



Delta Schools
Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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3	Not required	C	Not required

**Policy level			
1	Trust wide	Single policy relevant to everyone and consistently applied across all schools and departments, with no variation. e.g. Complaints procedure	Statutory policies approved by the Denbigh Alliance Board of Trustees (or designated Trustee Committee). Non-statutory policies approved by the CEO with exception of Executive Pay.
2	Trust core values	This policy defines the Trust core values in the form of a Trust statement to be incorporated fully into all other policies on this subject, that in addition contain relevant information, procedures and or processes contextualised to that school. e.g. Safeguarding, Behaviour	Statements in statutory policies approved by the Denbigh Alliance Board of Trustees (or designated Trustee Committee). Statements in non-statutory policies approved by the CEO. Policy approved by Local School Board.
3	School/department	These policies/procedures are defined independently by schools as appropriate. E.g. Anti-bullying	Approved by Local School Board.

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 August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid within 28 days. The Milton Keynes code of conduct states that a fine can be incurred if a child is removed from school for ten consecutive unauthorised sessions (5 days). No holidays can be authorised.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. All fines are 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 school's 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 £80 per child per parent if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid within 28 days.

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.

Penalty notices and legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the Attendance Officer.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Executive Headteacher or Head of School will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's ['Working together to improve school attendance'](#) guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 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. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Parents will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an SEO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

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 (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'*
- *DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'*
- *DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'*
- *DfE (2024) '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

Appendix A : NEW ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

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:

- # = planned whole school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed (after 9.30am)
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements or due to the pupil having to attend a school that does not qualify for travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law, despite the pupil being well enough to attend
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause, the nature of which must be documented by the school.
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

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