

Attendance Policy



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Rationale:

More Than Ed's School Attendance Policy aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with attendance.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the DFE Guidance on Attendance (November 2013) and the School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures (January 2015)

The policy aims to make explicit the School's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. The purpose of the policy is, therefore, to ensure that attendance concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the student's wellbeing.

1. Aims:

- To work with each learner as an individual and improve their attendance by removing barriers to learning.
 - On induction discussing individual plans which will improve attendance
 - All students transported to and from home by their key worker
 - Monitor attendance on a weekly basis and put interventions in place if patterns are beginning to emerge.
- To make the improvement of individual attendance a priority for all learners, parents/carers, staff and other stakeholders.
 - By making sure that parents/carers are aware of the link between good attendance and good achievement.
 - By discussing attendance at relevant meetings including SLT and whole staff meetings.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
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 - By discussing attendance at relevant meetings including SLT and whole staff meetings.
 - Data from CPOMS and contact from parents/carers will be examined weekly to ensure that learners at risk of becoming persistent non-attenders are quickly identified.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
 - Promote a positive working relationship right from induction.
 - Involve parents/carers in decisions.
 - Identify potential issues as early as possible, work in partnership with parents/carers to solve them.
 - All staff to understand that many parents/carers are doing their best, often under difficult circumstances however, good attendance is non-negotiable.
 - Parents to receive termly reports which include a printout of attendance.

- To recognise the needs of the individual learner when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence or an ingrained habit of low attendance at school.
 - Be sensitive and show understanding of the circumstances of individual learners.
 - Work in partnership with parents/carers involving them in decisions.
 - Set up regular meetings either at the school, home or via telephone to evaluate the pupil reintegration plan
 - Celebrate improvements and build confidence and self-esteem of the learner.

2. Procedures

As all students are transported to and from home by their key worker, any issues regarding attendance can be addressed immediately. Strategies will range from waiting in the car while the student feels calmer, if they are dysregulated, to teaching sessions at the home until the student feels confident enough to attend the school.

Any attendance strategy is bespoke to the young person and their needs, and will include working with parents/carers, social workers, Local Authority, and any other agency involved around the child.

3. Registration

The school is statutorily required to take an attendance register twice daily. This will be managed manually on arrival then electronically via CPOMS. This system will display present/absent using the national attendance codes. This will be input by the Business Manager.

The attendance register should only be altered:

- Where a learner's name has been legally changed
- Where an unexplained absence has been explained
- If an error has been discovered.
- Any alterations will be recorded on CPOMS with reasons for the change.

4. Absences

4.1 First Day Absence

If a child is absent for any reason, parents/carers must let the school know ASAP. This information will be placed on the register when it has been received. If the learner is on a CP or CIN plan or we have concerns about the welfare of the child, then the visit will take place on day 1 of the absence. Every case of absence is examined and safeguarding is paramount.

If a learner is absent and we have been unable to contact the parent/carer to establish the reason for absence, then the Key Worker may perform a home visit.

4.2 Authorised Absence

Every absence (am/pm) will be classified as authorised or unauthorised. This will be confirmed using the National Attendance Codes. Authorised absences include events such as:

- Illness
- Bereavement

- Medical appointments (where every eventuality has been made to make this outside School hours)
- Approved sporting activities.

4.3 Unauthorised Absence

'Unauthorised Absence' is a period of absence which the school does not consider reasonable and no leave of absence has been issued. This may include events such as:

- Family holidays
- Truancy
- Unexplained absences

A parent can offer an explanation for their child's absence, but the law clearly states that it is the Head teacher's decision as to whether it is felt the explanation offered by a parent for an absence is justified. For pupils on non-attendance procedure stage 2 onwards absence will only be authorised when evidence can be provided.

4.4 Holiday Absence

Holidays in term time are classified as unauthorised and marked on the register as G. This should not change unless it is at the discretion of the Head Teacher and only under exceptional circumstances can a holiday be authorised.

4.5 Long-term Absence

If there is a long-term absence for medical reasons where external tuition has been put in place, for example hospital schooling a 'B' should be marked on the register. If a child has been in hospital and discharged under medical supervision, work packs should be provided for the learner for up to two weeks. If the learner has not returned to school a member of the Senior Leadership Team should complete a home visit and discuss the appropriate intervention which needs to take place.

5. Children Missing from Education

A learner going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or sexual exploitation. The Designated Safeguarding Leads will monitor unauthorised absence, particularly where learners go missing on repeated occasions.

More Than Ed School follows DfE legal requirements for schools in respect of recording and reporting of children who leave school without any known destination and work closely with the Local Authority.

Where a learner has 10 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence and responsible steps* have been taken by More Than Ed School to establish the whereabouts without success, the DSL will contact Doncaster's Children Missing Education Team on 01302 735311 and email

childrenmissingeducation@doncaster.gov.uk

Reasonable steps include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visit where safe to do so
- Enquires through friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other service known to be involved with the family
- Request a Police Welfare Check (after 5 days)
- All contacts and outcomes should be recorded on CPOMS

The Attendance Team will then work with the school and make reasonable efforts to try and identify the child's current whereabouts or destination. If the child is not found, the Attendance Team will complete a Child Missing From Education form (CME). The child's name will be entered onto the Children Missing from Education Register, which is held centrally in accordance with the LA Children Missing from Education Procedural Guidance.

After four school weeks (20 school days) should such efforts prove to be unsuccessful and confirmation has been received from the Attendance Team that they are aware of the Child, they can be removed from roll.