



Dringhouses Primary School

Attendance Policy

Important Equality Act 2010

In operating this Policy/Procedure it is very important to ensure compliance with discrimination law which is now consolidated within the Equality Act 2010.

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil by treating them unfavourably because of their disability.

The school is expected to make **reasonable adjustments**. The 'test of reasonableness' should be applied in each situation where a reasonable adjustment may need to be made.

In some instances, it may be justified not to make a proposed reasonable adjustment to resolve a situation where the young person, parent/carer, staff of school, governors and/or disabled members of the public who use school premises/facilities outside of core school hours could be seen as being at a "substantial disadvantage" as compared to their non-disabled peers. This doesn't mean that where this reasonable adjustment is considered and felt to be appropriate, that no action should be taken to resolve the situation.

If you have any questions/concerns concerning the application of the Act in relation to this policy/procedure you must **always** refer the matter to the headteacher.

For Reference:

'Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Pupils' guidance to school issued by Equalities and Human Rights Commission dated September 2012. www.equalityhumanrights.com

'Advice for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities' issued by the Department for Education 23rd October 2012. www.education.gov.uk

'The Equality Act 2010 and Schools' issued by the Department for Education May 2014

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

This policy outlines the underlying philosophy, purpose, nature, organisation and management of attendance at Dringhouses Primary School. It is a working document designed to promote positive attendance and reduce absence.

Good attendance at school is vital for pupils to achieve their full educational potential. Good attendance ensures:

- continuity of learning, which makes progress, attainment and retention of learning easier
- continuity of relationships and friendships, leading to positive emotional wellbeing
- good habits are formed for later life
- the effective safeguarding of pupils

Our school takes an active approach to promoting good attendance. We monitor attendance closely as part of our commitment to the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding responsibilities. With the support of parents, the wider community, the local authority and the pupils themselves, we take a positive approach to safeguarding the well-being of all pupils and staff.

This policy reflects current practice within the school. Its fair and consistent implementation is the responsibility of all staff.

1.0 Aims

In order to monitor and improve the overall attendance of pupils in school, our aims are:

- 1.1 to make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents/carers, teachers and governors.
- 1.2 to develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- 1.3 to develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- 1.4 to provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.
- 1.5 to further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school to ensure and celebrate good attendance.
- 1.6 to promote effective partnerships with supporting services and agencies through the Local Authority's Children's Advice Team (Front Door).
- 1.7 to recognise and address the needs of individual pupils when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer (e.g. if a child is unwell and school receives a telephone call, or the school has given advance permission to the parent or carer for their child to miss school).

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is unauthorised when a child is absent during term time for a reason which is not considered an exceptional circumstance.
- Only the headteacher can authorise an absence. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences justified by parents/carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school and gives the reason that it was to go shopping for school shoes, this is unauthorised absence.

2.4 Total Absence

Total absence represents all the time children are absent from school, regardless of whether this is authorised or unauthorised.

2.5 Persistent absence (PA)

The Department for Education's criteria for defining a child as a Persistent Absentee (PA) is any child who has missed 10% or more of possible sessions (one session = half a day in school), so, therefore, where a student's attendance is 90% or lower. The table below illustrates how this relates to the academic year 2017-18:

School Term	Proposed 10% absence threshold (cumulative)
Autumn half term 1	8 sessions (4 days)
Autumn half term 2	15 sessions (7.5 days)
Spring half term 1	19 sessions (9.5 days)
Spring half term 2	24 sessions (12 days)
Summer half term 1	31 sessions (15.5 days)
Summer half term 2	38 sessions (19 days)

3.0 Marking of Registers

3.1 Codes

There are a series of codes which are used to denote authorised and unauthorised absence (DfE School Attendance - November 2016).

It is the school's responsibility to ensure the correct codes are recorded and that patterns and trends in children's absence are analysed.

Absence Codes used in the Attendance Register:

code	description
/ and \	present
*	Not yet marked
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registered)
D	Dual registration (pupil attending other establishment)
J	Interview at another educational establishment
L	Late (before register closes at 09:15)
P	Approved sporting activity
V	Educational Visit or Trip
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll
#	Planned whole or partial school closure
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
R	Religious observance
T	Traveller Absence
H	Family holiday authorised by the school
E	Excluded (no alternative provision)
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school
G	Family holiday NOT authorised by the school, or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher
U	Late (after registers closed at 09:15)
O	Unauthorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence

3.2 Punctuality and the close of registers

We need children to arrive at school punctually so that they can access all learning opportunities. If a child misses the start of the day they miss valuable learning and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arrivals also disrupt lessons and it can be embarrassing for the child, which may encourage absence. We encourage all children to arrive at school on time.

- Children should arrive at school between 08:35 and 08:45.
- Registration takes place between 08:45 and 09:00.
- The registers officially close at 09:15. If children arrive at school between 09:00 and 09:15, they are marked as late in the registers (using the code 'L'); this is reported as an attendance.
- Children arriving after 09:15 are recorded as 'late after registers close' (using the code 'U'); this is reported as an unauthorised absence and will count as an absence for the whole morning session.

3.3 First day contact

If a child is missing for registration and the school has not received a reason for the absence, the Admin team will make every effort to contact the parents/carers. This is done by a phone call or text messaging service, and may be followed by a home visit if contact has not been made by 09:30. Where there is no response, the police may be notified if there are safeguarding concerns and the child's absence will be marked as 'N' (reason unknown) until an explanation has been received.

3.4 Medical appointments/children with long-term medical conditions

We encourage families to book medical appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, the following codes are used: If a child arrives back in school before the official close of the register (09.15), this will be recorded as 'L' and therefore the child is marked as attending school. If a child arrives back after the official close of the register, the child will be marked as 'M' for a medical appointment.

We acknowledge that some children with chronic, long term, medical conditions may have illness-related absences. In these circumstances, the class teacher and headteacher will keep in touch with parents/carers to offer support and to plan for the child's return to school. Referrals to City of York Council's Hospital and Home Teaching Team will be discussed.

3.5 Religious Observance

Where a family's religious organisation sets a day apart for religious observance, absence will be authorised and marked using code 'R'. If the religious body has not set the day apart, absence will be unauthorised unless authorised in advance by the headteacher.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities:

All members of our school community have roles and responsibilities in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality.

4.1 Role of the pupils

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available.

All pupils will (with support where appropriate):

- Ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Be aware of their current attendance record and targets.
- Be aware of the consequences of poor attendance or truancy.
- Not leave school without permission.
- Follow correct procedures for known absences.
- Respect themselves and others.
- Encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.
- Be happy and encourage others to feel happy
- Inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied or feel unhappy in school.

4.2 Role of parents/carers

Parents and carers have an essential role in ensuring their child's good attendance.

We ask parents to:

- Establish good attendance habits by acting as a role model and showing the children that good attendance and punctuality is important.
- Praise and reward good attendance.
- Talk regularly with their child about school and how they feel about it. Children are more likely to want to attend and learn if they feel supported and their anxieties are listened to.
- Know routines of the school day to avoid issues e.g. ensuring children have their PE kits on the right days.
- Establish a good bedtime routine, so that their child can sleep well, get enough sleep and make mornings less of a struggle.
- Only grant days at home for genuine illness and contact the school by phone, email or letter as soon as possible to say why their child is absent, and when they are expected to return.
- If you are doubtful as to whether your child is genuinely too unwell to attend school, we ask that you send your child in as normal; we will contact you if it becomes apparent that your child is too ill to remain in school.
- Arrange for a friend to take a child to school if a sibling is ill.
- Ensure that wherever possible, medical appointments are made outside of the school day.

4.3 Role of the Class Teacher and Teaching Assistants

We ask teachers and teaching assistants to:

- Encourage good attendance.
- Ensure that registers are correctly and promptly marked.
- Set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Provide a safe and secure environment in which pupils can learn.
- Provide engaging and worthwhile learning experiences that encourage pupils to regularly attend lessons.
- Listen to and value pupils' views.
- Talk regularly to pupils and parents about the importance of good attendance.

4.4 Role of the School

As a school we:

- Use Restorative Practices to create a school ethos and community that pupils want to be part of.
- Meet the legal requirements set out by Government and the guidance set out by the City of York Council. This includes consistently recording authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1995 Education Act.
- Give a high priority to punctuality and attendance.
- Use a range of positive strategies to promote and reward punctuality and good attendance.
- Develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- Develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance.

- Develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees.
- Encourage open communication channels between home and school.
- Work with the Local Authority's Schools' Adviser for Attendance and the Children's Advice Team (Front Door) where we have significant concerns about a pupil's attendance.

4.5 Role of the Governing Body

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations, the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or authorised. The governing body monitors the rate of attendance and ensures the policy is adhered to fairly and consistently.

4.6 Role of the Local Authority

The Children's Advice Team is available to offer further information regarding a child and advice on other services available. The Schools' Adviser for Attendance supports the school with attendance panels and provides guidance on national legislation and local initiatives.

5.0 Applications for Leave of Absence in Term Time

The school is required to provide education for 190 days per year and it is expected that children who are registered at the school will attend for all this time. Parents do not have an automatic right for their child(ren) to have authorised absence when they request it for holidays in term time or for any other reason.

There are clear links between children's attendance and their attainment. A child absent from school for two school weeks each year will miss the equivalent of two terms' education over their school career. This is a strong factor in the school seeking to reduce all avoidable absence.

The Secretary of State for Education has made it clear that headteachers expected to unauthorise all requests for leave of absence unless in **exceptional** circumstances. This means that:

- Parents can NOT demand leave of absence as an automatic right.
- The headteacher will consider each request for leave of absence on its own merits.
- Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- It is for the headteacher only, not parents, to determine whether a request is exceptional.

A pupil may be granted leave of absence during term time where:

- An application is made to the headteacher in advance, using the form, "Application for Pupil Leave of Absence from School for Exceptional Reasons" (Appendix 1). This is available, on request, from the school office.
- The headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

City of York Council Guidance relating To Pupil Leave of Absence from School (June 2013), advises that the following examples constitute 'exceptional circumstances':

- Service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time, if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a trauma or crisis.
- Absence for the funeral service of a close family member.
- Any other circumstances the headteacher considers to be exceptional.

Absence during term time for holidays is NOT considered an exceptional circumstance.

Any examples given are illustrative rather than exhaustive. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. By 'unavoidable' this means an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

In the event of a pupil being granted leave of absence, should the pupil fail to attend within ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which leave was granted, the school is able to remove the child's name from the school roll, following discussion with the Schools Adviser: Attendance and Integrated Working.

6.0 Fixed Penalties

Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their children to maximise their educational opportunities. It is an offence if a parent or carer fails to secure a child's attendance. When the school has supported a family to improve attendance, the school may work with the Local Authority to consider an 'Education Related Fixed Penalty Notice'. This will be done in line with the 'City of York Code of Conduct for the use of Education Related Fixed Penalty Notices' (September 2013) – see Appendix 2.

7.0 Promoting Positive Attendance at Dringhouses Primary School:

The school uses a range of positive strategies to promote and reward punctuality and good attendance. These are developed in consultation with parents and members of the School Council.

8.0 Monitoring and Review

Class teachers and the Admin team monitor pupils' attendance on a regular basis. We look at any child whose attendance drops below 95%. This threshold is chosen to reflect the direct link between attendance and achievement. Once a child's attendance falls below 90%, a letter is sent home expressing concern and a more focused monitoring. If there are no improvements, then the parents/carers are invited to a meeting with the headteacher/behaviour co-ordinator, where further actions may be discussed. Similarly, if late arrivals become an issue, parents/carers are contacted by phone or letter and/or invited into school for a meeting to see what support can be offered in order to improve the situation.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor the rate of attendance and to ensure that the school policy is adhered to fairly and consistently.

The governing body reviews this policy every three years. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

9.0 Relevant Legislation

- The Children Act 1989 (section 36);
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education Act 1996 (sections 7, 19, 436A, 437-39, 443-447);
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (section 8 -10);
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (ASB Act) (sections 19-24);
- The Education Act 2005 (section 115);
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 97-111) ;
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education and Skills Act 2008 (section 2 and 155).
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- 'School Attendance' issued by the Department for Education – October 2014
- 'School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures' issued by the Department for Education – January 2015

Date Policy Agreed: 17 July 2017

Signed:

Margi Charlson
Chair of Premises Committee

Next Review Due: Summer 2020



**Dringhouses Primary School
APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL
FOR EXCEPTIONAL REASONS**

Full name(s) of child(ren):

Class(es):

Address:

Exceptional Reasons for Application and Dates:

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Are you applying for leave of absence for any siblings at another school?
If so please provide details:

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Signature of parent(s) / carer(s)
(applications can only be made by parents/carers)

Date:

Important
Leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.
Your child(ren) should not be taken out of school unless this application has been approved

School Office use only

Absence authorised by Headteacher: YES / NO

Other outcome:

Signed: Date:
(Headteacher)

Parent(s)/Carer(s) notified of outcome: (date)



**City of York Council
Adults, Children and Education
Children's Advice Team**

City of York Code of Conduct for the use of Education Related Fixed Penalty Notices

	Penalty Notice Protocol
1	Legal Basis
1.1	Section 23 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LEA officers, Head Teachers (& Deputy and Assistant Headteachers authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. The specific regulations governing the use of penalty notices are: <u>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004</u> <u>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007</u> <u>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013</u>
1.2	The issuing of Penalty Notices must conform with all requirements of the Human Rights Act and all Equal Opportunities legislation.
1.3	The Local Authority (LA) has the prime responsibility for developing the protocol within which all partners named in the Act will operate.
2	Rationale
2.1	Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities.
2.2	In law an offence occurs if a parent or carer fails to secure a child's attendance at the school at which they are a registered pupil and that absence is not authorised by the school. Penalty notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or Section 36 of the Children Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate. The Children's Advice Team (CAT) delivers this LA responsibility.
2.3	Parents and pupils are supported at school and at partner agencies level to overcome barriers to regular attendance through a wide range of assessment and intervention strategies such as the use of <u>Integrated Working tools</u> . Sanctions of any nature are for use only where parental co-operation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the presenting problem.
2.4	Sanctions are never used as a punishment, only as a means of enforcing attendance where there is a reasonable expectation that their use will secure an improvement.
2.5	These measures are permissive and it is for individual governing bodies and the LA to decide whether to use them. In exercising these powers governing bodies, head teachers and local authority officers should have regard to their

	safeguarding duties.
3	Circumstances Where a Penalty Notice May be Issued
3.1	A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence. Use of Penalty Notices will be restricted to one per pupil per academic year. In cases where families contain more than one poor-attending pupil, multiple issues may occur but this will be the subject of careful consideration and co-ordination.
3.2	There will be no restriction on the number of times a parent or carer may receive a formal warning of a possible issue of a Penalty Notice.
3.3	The issuing of a Penalty Notice is considered appropriate in the following circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps) • parentally-condoned absences • excessive leave of absence in term-time • excessive delayed return from leave of absence without prior school agreement • persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed)
3.4	To ensure consistent practice Penalty Notices will be issued only when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least 10 sessions (5 school days) have been lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during the current term • the liable parent or carer responsible for the pupil has received a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to effect an improvement
3.5	The requirement to issue a formal warning will be waived if a period of unauthorised absence occurs of at least 10 sessions in the current term because leave of absence for a holiday is taken in term time without school permission.
3.6	Schools must consider every aspect of a pupil's case before considering whether a Penalty Notice would be appropriate. This must include discussions with the Schools Adviser: Attendance and Integrated Working and any other service that have involvement with or knowledge of the pupil and his or her family. Where absence is regular and ongoing rather than due to unauthorised leave of absence schools are expected to follow the <u>School Attendance Absence Prevention Route Map</u> before requesting a Fixed Penalty Notice. Requests for Fixed Penalty Notices where pupils have ongoing absences will only be issued where school can evidence they have followed the guidance on Attendance and Integrated Working available on the <u>YorOK website</u> .
3.7	Penalties may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of this and the days to which it applies.
4	Procedure for Issuing Penalty Notices
4.1	In the City of York Penalty Notices can be issued by The Schools Adviser: Attendance and Integrated Working or a headteacher following consultation with the Schools Adviser. This will ensure consistent and equitable delivery, protect school-home relationships and allow cohesion with other enforcement sanctions.
4.2	Penalty Notices issued by City of York will only be issued by first class post, using City of York invoices, and never as an on the spot action. This is to ensure that the evidence to support the penalty notice is sound and meets Health and Safety requirements.
4.3	The Schools Adviser: Attendance and Integrated Working is likely to receive

	<p>requests to issue Penalty Notices from schools, North Yorkshire Police and neighbouring LAs. These requests will be actioned provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all relevant information is supplied in the specified manner • the circumstances of the pupil's absence meets all the requirements of this Protocol • family circumstances and the ability to pay is judged against the likelihood of securing an improved attendance by issuing a Penalty Notice (this to include any cases of possible multiple issue to any one family) • the issue of a Penalty Notice does not conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other enforcement sanctions already being processed
4.4	<p>The Schools Adviser: Attendance and Integrated Working will normally respond to all requests within 10 school days of receipt and where all criteria are met will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issue a formal written warning to the parent/carer of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued • in the same letter set a period of 15 school days within which the pupil must have no unauthorised absence • issue a Penalty Notice through the post at the end of the 15 day period if the required level of improvement has not been achieved
4.5	<p>Where headteachers wish to issue notices themselves this can only be done following discussion with the Schools Adviser. This will ensure notices are issued in accordance with this protocol and ensure parents are not issued with multiple notices etc. Schools must send copies of any notices issued to the Schools Adviser: Attendance and Integrated Working</p>
4.6	<p>Schools must have procedures to ensure parents are able to pay and must be aware that payment of penalty notices must be made in full. Parents are not able to make "payment by instalments" on fixed penalty no</p>
4.7	<p>National guidance stipulates that all revenue from Fixed Penalty Notices must be retained by the LA therefore payments must be forwarded to the LA account.</p>
5	<p>Procedure for withdrawing Penalty Notices</p>
5.1	<p>Once issued, a Penalty Notice will only be withdrawn in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proof has been established that the Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person • the use of the Penalty Notice did not conform to the terms of this Protocol
6	<p>Payment of Penalty Notices</p>
6.1	<p>Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.</p>
6.2	<p>Payment of a Penalty Notice discharges the parent/carer liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under other enforcement powers for the period covered by the penalty Notice.</p>
6.3	<p>Payment of a Penalty Notice within 21 days is £60 and payment after this time but within 28 days is £120.</p>
6.4	<p>The LA retains any revenue from Penalty Notices to cover enforcement costs (collection or prosecuting in the event of non-payment).</p>
7	<p>Non-payment of Penalty Notices</p>
7.1	<p>Non-payment of a Penalty notice will result in the withdrawal of the Notice and will trigger the fast-track prosecution process under the provisions of Sec 444, 1996 Education Act.</p>

8	Policy & Publicity
8.1	The use of Penalty Notices as a sanction is included on the attendance page of the the YorOK website.
8.2	All school Attendance Policies should include information on the deployment of Penalty Notices and this will be brought to the attention of all parents.
8.3	The LA will include information on the use of Penalty Notices and other attendance enforcement sanctions in promotional/ public information materials.
9	Reporting & Review
9.1	The Schools Adviser: Attendance and Integrated Working will report at regular intervals to the Assistant Director (Adults, Children and Education) on the deployment and outcomes of Penalty Notices.
9.2	The Schools Adviser: Attendance and Integrated Working will review the use of Penalty Notices at regular intervals and amend the general enforcement strategy as appropriate.