns around a pupil with poor attendance, if so the school's Safeguarding Policy will be followed and there will be liaison with the DSL team.

Communications/Information

- Pupils are informed of class and whole school attendance in a weekly assembly supported by a Powerpoint presentation.
- All parents are informed of their child's attendance by letter three times a year
- All parents receive a letter summarising the school's attendance three times a year
- Parents receive a leaflet annually, regarding expectations and procedures around attendance, as part of the Year Group Pack.
- Parents receive messages regarding class attendance on Marvellous Me, on a weekly basis
- When there are concerns around a pupil's attendance, parents are informed by phonecall and letter

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The law requires that all schools must show the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence. **Only the school can authorise an absence.**

Authorised absence can be:

- ✳ Illness (medical evidence may be required in some circumstances)
- ✳ Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged outside school hours.
- ✳ Up to 3 days of religious observance in a year, no more than one per festival.

Unauthorised absence is:

- ✳ Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relatives.
- ✳ Staying at home for birthdays or when friends or family visit
- ✳ Going shopping or having hair cut
- ✳ Getting up late
- ✳ Holidays
- ✳ Any absence which the school has not been informed about.

Holidays

Any holiday taken during school time will be unauthorised. A form informing

the school of a leave of absence must be completed by parents/carers and returned to the school office before a holiday is taken. School will respond to this by letter. Leave of absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised holidays may lead to a referral to the Education Welfare Service and legal proceedings. School will provide missed work for pupils who have taken holidays in term time.

Rewards

We reward good attendance in a variety of ways;

- House points for 100% weekly attendance
- Always There Bear for class with best weekly attendance
- Prize Draw termly
- Class and Individual Marvellous Me messages
- Certificates for 100% attendance every term
- End of year Prize Draw
- Pupils receiving Achievement Awards must have 98% Attendance or above.

Legal Framework

Department of Education guidance on attendance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/518586/Advice_on_school_attendance.pdf

Government overview of attendance and absence:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview>

Statutory guidance on Children Missing Education

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/395138/Children_missing_education_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf

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