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	Name	**Date**
Name of Policy	**Attendance Policy**	
Prepared by	**MLM**	**February 2020**
Checked and Reviewed by	**AH**	**February 2020**
Ratified by Board of Governors		**March 2020**
Next School Review		**March 2022**

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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 pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

- Acting early to address patterns of absence

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 in attending lessons.

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.

Legislation specifies the legal responsibility of parent/carer(s) of statutory school age children to ensure they attend school. It is important that everyone works together to help children obtain the best possible start in life with a good education by regular school attendance.

The same law requires the school to have an Admissions Register and an Attendance Register, and to place all children on both registers. Failure to do so is an offence. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014) requires a daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises and their hours of attendance.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils 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 pupil 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.

The school doors open to pupils at 8:40 am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50 am and will be kept open until 9:00 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:30 pm and will be kept open until 1:40 pm.

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. Absences should be reported to the office by 9:00 am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). This should be done by phone (you can leave a voicemail up until 8:30 am) or verbally with the parent/carer informing the office during school drop off. Notification of an unplanned absence should never be made via email.

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. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

Notification of a medical/dental/optical appointments should be made in writing to the Headteacher via the office in advance of the appointment.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed (between 9:00 am – 9:15 am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed (after 9:15 am) will be marked late after the register closes, using the appropriate code. Arrival after 9:15 am counts as a session absence.

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.

If an absence has not been reported to school – the office will endeavour to contact the parent/carer between 9:30 am and 10:00 am to ascertain the reason for absence. If contact cannot be made the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Parents will be made aware of their child's overall attendance record in their annual end of year report. Where a child is persistently absent contact will be made with the family termly as explained in section 6.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Dallington School agrees to <u>follow the law</u>, in such that the provision for Headteachers to authorise absence purely for the purpose of **a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.**

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3

- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.

- The death or terminal illness of a close relative, only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional;

- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.

- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states ''on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs'';

- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional;

Please note: Evidence would be required in each case.

The Headteacher will consider 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.

5. Attendance monitoring

The office monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents are expected to call on each morning their child will be absent unless they stated a specific number of days on the first day of absence.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. Any child flagged as having persistently poor attendance will be monitored and contact made with that family on a termly basis. If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to increase, the office will consider involving the SENCo and/or the Director of Teaching & Learning.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The governing board

The School Governors are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school. The governing board reviews attendance termly. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

6.2 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 pupils.

6.3 The school office

The school office:

- Logs attendance on the electronic register

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level

- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher

- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

6.4 Class teachers

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

6.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to listen to voicemails, take calls from parents about absence and relay this information to the class teachers as well as record it on the school's electronic system.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed three yearly by the school office. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
	Authorised absence	
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil 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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	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 pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day