



Derby Cathedral School

Attendance Policy

Statement

Derby Cathedral School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling good attendance.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that:

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

- a) to age, ability and aptitude and
- b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise”.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2018) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children Missing Education'
- DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education September 2018'

Definitions

1.1. The school defines "absence" as either:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

1.2. The school defines an "authorised absence" as:

- 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.

1.3. The school defines an "unauthorised absence" as:

- Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not 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.

1.4. The school defines "persistent absenteeism (PA)" as:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of the school.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2018) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

2.2. The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of the school and distributing these to parents.

2.3. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Following the attendance policy, and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.

2.4. Designated members of staff will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of each afternoon session.

2.5. The school will ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

2.6. The school will inform the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:

- Are being educated from home.
- No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
- Have an authorised medical note.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
- Have been permanently excluded.

- 2.7. Parents will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their children during term-time.
- 2.8. Parents will be expected to promote good attendance and ensure their children attend school every day.
- 2.9. Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.
- 2.10. All pupils are responsible for their punctuality to lessons.

3. Training of staff

- 3.1. We recognise that early intervention can prevent bad behaviour. As such, members of staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their inductions and annual refresher training.
- 3.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Attendance Policy as part of their induction.
- 3.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

4. Pupil expectations

- 4.1. Pupils will be expected to attend school every day and will sign an agreement at the beginning of each school year.
- 4.2. The school expects all pupils to attend lessons punctually.
- 4.3. Pupils will be expected to report any absence immediately to the relevant member of staff.

5. Absence procedures

- 5.1. Parents are required to contact the school before 8:30am or as soon as possible thereafter on the first day of any absence and on each day of absence thereafter
- 5.2. Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the school office where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.
- 5.3. Communication (a telephone call, an email or a home visit) will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day and every proceeding day that they do not attend school.
- 5.4. The school will always follow up any absences in order to:
 - Ascertain the reason for the absence.
 - Ensure that robust safeguarding actions are being taken to guarantee the welfare of all students on roll at the school

- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
 - Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school's Management Information System (Bromcom)
- 5.5. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team
- 5.6. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission.
- 5.7. If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents.
- 5.8. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from the school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admission register (the school's roll of pupils) if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.

6. Contact information

- 6.1. Parents must provide accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- 6.2. *Parents* are responsible for updating the school if the details change.
- 6.3. Parents **must** provide the school with more than one emergency contact number.

7. Attendance register

- 7.1. The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:
- Present.
 - Absent.
 - Attending an approved educational visit.
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- 7.2. The school will use the national attendance codes to enable the school to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:
- / = Present in the morning
 - \ = Present in the afternoon
 - L = Late arrival before the register has closed
 - C = Authorised absence

- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site educational activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- S = Study leave
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- W = Work experience
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- J = At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- D – Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z – Pupil not on admission register

7.3. When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, for example: induction days.

7.4. All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment, and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

7.5. Every entry into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

8. Attendance officer (Education Welfare Officer)

8.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who will attempt to resolve the situation through various means, which may include meetings, home visits, parental contracts and otherwise.

8.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the EWO has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

9. Lateness

- 9.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance, and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 9.2. The school day starts at 8:45am; pupils should be in their classroom at this time.
- 9.3. Registers are marked by 8:45am; pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 9.4. The register closes at 9:15am; pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- 9.5. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.

10. Truancy

- 10.1. Truancy means any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
- 10.2. All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of pupils, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning.
- 10.3. All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 8:45am
- 10.4. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return.
- 10.5. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting.
- 10.6. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher will be notified and they will contact the child's parents, in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.
- 10.7. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:
 - In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
 - If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
 - A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term time and persistent late arrival at school.

11. Missing children and Children Missing from Education (CME)

- 11.1. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the headteacher.
- 11.2. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing during the school day:
- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
 - The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
 - A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
 - The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Changing rooms
 - The library
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
 - Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
 - If the pupil has not been found, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
 - The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contacts provided.
 - If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the list has been exhausted, then the police will be contacted.
 - The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- 11.3. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- 11.4. When the pupil has been located, a designated member of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- 11.5. The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupil understands they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- 11.6. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

- 11.7. The headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- 11.8. Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- 11.9. A Child Missing from Education (CME) is defined by the Department for Education (DfE) as "a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise".
- 11.10. Children Missing from Education are not on a school roll, not being educated in a school or anywhere else or are identified as being out of education of over 20 school days
- 11.11. Children Missing from Education are not those who are being Electively Home Educated, nor those not attending school but yet who remain on a school's roll nor those whose parents have applied for a school place and the application is being dealt with
- 11.12. Anyone can refer a child as CME. In Derby City, referrals are handled by Education Welfare Service who can be contacted on 01332 641448; by email cme@derby.gov.uk or by post Education Welfare Service, Locality 3/4 Ashtree House, The Council House, Corporation Street, Derby, DE1 2FS
- 11.13. A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome

12. Term-time absence

- 12.1. Our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 12.2. Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example bereavement of a close family member, serious illness or military staff returning from active service
- 12.3. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 12.4. Requests for term time absence must be submitted at least 4 weeks in advance of any absence in writing to the Headteacher
- 12.5. If term time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions such as a penalty notice.
- 12.6. Consequences for parents taking a leave of absence during term time which are not authorised by the school may result in a penalty notice of £120 per parent per child. The procedures regarding the issuing of a penalty notice are set out below.

- 12.7. In circumstances whereby a pupil is absent and where school staff suspects a child is away on holiday then efforts will be made to make contact with the Parent(s). Once this has been done, a home visit will be considered if there is cause for such action.
- 12.8. Should the Headteacher deem it necessary, we will request a Penalty Notice within 2 weeks of the pupil *returning* to school.
- 12.9. A letter will then be sent to the named Parent(s) individually detailing the fact that we have requested for a penalty notice to be issued.
- 12.10. The Headteacher makes the final decision on whether to authorise term time absence, record it as unauthorised or pursue a penalty notice.
- 12.11. If a child returns to school and informs staff that a Leave of Absence (holiday) has been taken or it is suspected that this is the case, or in following up on absence parents/carers communicate that a holiday has been taken – parents/carers will be informed of school's decision on the absence in writing
- 12.12. All un-authorised absences are reported to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice.
- 12.13. Fines apply per parent per child
- 12.14. Payment is £120 if paid within 28 Days – reduced to £60 if paid within 21 Days
- 12.15. If not paid the matter will be placed before the Court.

13. Religious observances

- 13.1. The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- 13.2. Parents must inform the school in at least 7 days advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.
- 13.3. The day(s) of absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.

14. Appointments

- 14.1. As far as possible, parents should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 14.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the school.
- 14.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, the pupil must be signed out by a parent.
- 14.4. Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

15. Young carers

- 15.1. The school understands the difficulties young carers face, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school, as well as throughout their time at the school.
- 15.2. The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

16. Exceptional circumstances

- 16.1. When absence is due to exceptional circumstances, the 'Y' code will be used on the attendance register.
- 16.2. Exceptional circumstances include when a pupil is unable to attend because:
 - The school is fully or partially closed.
 - Transport provided by the school or LA is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance.
 - There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the pupil from attending.
 - The pupil is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.
- 16.3. The use of the 'Y' code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

17. Rewarding good attendance

- 17.1. Good attendance and punctuality will be rewarded in the following ways:
 - Postcards home
 - Rewards raffle
 - House points
- 17.2. School trips and events are a privilege. Where attendance drops below 95 percent, these privileges may be taken away.
- 17.3. Attendance at the Year 11 prom requires 90 percent attendance across all five years.

18. Monitoring and review

- 18.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- 18.2. The school's attendance target is 97 percent each year.
- 18.3. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Senior Leadership Team
- 18.4. Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

