



# Dafen Primary School Attendance Policy

## **Introduction**

1.1 We at Dafen School expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. We use our data management system to record attendance and absence. This register indicates whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## **2. Definitions**

### **2.1 Authorised absence**

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### **2.2 Unauthorised absence**

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

## **3. If a child is absent**

3.1 When a child is absent the teacher records the absence and any known reasons for the absence. If the absence is unexpected and/or there has been no parental contact, the teacher records this using the appropriate code. The Admin. officer checks the registers after registration is closed. They then send a text message/or contact them by phone asking the parent or guardian to telephone the school to establish the reasons for absence. If there is no response, the parent/ guardian is telephoned. The Education Welfare Service is contacted if there is a concern or if there is an absence without an explanation.

3.2 The Parent / Guardian should contact the school on the first day of absence to explain the absence. The Parent/Guardian should send a note in with the pupil on their return if they haven't contacted the school to explain the absence. Parents may also give a verbal / email account to explain the absence. Parents are requested to contact the school before 9.30 am if possible.

3.3 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

#### **4. Requests for leave of absence**

4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance, in writing. If the child's attendance is normally good, his request will be granted, but it has to be recorded as Unauthorised.

#### **5 Long-term absence**

5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work. 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

#### **6 Repeated unauthorised absences**

6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence.

#### **7 Attendance targets**

7.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA adviser as well. The targets are therefore challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

#### **8 Monitoring and review**

8.1 If pupils' attendance falls below 92% during monthly monitoring, a letter is sent to parents, reminding them on the importance of good attendance.

8.2 If attendance fails to improve and/or is between 83-92%, then parents are invited to speak to the Head teacher to discuss the reasons for the poor attendance. Referral to Team Around the Family may be offered, if appropriate.

8.3 Attendance below 85% is the trigger for referral to the Education Welfare Service. This is done online and will usually mean that a Family Engagement worker becomes involved with the family, in a bid to improve attendance.

8.3 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the head teacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

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

8.5 The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the annual governors' report.

8.5 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a

particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardian and EWS.

8.5 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

### **9 Celebrating good attendance**

At the end of each fortnight, at a school celebration assembly, attendance rates for each class are announced. The class with the highest attendance has extra playtime/Golden time that afternoon.

98+% and 100% attendance stickers and certificates are given to pupils on a termly basis.

Attendance is commented upon in the child's annual report.

Signed by Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing Body:

Mr G Edwards

Signed by Headteacher

Mr J C Morris

Date approved: November 2017

Next Review : November 2018