



Devonshire Road Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality

Status	Current
Approval	Pupil Welfare Committee
Date	November 2021
Maintenance	Pupil Welfare Committee
Responsibility	Headteacher
Date of next review	Autumn 2023

Introduction

At Devonshire Road Primary School, staff and Governors aim to provide a caring environment in which all members of the school feel happy and secure in an effort to make sure all our children attend willingly on a regular basis. It is a legal requirement that all children from age 5 to 16 attend school regularly. The school's attendance data is submitted annually to the Department for Education and is compared to national attendance figures. This information is one of the measures considered by Ofsted when it inspects schools.

We believe that the children can only make the expected progress if they attend regularly. It is important, too, that children arrive in school on time. We know that our parents/carers want to support the school in encouraging this good attendance and punctuality. Our school's policy is designed to encourage regular attendance and punctuality when a child is fit for school.

The School

At Devonshire Road Primary School we endeavour to promote a good attendance pattern by providing an atmosphere which:

- Builds pride in the school and its achievements
- Values the contributions made by all its members thus building self-esteem
- Caters for the needs of individuals and groups
- Follows a code of conduct in which good behaviour is praised and where bullying in any form is considered unacceptable
- Encourages strong links between home, school and the community

Our Families

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to:

- Ensure that children of school age receive an efficient, full-time education

- Make sure their children attend school and realise the importance of attending school
- Get their children to school on time every day
- Inform school of any absence as soon as possible on the first day of absence - this should include details of the nature of the absence and when the child is expected to return
- Parents/carers are encouraged to bring their children in to the afternoon session if their child feels better and fit for school

The school also expects families to encourage their children to follow the Published Code of Conduct for Good Behaviour.

The School Day

SCHOOL HOURS:

Doors Open: 8:45am

Morning Sessions:

EYFS/Key Stage 1: 8:55am to 12:00pm

Key Stage 2: 8:55am to 12:30pm

Afternoon Sessions:

EYFS/Key Stage 1: 1:00pm to 3:30pm

Key Stage 2: 1:30pm to 3:30pm

Children are expected to be in class between 8.45am and 8.55am every morning. The external doors are closed at 9am; children arriving after that time must enter through the main entrance. Registration closes at 9.00am prompt, if your child arrives after 9.00 his/her name will be recorded in a 'Late Register' and the time and reason for lateness will also be recorded. The 'Late Register' is closely monitored as it is essential to every child's learning that they arrive on time and are settled in class in readiness for the first lesson. If a child arrives after 9am the number of minutes late will be recorded and reported back to parents/carers at the end of the week. A late mark 'L' is recorded for children arriving between 9 and 9.05am, if a child arrives after 9.05am then an 'unauthorised' mark will be recorded for the morning session.

Rewarding Good Attendance

Attendance is currently monitored by our Attendance Team. The classroom staff ensure that children are aware of the benefits of regular attendance, both academically and socially. To encourage good attendance the following reward systems are in place:

- Weekly assembly focussing on the previous week's whole school attendance
- Presentation to Class of the Week for the highest whole class attendance
- Display boards outside each classroom, in the school hall and in the playground notice board celebrate the children's whole school attendance
- Individual 100% attendance certificates and badges, presented each term to 100% attendees for the term
- 100% attendees each term have their name entered in a raffle for £50 Argos voucher
- 97% and above attendees each term have their name entered in a raffle for £25 voucher
- Annual 100% attendance awards
- Verbal encouragement from staff regarding children's attendance and punctuality

Informing the School of Absences

If a child does not attend school, the parent/carer should contact the school by telephone, text or in person, as early as possible on the first day of absence, clearly stating the reason for absence and the expected day of return to school.

If there has been no notification by 9:30am, the school will ring the parent/carer requesting that they contact school as soon as possible to explain the absence. If there has been no response, the attendance team will then text the parent/carer for an explanation. If the school is unable to engage after a reasonable amount of attempts the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. At the Head Teacher's discretion, in this circumstance, a home visit may be undertaken.

If the class teacher has any doubts as to the whereabouts of a child, the attendance team should be notified immediately. The school will then contact the parent/carer to ensure the child is safe and well.

Authorised Absence

An absence is classed as authorised when a child has been absent from school for a legitimate reason and the parent/carer has notified the school in the expected manner. The absence can only be authorised by the school. Parents/carers do not have this authority. Absences are authorised at the Head Teacher's discretion. Subsequently not all absences supported by the parent/carer will be authorised.

If you do not inform school of a reason for absence and do not return school texts or calls regarding the absence then this will be recorded as unauthorised.

The following are examples of when an absence **MAY** be authorised:

- Cases of genuine illness – if the parent/carer is in doubt as to whether their child is fit for school they should contact the school or their doctor for advice – e.g. cases of Head Lice, the tail end of chicken pox, a viral rash – note: if a child has suitably recovered but is still to complete a course of anti-biotics, the child may return to school and with signed permission from the parent/carer the school can administer the medicine
- Dental and medical appointments – wherever possible these should be arranged outside school hours, however, if this is unavoidable the parent/carer must present the school with a copy of the appointment letter/card. If the appointment is in the morning, parents/carers are asked, wherever possible, to bring their child into registration and then sign them out at the office, they should return to school as soon as possible after the appointment
- Dance, music and sporting exams, competitions or events – such activities are deemed educational and therefore the child will be registered as attending an educational visit – written confirmation of the exam or special event must be provided as early as possible
- Certain cases of family bereavement
- Days of Religious Observance – the school will follow Local Authority guidelines when determining the number of authorised days appropriate. The guidelines currently state only one day may be granted.

All authorised absences are recorded on each child's end of year report.

Applying for Leave of Absence

Children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the best possible progress. We do, however, understand that there are circumstances under which a parent/carer may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g Forces families. In these circumstances, parents/carers should put their request in writing to the Head Teacher, giving as many details and as much notice as possible.

Family Holidays/Extended Leave:

In September 2013 new statutory regulations came into force which state that head teachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time for holidays or extended leave.

Cases of Persistent Absence

A child whose overall attendance to date for the year is below 90%, is classed as a persistent absentee and it is a Department for Education requirement that we monitor these cases closely. There can be many reasons for persistent absences,

the school considers each case individually but in all cases will contact the parent/carer to discuss the situation and secure future regular attendance. If the absences are predominantly due to sickness then school will discuss, with the parent/carer, a possible referral to the senior nursing practitioner with the aim that she can offer additional support. In some circumstances the school will request evidence from the child's GP of the reasons for absence.

Equally, if a parent/carer feels that their child does not want to come to school, they are encouraged to make contact so that advice and help may be sought.

If after this initial contact attendance doesn't improve, the case will be referred to the Local Authority and there is a possibility that a fixed penalty notice will be issued.

Penalty Notices

If attendance is a concern following initial contact and support from the school and the level is at least 8 sessions (4 days) of unauthorised absence, a penalty notice warning letter will be sent. If there is no improvement subsequent to this letter and absence reaches a total of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days), the Local Authority will issue a penalty notice.

If the attendance is for a holiday or extended leave, then no warning letter will be sent and the penalty notice will be issued by the Local Authority automatically if the absence reaches 10 sessions (5 days).

Each parent/carer receives a Penalty notice for each child. Parent includes step parent or other carer. The fine is £60 per parent/carer, per child and must be paid within 21 days. The fine goes up to £120 if it is paid between 21 and 28 days.

Truancy

Truancy is extremely rare at primary school. If truancy is suspected, the Head Teacher is notified, who then contacts the parent/carer, either by phone, or by home visit if possible. Parents/carers are encouraged to bring their child to school so that the reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and hopefully resolved. In the event of not being able to talk to the parent/carer then the Head Teacher talks to the child concerned to find out if there are any worries in school that might make that child not want to attend. If there are, then these are discussed with the class teacher and appropriate action is taken.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance, and they are provided with a termly report. The Head Teacher and the Learning Mentor meet each week to discuss attendance trends and concerns, the details of this meeting are recorded and shared with the Chair of Pupil Welfare Committee as appropriate. The Governing Board also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information

provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum of three years.

This Policy will be reviewed by the Governors as and when changes to school procedures, local authority regulations or statutory legislation occur.

Related Documentation:

The School's Attendance Booklet

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 – Statutory Instrument

Keeping Pupil Registers – DCSF June 2009

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

Penalty Notice Code of Conduct Letter for Parents/Carers - BMBC