



**Dringhouses Primary School**

# **Attendance Guidelines and Procedures**

**Signature of Chair of Governors . . . . .**

**Signature of Headteacher . . . . .**

**Date of Adoption: Summer 2023**

**Date of Review: Summer 2025**

**Reviewing Committee: Resources Committee**

**Statutory/Non-Statutory**

## **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](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

'Advice for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities' issued by the Department for Education 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012. [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

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

# **Attendance Guidelines and Procedures**

## **Contents**

1. Statement of Intent
2. Definitions
3. Implementation
  - 3.1. Roles and Responsibilities
  - 3.2. Recording Attendance/Attendance Registers
  - 3.3. Lateness
  - 3.4. Absence Procedure
  - 3.5. Appointments
  - 3.6. Term-time Leave
  - 3.7. Religious Observances
  - 3.8. Attendance Monitoring and the School's Graduated Approach
  - 3.9. Children Missing in Education
4. Impact
5. Legislation, Statutory Guidance and Links to Other Policies
6. Monitoring and Review
7. Appendices
  - 7.1. Register Codes

## 1. Statement of Intent

1.1. Dringhouses Primary believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

1.2. We are committed to:

- Ensuring that parents/carers follow the framework set out in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:

*“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full-time education suitable*

*a) to age, ability and aptitude, and*

*b) to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”*

- Promoting, modelling and celebrating good attendance behaviour;
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all;
- Implementing our guidelines and procedures in accordance with the Equality Act 2010;
- Early intervention and working with families and other agencies to ensure the health and safety and education rights of our pupils.

1.3. We expect children and families to aim for 100% attendance at school. However, we also understand that there are times when a child will be ill and may be absent. We aspire for our children to have attendance of 96% or above, which is the equivalent of missing around 8 days over a year.

1.4. In order to improve the overall attendance of pupils in school we aim to do the following:

- Make attendance and punctuality a high priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents/carers, teachers and governors;
- Encourage good attendance and routines in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children may be of pre-compulsory school age;
- Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks;
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data;
- Implement a system of rewards and sanctions;
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils;
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school;
- Develop effective partnerships with supporting services and agencies through the Local Authority;
- Recognise and address the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

## 2. Definitions

2.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

2.1.1. “Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed;
- Not attending school for any reason;

2.1.2. An “authorised absence” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave;

- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave;
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave;
- An absence due to a family emergency.

2.1.3. An “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason e.g. shopping, looking after siblings, birthday celebrations;
- Truancy before or during the school day;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Arrival late at school after the register has closed;
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed;
- Children leaving school without permission during the day.

2.1.4. “Persistent absenteeism” as:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

### **3. Implementation**

#### **3.1. Roles and Responsibilities**

3.1.1. The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- The implementation of the Attendance Guidelines and Procedures of Dringhouses Primary School;
- Ensuring that the attendance procedures in school do not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation;
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures;
- Having regard to ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (2022) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

3.1.2. The Leadership Team is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Guidelines and Procedures of the school and distributing these to parents/carers.

3.1.3. The Pastoral Team and Attendance Focus Group are responsible for:

- Checking registers daily and following up absence with the support of the admin team and class teachers;
- Attending weekly attendance focus meetings to monitor individual attendance and agree next steps in line with the school and LA graduated approach;
- Monitoring attendance across year groups;
- Analysing attendance data alongside academic data;
- Identifying students at risk of becoming persistent absentees, setting appropriate targets and implementing intervention strategies to meet targets;
- Emailing/writing to families to share attendance concerns and celebrate improvements.
- Arranging parent/carer meetings with relevant school staff.
- Ensuring that information is regularly communicated and that all staff are aware of pupils with attendance concerns;
- Arranging weekly and termly ‘Golden Ticket’ raffles to celebrate good attendance;
- Implementing, delivering and monitoring daily and weekly attendance incentives;

- Working and communicating effectively with external agencies, including attending half termly Attendance Lead Groups arranged by the Local Authority and liaising with key LA staff:

Mark Smith (Principal Education and Welfare Officer),

Cai Onraet (Attendance Enforcement and Data Officer) and

Stephanie Keenan-Logue (School Attendance Lead).

- Ensuring that parents/carers are aware of their legal responsibilities and ensuring that information is communicated through a variety of means.

#### 3.1.4. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Encouraging good attendance;
- Ensuring that registers are correctly and promptly marked;
- Setting a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality;
- Making contact with parents/carers when initial concerns arise and mention children's attendance as a matter of course at parents evening, meetings, etc.
- Logging attendance and punctuality concerns on CPOMS;
- Attending meetings with parents/carers as appropriate;
- Supporting daily/weekly incentives implemented to promote attendance.

#### 3.1.5. Parents/carers are expected to take responsibility for:

- Establishing good attendance habits by acting as a role model and showing the children that good attendance and punctuality is important;
  - Praising and rewarding good attendance, even small successes, e.g. getting ready quickly, even if resisting going to school;
  - Contacting the school by phone, app or email ([hello@dringhouses.co.uk](mailto:hello@dringhouses.co.uk)) as soon as possible to say why their child is absent, and when they are expected to return;
  - Only granting days at home for genuine illness;
  - If appropriate, arrange for a friend or family member to take a child to school if a sibling or other family member is sick;
  - Avoiding taking holidays in school time.
  - Ensuring that wherever possible, medical appointments are made outside of the school day;
  - Establishing a good bedtime routine, so that their child can sleep well, get enough sleep and make mornings less of a struggle;
  - Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details;
  - Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number;
  - Updating the school if their details change;
  - Attending meetings in school if appropriate to discuss attendance and any support needed.
- #### 3.1.6. Pupils are expected to take responsibility for:
- Working with their parents/carers to ensure that they attend school regularly and on time and taking some individual responsibility, particularly when they are in Key Stage 2 (KS2);
  - Being aware of their current attendance record and targets;
  - Being aware of the consequences of poor attendance or truancy;
  - Arriving to lessons punctually at the start of the day and following break times;
  - Not leaving school without permission.

### 3.2. Recording Attendance/Attendance Register

3.2.1. The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent

- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

3.2.2. See Appendix 7.1 for register codes.

### **3.3. Lateness**

3.3.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.

3.3.2. The school day starts at 8:50am. Pupils should be in their classroom at this time.

3.3.3. Registers are marked by 9:00am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

3.3.4. The register closes at 9:30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.

3.3.5. Pupils attending after 9:30am will receive a mark to show that they were on site, although this will go down as an unauthorised absence.

3.3.6. Registers will be marked at the start of the afternoon session at the appropriate time for each year group subject to rolling lunch timing.

3.3.7. It is a legal requirement that school registers must be completed at the start of both morning and afternoon sessions.

### **3.4. Absence Procedure**

3.4.1. Parents/carers are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence with a reason for absence and an expected date of return if possible.

3.4.2. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the Pastoral Team via CPOMS.

3.4.3. Contact is made with parents/carers on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence using the code O.

3.4.4. If there are concerns about a child's absence and/or the school are struggling to make contact with the family, a home visit may be carried out.

### **3.5. Appointments**

3.5.1. As far as possible, parents/carers will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

3.5.2. Where this is not possible, the school office will be informed and evidence of the appointment shown, such as a booking confirmation text or letter.

3.5.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent/carer.

3.5.4. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

### **3.6. Term-time Leave**

3.6.1. At Dringhouses Primary School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.

3.6.2. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. This will be done following guidance written by the City of York Council ('Guidance Relating to Pupil Leave of Absence from School' - August 2019).

3.6.3. Special circumstances for term-time leave may include the following:

- 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 crisis;
- Any other circumstances the head teacher considers exceptional.

3.6.4. It is expected that head teachers will not authorise requests for leave of absence where the following apply:

- Availability of cheap holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday
- Periods that overlap with the beginning or end of term.

3.6.5. If a family take holiday in term time, or if a second period of holiday is taken within a calendar year in term time, and together or singularly they meet the threshold of 10 sessions of absence in 12 weeks, then the Local Authority will consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice following a case review by the School Attendance Advisor and Inclusion Advisor. A penalty notice means that parents/carers have to make a payment of either £60.00 or £120.00 per parent/carer, per child, depending on when they pay the penalty notice.

### **3.7. Religious Observances**

3.7.1. The DfE recommends the use of Code 'R' when children are absent from school to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents/carers belong, including religious festivals. Parents/carers should be encouraged to give advance notice.

3.7.2. This is interpreted to mean that if the parent/carer's religious organisation sets the day as a religious festival then the school must authorise the absence. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

3.7.3. If the religious body has not set the day apart, there is no requirement for the school to approve the absence or grant a leave absence. Additional holidays and days off linked to the religious festival but not "exclusively set aside for religious observance" by the religious body are not marked using Code 'R'.

### **3.8. Attendance Monitoring and the School's Graduated Approach**

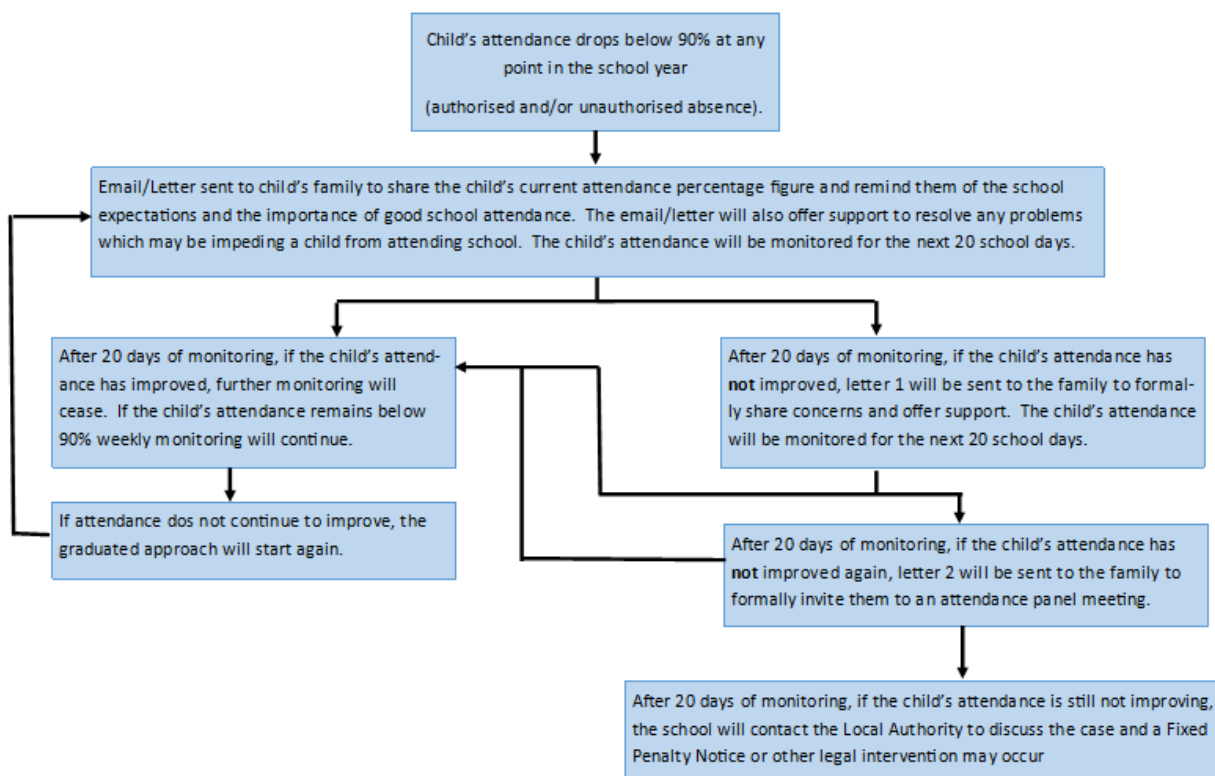
3.8.1 Any child whose attendance falls below 90%, or around 13 days off over the year, will be carefully monitored by the school using the Graduated Approach listed below (section 3.8.4). All attendance records are considered on a case by case basis.



3.8.2. Any child whose absence falls below 90%, or around 19 days off over the year, is classified by the Government as a Persistent Absentee.

3.8.3. Any child whose absence falls below 50%, or around 95 days off over the year, is classified as having severe absence. Children in this category will have an individual 'Severely Absent Plan' inline with Government expectations. This will involve regular monitoring and engagement with the child and family.

3.8.4. Dringhouses Primary School's Graduated Approach:



1) Letter 1 is taken from a City of York Council template and shares increasing concerns about a child's attendance and offers further support to the family. If the family receives support from a social worker or other external professional, they will be notified of the attendance concerns. If the child has Special Educational needs or Disability, the SENCo will decide if further referrals to external professionals are required and if a My Support Plan would be appropriate.

2) A member of the school's Attendance Team will attend the Attendance Panel Meeting (Headteacher, SENCo, Attendance Lead) alongside either the class teacher (authorised absence) or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (unauthorised absence).

Targets and support will be agreed.

A Family Early Help Assessment (FEHA) may be offered to parents/carers and put in place if agreed and referrals to outside agencies as appropriate e.g. Changing Lives, York Mind, The Island, School Wellbeing Service.

Alternative Provision and/or a short-term reduced timetable will be considered at this stage to increase engagement.

A request for a Managed Move may also be considered with parent/carer consent and referred through Fair Access.

3) The Attendance Focus Group will make a referral to Mark Smith (Principal Education and Welfare Officer) and may contact the Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH) with reference to educational neglect. A Fixed-Penalty notice or warning may be issued. If attendance continues to be an issue, the Local Authority will consider legal proceedings following case review by the School Attendance Adviser and Inclusion Adviser. These are then considered for approval by the Assistant Director (Education). A penalty notice means that parents/carers have to make a payment of either £60.00 or £120.00 per parent/carer, per child, depending on when they pay the penalty notice.

### **3.9. Children Missing in Education**

3.9.1. All schools must notify their Local Authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the Local Authority requests that such returns are to be made.

3.9.2. When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the Local Authority must include:

- (a) the full name of the pupil,
- (b) the full name and address of any parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides,
- (c) at least one telephone number of the parent/carer
- (d) the pupil's future address and destination school (DfE Children Missing Education, Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, September 2016).

3.9.3. When pupils leave and parents/carers have not provided the school with the above information, and the school cannot contact the parent/carer, then the child is considered to be a 'Child Missing Education'. This means that the school and Local Authority have a legal duty to carry out investigations, which may include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services), the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate the child. By providing the above information, parents/carers can ensure that unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

## **4. Impact**

4.1. At Dringhouses Primary School, we prioritise attendance at school to ensure that children achieve the best possible academic and social and emotional outcomes in life. The better a child's attendance the higher they achieve and research shows that attendance levels at primary school have an impact on GCSE results at the end of secondary school. Higher overall absence leads to lower attainment at KS2 and KS4.

4.2. Good attendance at school will be evidenced in whole school, group and individual attendance records and comparisons with local and national averages.

4.3. It will also be evidenced through children's articulation of the value of education during pupil voice sessions and good attendance will have a positive influence on attainment and progress data.

4.4. Parents and carers should also feel well informed about attendance throughout their child's time in school and know how they can access support both from school and other agencies.

## **5. Legislation, Statutory Guidance and Links to Other Policies**

5.1. This document has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996 - Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963 - DfE (2022) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'School attendance parental responsibility measures'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education' - DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2022) Working Together to Improve School Attendance

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

6.1. This policy will be reviewed on an bi-annually basis by the Leadership Team and Governing Board.

6.2. The next scheduled review date for this policy is Summer 2025.

## **7. Appendices**

### **7.1. Register Codes**

7.1.1. The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed (after 9:00am but before 9:30am)
- C = Authorised absence
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I01 = Illness
- 102 = Covid positive
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed (after 9:30am)
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X01 = Not required to be in school
- X02 = Self-isolation with Covid symptom
- X05 = quarantine requirement
- X06 = shielding
- X07 = School closed due to Covid
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Education visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

7.1.2. When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years e.g. induction days.

7.1.3. All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.