



Delta Federation
Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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To be reviewed: February 2026

Jen Swain, Executive Headteacher

POLICY STATEMENT FOR ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Introduction

"If pupils fail to attend schools regularly their education will suffer, which in turn will restrict the opportunities open to them once they have left school" (Here today, Here tomorrow: Helping schools to promote attendance, Gulbenkian Foundation 1997)

At the Delta Federation, we believe that education is a preparation for life. We aim to ensure each child's growth; academically, physically, spiritually and emotionally. We aim to not only lay the foundations of learning but to also set good patterns of attendance which will remain with them through the secondary years of schooling and into the wider world of work.

We strive to provide a community based on respect in which pupils feel safe and confident. All the staff at Brooksward and Drayton Park are involved in the care and development of our children. We also work with our pupils to help them to develop skills in supporting one another. We encourage a sense of pride and belonging.

Aims

- to provide an environment which encourages children to enjoy being at school and learning.
- to promote and model high attendance and its benefits.
- to strengthen the home/school partnership.
- to set good attendance patterns.
- to comply with Education Regulations (1995).
- to support the school's work in inclusion.
- to ensure equality and fairness for all.
- to monitor individual and overall patterns of attendance.

Attendance; Regulations, Practice and Responsibilities

- In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the schools keep two registers; one for admissions and one for attendance.
- Class registers are completed electronically using SIMs Attendance Software and saved.
- Fire registers are available in the case of emergencies.
- Admissions and Attendance registers are kept for 3 years from the date when they were last used.
- Registers are made available to Inspectors and authorised officers only for educational purposes.
- The school makes rates of absence, both authorised and unauthorised available to parents.
- The school keeps accurate and systematic records of attendance.
- The Governing Body has registered with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998. (The office of the Data Protection Register will offer advice on 01625 545745).

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

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

Authorised absence:

- 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

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

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

Missing education:

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

The Procedure for Registration

Class Registers are taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. The register must be completed electronically using SIMs Attendance Software and saved. A coded system records reasons for absence (see appendix A).

Late arrivals are recorded, with the time of arrival.

Children leaving school at any time during the school day are signed out on leaving and signed in on their return.

Children who go home for lunch are indicated in the register. They must return to school at 1:10 p.m. in time for afternoon registration.

Class teachers are required to total the number of pupils present for each am and pm session. The Learning Mentor, through the SIMs Attendance software, compiles daily totals of individual pupils' attendance.

Absence procedures

Parents are required to contact the school office via telephone before 9:00am every day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of when they think the child will return to school.

Monitoring Attendance

The school monitors attendance, absence and its reasons, and lateness. In the first instance, parents are requested to contact the school if their child is going to be absent. If unsuccessful, a learning mentor will contact parents by telephone to ask for an explanation for the absence. If we are unable to make contact on the first day of absence, a member of the safeguarding team will complete a welfare home visit. On return, parents of a pupil who has been absent will be asked for an explanation if the school has not already been notified and a letter will be sent (Appendix: letter 1) informing the parent that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no response is received within 10 days. If the reason provided is not valid, (See Authorised Absence below) a letter will be sent informing parents the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. (Appendix: letter 2). The learning mentor or attendance officer makes first day of absence calls to those parents of children who have not informed the school of their child's absence and will complete home visits on every third day of absence.

Brooksward's attendance officer is Michelle Cook, and can be contacted via ClassDojo or by email at office@brooksward.org.uk.

Drayton Park's attendance officer is Ben Roberts, and can be contacted via ClassDojo or by email at office@draytonpark.org.uk.

Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

The registers are monitored daily by the attendance officer and ongoing patterns tracked. These are discussed regularly with the Head of School. If there are concerns about a pupil's attendance and the pupil's percentage attendance falls below 95% a standard letter from the school (Attendance A) will be sent. If there is no improvement, a second letter (Attendance B) will be sent and parents will be requested to contact school to speak to the learning mentor. If after this there is still no improvement, a third letter (Attendance C) will be sent informing the parent that a meeting with the Head of School will be required. In cases of persistent absence Learning Mentor will refer to Senior Attendance Officer (legal interventions). When improvements are noticed a letter acknowledging this will also be sent from school. (Attendance D).

The parents of children whose attendance falls into the category of persistent absence (below 90%) due to regular bouts of illness may be asked to provide evidence of medical appointment attendance in order for sickness absence to be classed as authorised.

Monitoring Lateness

After 9.00 am, entry to either school building is via the main office. Any child arriving after 9:00am is marked in the late arrival book and the registration code is L. If the child arrives at 10:00 or later, and similarly at 1:45 or later for the afternoon session, the register code will be U. If children are persistently late, a meeting with parents and the learning mentor will be held to discuss what support the family may need to improve their child/children's attendance.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences are treated as unauthorised.

The law requires registers to show whether a pupil's absence is authorised or unauthorised. Parents may not authorise absence, only the school can do this.

The school will authorise absences for such reasons as illness, medical and dental appointments and exceptional circumstances such as family bereavements (see Exceptional Circumstances below); the period authorised will be at Executive Headteacher or Head of School's discretion.

Holidays and Leave of Absence

From 1st September 2013 The Secretary of State has removed the discretion of head teachers to grant up to 10 days leave in term time for holidays. No holidays can be authorised and, in line with The Milton Keynes Code of Conduct, any absence of 10 sessions (5 days) due to unauthorised holiday will result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) of £60 per child per parent.

Any request for other 'leave of absence' **MUST** be for exceptional circumstances i.e. close family wedding or funerals, and be submitted in writing to the Executive Headteacher or Head of School using a 'Leave of Absence' form. Any leave of absence will be considered in light of a child's current attendance record and the definition of exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances

Following the Schools Attendance Guidance (August 2020), Head Teachers are only able to grant term time leave in the case of 'Exceptional Circumstances'. During term time, children are expected to be in education to ensure that their schooling will not be affected or harmed in any way. Children and families have 175 days a year that can be spent together, including weekends and school holidays, and therefore education will be prioritised during term time.

We do understand however, that there are some circumstances where absence (other than sickness) is required and therefore absence may be authorised if it meets the school's criteria of 'exceptional'.

Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis taking into account: the schools list of 'exceptional circumstances', a child's previous attendance record and the impact absence may have on the child's education. All decisions to authorise absence or not are at the Executive Headteacher or Head of School's discretion.

If you think that your circumstances meet the criteria for 'exceptional' please collect and complete a 'Leave of Absence' form from the school reception as soon as possible. You will be contacted to inform you if this absence will be authorised or not as soon as possible.

Please note: In line with The Milton Keynes Code of Conduct, any absence of 10 sessions (5 days) due to unauthorised absence will result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) of £60 per child per parent.

List of Exceptional Circumstances that may be considered for 'Authorised Absence':

1. Visiting seriously ill relatives in the immediate family if there is no way of achieving this outside of term time. Please note: an extended visit will not be authorised.
2. Bereavement of close family members. Please note: this would include a short agreed period of time after the initial bereavement and 1 day for a funeral. Travelling time would not be taken into account.
3. For important religious observances, 1 day will be authorised.
4. To spend a short, agreed amount of time with immediate family who are service personnel and are returning from a long operational tour, which cannot be accommodated in the school holidays.
5. For the wedding of an immediate family member. Please note: authorisation would be for the wedding day only not any travel needed.
6. Adjustments that must be made for children requiring additional care for a special need or disability.
7. Time to recover from a trauma and/or crisis.
8. An agreed amount of time based on a medical professional recommendations for recovery.

For information, the following circumstances would not be classed as 'exceptional' and would not be authorised.

1. Weddings and funerals of non-immediate family.
2. Visiting of relatives who are not classes as immediate family and who are not critically ill.
3. Holidays in term time taken due to lower cost or family work patterns.

This is in no way an exhaustive list of exceptional/non-exceptional circumstances but serves as a guide for families when making their requests.

Exclusions

Where a pupil has been excluded, he or she will remain on the school roll. The absence is treated as authorised. A pupil who has been permanently excluded is removed from the school roll following any appeal or review.

Establishing and Maintaining a High Profile for Good Attendance and Punctuality

Good attendance and punctuality are actively encouraged and promoted. At the end of each term, attendance certificates are awarded for 100% attendance over the term. At the end of the year, an additional certificate for 100% overall is given. The Attendance Board in each school (at Drayton Park this is in the main corridor and at Brooksward this is in the Key Stage 2 hall) is on permanent display showing individual classes % attendance. If any class achieves 100% in a week, they are given an attendance bunny/teddy. The school prospectus and website both have sections referring to the importance of good attendance and

punctuality. At all times, we believe a positive approach is essential if improvements in attendance and punctuality are to be maximised and sustained.

Working with individual pupils

At the Delta Federation, we recognise that a small number of pupils may experience specific physical and psychological difficulties that impact on attendance. In partnership with parents, the school will seek to implement an action plan to support a return to full attendance. Strategies may include; initial part time attendance, special teaching provision, preparation of the class for the pupil's return, an Early Help Assessment, support for the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and counselling provision. We employ a Learning Mentor who liaises with particular families and pupils who are at risk.

Further Information

At Brooksward and Drayton Park, we seek to support good patterns of attendance for pupils and staff. This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- *Education Act 1996*
- *Equality Act 2010*
- *The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)*
- *The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014*
- *Children and Young Persons Act 1963*
- *DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'*
- *DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2023'*
- *DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'*
- *DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'*

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96%. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Headteacher. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Jen Swain Executive Headteacher

NEW ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X01	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
X02	Self isolating-Covid 19 symptoms	Authorised absence
X05	Quarantine-self isolating	Authorised absence
X06	Clinical advice not to attend	Authorised absence
X07	Government advice not to attend	Authorised absence
X08	Director of Public health not to attend	Authorised absence
X09	Self isolating specific group required by NHS test and trace	Authorised absence
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible

		attendances
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**REGISTER CODES: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
ALSO PLEASE NOTE**

- Pupil going home for lunch HL should be marked in the action column.
- If a pupil is late, their arrival time is to be noted in the action column.
- Half term weeks to be left blank.
- Teachers to fill in the class attendance totals each session.

ATTENDANCE LETTER A

Date

Dear,

As part of our routine monitoring of registers it has come to our attention that
has a percentage attendance of only.....%.

This is of concern as it is well known that poor attendance is linked with lower levels of attainment.

Clearly, if children are ill, attendance is not possible and there are also other valid reasons.

However, whatever the reasons for absence, it is our policy to track attendance patterns and if percentages are of concern, we feel it is extremely important that you are kept informed.

Brooksward wishes to ensure all pupils have the best chance of succeeding; good attendance is therefore crucial.

I do hope therefore that... attendance improves in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Jen Swain
Executive Headteacher

**Letter can be adapted to include trends and patterns of absence instead of/or and attendance percentages.*

ATTENDANCE LETTER B

Dear.....,

Further to my letter dated re’s attendance, I am writing to invite you to a meeting on.....at Please confirm that you are able to attend as soon as possible or alternatively to rearrange a convenient time.

Regular attendance, as I am sure you are aware, is vital as it is directly linked with good levels of attainment.’s attendance is currently a cause for concern and I hope that together we can address the issues and ensure it improves.

Yours sincerely,

Jen Swain
Executive Headteacher

ATTENDANCE LETTER C

Pupils Name;

Year Group:

Class:

Dear,

I am writing to acknowledge the improvement I have noticed in’s attendance.
Thank you for your support in achieving this and I hope this positive trend continues.

Well done

Yours sincerely,

Jen Swain
Executive Headteacher

LATE LETTER A

Date: _____

Dear Parent

It has been brought to my attention that, recently, your child _____ has been late for registration on several occasions. The children need to be on the playground by 8:40 a.m.. All outside doors are locked at 8:50am for security reasons. After this time, children can only enter through the main entrance.

Children arriving late are missing teaching time and interrupting the work of the school office staff. I do hope that you are able to support the school in eliminating late arrivals.

Thank you, for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Jen Swain
Executive Headteacher