



Dereham Church of England Junior Academy



Attendance Policy

Responsible: Headteacher
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Whole School Attendance Policy

Dereham Church of England Junior Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. A high level of school attendance is essential if pupils are to reach their full educational achievement. We will work consistently towards the achievement of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to inform pupils, parents and/or carers about the importance of regular and punctual attendance. School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Employment. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance targets. These will relate to both national and Norfolk attendance targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school must have their absence recorded as being authorised or unauthorised. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff, acting on behalf of the Head, can authorise absence.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school. The registers will remain open for thirty minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless an explanation given is accepted as grounds for authorising the late arrival.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.10 pm. The registers will close at 1.25 pm.

First Day Absence

On the first day of absence and all subsequent days thereafter, parents are asked to contact the school to explain why their child is away. If the school does not receive a message office staff will make contact by telephone and use the text messaging service to alert parents.

Second Day Absence

The school will pursue contacting parents if no message has been received.

Third Day Absence

The school will continue to attempt to contact the parents until an explanation for the absence is forthcoming.

If any pupil is absent from school for more than 2 days consecutively and no contact is received by the school from parents or any of the other emergency contacts' held on file for the pupil reporting the reason for absence, then a home visit will be carried out by 2 members of school staff and a standard letter will be sent to parents.

Sixth Day Absence

If a pupil is absent from school for more than 5 consecutive days due to illness, authorised absence will only be agreed if medical evidence is presented to the school in the form of a doctor's appointment card, medicine prescribed with label or a hospital appointment/discharge letter.

Ten Days Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be referred to the Norfolk Pupil Attendance Service [This is a legal requirement]. The school will include details of action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

Within the school it is the responsibility of the academy's attendance officer to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Health Adviser if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will discuss the problem with the schools local authority attendance support officer.

Persistent Absence [PA]

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% will be subject to an action plan to support their return to full attendance. These action plans will be set up by all parties attending both school and for Fast Track attendance panels. Fast Track Attendance panels will also have local authority representation. Parent(s) and other agencies involved in the support of the family for example parent advisors will be invited to attend panels. At the panel where the

action plan will be set it will be inclusive of engagement with all parties who can support the pupil's attendance as well as identifying future attendance targets and review dates.

Frequent Medical Absences

The school will discuss with the School Health Advisor those pupils who frequently miss days for medical reasons and such pupils' will be requested to provide medical evidence in the form of appointment card, medicine prescribed with label, hospital appointment letter.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This will include ensuring that pupils are helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date with information which may have been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive a full education.

The Home/School agreement, the school booklet and weekly bulletins are used in this way.

Leave of Absence in term time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorise the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

Holidays during term time will not be authorised.

A leave of absence form is available on the academy's website under the Useful Links section or can be collected from the school office.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

Children who have 100% attendance during the year will have this marked by the presentation of a special certificate. Those with very good attendance (over 98.5%) also will receive a certificate of recognition.

Attendance Targets

The school's attendance last year 2016/17 was 96.66%.

The schools attendance targets are:

2017 – 2018 is 97.5%

2018 – 2019 is 97.5%

2019 – 2020 is 97.5%

The Registration System

The school uses a computerised system for keeping the school attendance record using the standard DfE codes to record attendance information.

Registers by law must be kept for at least three years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes as well as preserved as electronic back-ups.

Computerised registers are taken at the start of every morning and afternoon session. Each class teacher inputs a present mark for all pupils in attendance, any pupil who is not in attendance is marked absent. The academy attendance officer is then responsible to check if the pupil is in school or not, and to ascertain that contact has been made with the parent/carer if absent and that the pupils' records are marked appropriately regarding the reason for non-attendance.

All changes and amendments to the electronic registers are time stamped and logged within the management information system and can be retrieved for review at a later date.

In the event of the electronic registers being unavailable, a backup process is used and it is the academy's attendance officer's responsibility to establish attendance or absence for each pupil on roll, together with absence reason. The academy's attendance officer is responsible for making contact with parents/carers where no contact had been received, and recording the information gathered respectively as soon as the electronic system is online again.

Register Security

The computerised register can only be accessed through a password system known only to the authorised users.

Appendix 1: The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Attendance Targets

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [School Attendance Targets] (England) Regulations 2007

Guidance documents on attendance.

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations)

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.