

## **The Dearne ALC** **Attendance Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Attendance and punctuality are fundamental to a young person's ability to benefit fully from the opportunities provided in our school. There is a clear link between good attendance and academic achievement as well as enabling the development of social, emotional and personal skills. Our school employs an "Attend to Achieve - 96%" strategy to ensure pupils' attendance at The Dearne ALC is at least in line with national figures.

### **Aims and Targets of Policy**

- To encourage all pupils to attend school and achieve their maximum potential
- To monitor individuals, key groups and whole school attendance and measure against agreed targets and national figures
- To ensure that pupils and their parents/carers understand and support the procedures in place to record and monitor attendance
- To identify pupils and their families who are not meeting the school's expectations and intervene as early as possible
- To ensure that all staff and governors understand and support the policy
- To use the "Attend to Achieve - 96%" strategy to drive forward day to day attendance work
- To use attendance data to inform policy

### **Establishing a Partnership**

Parents/carers, pupils and the school should endeavour to work in partnership in order to support the school community to raise attendance and achievement.

### **What we expect of our pupils**

- Attend school with at least 96% attendance
- Arrive to school and lessons on time
- Be prepared to work by bringing the appropriate equipment
- Cooperate with registration procedures
- Inform the appropriate member of staff if there are issues which might prevent attendance
- To stay on the school site during break and lunch times, unless issued with a privilege pass (Y11 only)

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### **What we expect of parents/carers**

- To fulfil their legal responsibility to encourage their children to attend school
- To encourage punctuality
- To contact school on the first day of a pupil's absence to explain the reason **and** send a note to school when the pupil returns. The note should be signed by the parent or carer.
- To ensure that the pupil has the appropriate equipment and work for the school day
- To contact the appropriate member of staff if there are any issues that might prevent attendance to school. Confidentiality would normally be respected except when there is a child protection concern.
- To ensure all holidays are taken out of term time. The school uses the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Revised Guidance Related to Pupil Leave of Absence from School to support its work on this area.
- To arrange non-urgent medical and dental appointments out of school hours. If this is unavoidable school must be informed and an appointment card be brought to the Attendance Officer

### **What parents/carers can expect of the school**

- A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum
- The encouragement of attendance of at least 96%.
- Rewards linked to attendance above 96%, including the participation of school trips and excursions. Only pupils with at least 96% attendance will be permitted to go on a trip/excursion. Any pupil who has a term time holiday will not be permitted to go on any school trip or visit during that rolling calendar year, from the last day of the term time holiday, regardless of the attendance figure at that time.
- Regular, efficient recording and monitoring of attendance and punctuality
- Prompt action and correspondence with parents/carers when issues arise
- Regular liaison with the Education Welfare Service which can assist and support parents and pupils where needed

### **The Law**

- Parents/Carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- The Local Authority (LA) must provide school places to parents/carers who wish their children to be educated at school

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- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session
- The school must report to the LA, pupils who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than 10 days without explanation
- The LA has a duty to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their legal responsibilities
- Failure by parents/carers to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil, is an offence punishable by law (Education Act 1996, Section 444)
- Fixed penalties can be issued by the Local Authority where the criteria for such a notice are met

## **School Procedures**

### **Registration**

- Morning registration begins at 8.30am and afternoon registration is the start of session 4, at 12.45pm.
- If pupils arrive after 8.30am they will receive a late mark in the register
- Staff should be in the form room or lined up for assembly at the start of registration
- Staff **MUST** ensure registers are filled in correctly within the first **10 minutes** of the start of the lesson **AND** saved to the system

### **Responding to lateness**

- Pupils arriving after 8.30 am must sign in at reception in the late book.
- The data and attendance team keep all registers up to date and insert late marks
- If a pupil is late they will be given a detention on that day after school. Lateness after 9.30am requires a reason from parents/carers.
- Persistent lateness may result in a referral to the Education Welfare Officer
- Teaching staff are responsible for monitoring pupils who are late to lesson.

### **Responding to Absence**

- Parents/carers should contact school on the first day of the pupil's absence giving a reason and the expected date of return
- Form teachers or the year team will ensure that the reasons for absence are recorded **accurately and on the day they receive them**
- Where a reason is accepted, the absence will be authorised using the appropriate symbol. The following circumstances would normally be authorised :
  - o Illness – medical evidence may be sought if there are frequent periods of absence
  - o Unavoidable medical/dental appointments

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- o Bereavement
  - o Agreed religious observation
  - o Exceptional circumstances agreed by the school
- When there is any doubt about whether or not to authorise an absence, advice should be sought from the Head of Year or Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning, who will decide whether or not to authorise the absence.

### **Continual Absence and Poor Attendance**

- The school will always attempt to resolve any problems relating to attendance as early as possible
- If there is no contact from the parent/carer, the Education Welfare Officer and/or Year team will make a home visit
- Ongoing attendance problems will be monitored daily and discussed weekly by the Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning and Heads of Year at their regular meetings. Weekly reports are sent to the Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning. Appropriate action will be decided and could include a telephone call, a letter, or an appointment for the parent/carer to come into school.
- Although any issues relating to attendance are best resolved between school and parents/carers on a voluntary basis, where a resolution cannot be achieved a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service requesting a home visit by an Education Welfare Officer. This will **always** be considered for those pupils whose attendance has been below 90%. It may also be considered for pupils with higher attendance but where there are patterns of absence which need to be discussed
- The school will send various letters to parents/carers when their child's attendance becomes a concern. Parents may also be invited to attend school attendance panels
- Persistent poor attendees and those with patterns of absence will be placed on a watch list for the school to monitor more closely.
- When pupils have not attended for 10 school days without explanation, the school has a statutory responsibility to inform the Education Welfare Service.
- Pupils who cannot be located will be considered missing. The Children Missing in Education Team will be informed and pursued in accordance with the Local Authority procedures.

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## **Responding to and Maintaining Good Attendance**

- Certificates or other awards are given to individual pupils to celebrate 100% attendance.
- Good attendance will be commented upon annually in a pupils school report by members of staff.
- Attendance above 96% will be rewarded in line with the school's rewards policy. All Gold, Silver and Bronze award winners have to have attendance of at least 96%. Pupils going on school trips/excursions will only be allowed to do so if their attendance is above 96%.
- Form groups and year groups will also be given attendance rewards on a half termly basis.
- Pupils with significantly improved attendance will also be rewarded.

## **Collecting and Analysing Data**

- Whole school, year group, key cohort and individual computerised attendance data is produced daily by the attendance team.
- This is used by Heads of Year/Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning to monitor whole school and individual attendance, evaluate the school's performance and strategies and inform future policies and strategies.
- The Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning meets weekly with the Vice principal: Inclusion for Learning and the Educational Welfare Officer to discuss attendance issues.
- Heads of Year track and monitor pupils who are below 90% attendance and look to use interventions to bring about improvements. All interventions used are logged via SIMS. Pupil Premium children are tracked and monitored as a priority.
- There is also a high risk cohort of pupils that are closely monitored lesson by lesson to ensure safeguarding measures are in place to protect them.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Class Teacher**

Take an accurate register in the first ten minutes and discuss absences in relation to progress and attainment when the opportunity arises. Class teachers should comment on attendance at every parents evening.

### **Form Tutor**

Take accurate registers in the first five minutes of form time. Discuss weekly attendance figures in relation to progress, attainment and the Year group competition. Check planners for notes after each absence. Call home or ask for a note and promote the 'Attend to Achieve - 96%' strategy. Ensure pupils fill in their personal attendance tracker for each day.

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## **Year Team**

Monitor attendance of Year group daily and support the work of Form Tutors where possible. Make first day calls when required and promote the 'Attend to Achieve - 96%' strategy in all calls home. Meet weekly with the Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning to discuss attendance figures of your cohort and action interventions from the required box, tracking and measuring the impact that week. Monitor and track the interventions, measuring impact. Produce data to highlight the positive or negative impact of interventions. Reward improved attendance and excellent attendance when possible. Attend panels when required and issue attendance passports at relevant points. Write up weekly attendance review for the Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning.

## **Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning**

Strategically lead attendance and the 'Attend to Achieve 96%' strategy. Manage and support pastoral staff through the process. Meet weekly with the year teams to discuss attendance. Support and attend home visits and call parents to highlight concerns and promote the 'Attend to Achieve - 96%' strategy. Chair Attendance Panels when required and hold staff accountable for the attendance work they undertake. Reward attendance termly and link to the whole school reward system. Regularly report on attendance to SLT and Governors identifying key areas of improvement. Report weekly to the Vice Principal: to discuss whole school attendance figures. As part of improving Parental Engagement organise attendance drop-ins on a termly basis with the support of the Local Authority. Take attendance concerns to the relevant meetings.

## **Data, Progress and Attendance Manager**

Produce data sets daily to Year teams to support them in first day calling. Produce data sets required for weekly meetings between year teams and Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning. Produce a daily report for the Director of Attendance, Behaviour and Learning highlighting attendance figures for every form group, year and whole school, and other relevant key cohorts, including persistent absence (PA) figures. This report should show monitoring and tracking of students and any improvements in attendance.

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