



DAUBENEV ACADEMY

Attendance Policy

Philosophy

Daubeney Academy is committed to maximising attendance for all pupils to enable them to benefit fully from their education. We believe that regular attendance is vital for effective learning.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parent/carers and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise the importance of establishing strong home/school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is a concern about attendance.

We will identify and address, as speedily as possible, any problems affecting attendance and adopt, at all times, a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance.

Principles

The school will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. It will promote positive staff attitudes to those pupils returning from absences.

Staff will be made aware of the registration process and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law.

Registers will be completed accurately at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and attendance is regularly monitored.

Parent/carers will be encouraged to contact school early on the first day of absence.

Attendance procedures will be regularly evaluated by senior managers and school governors.

Procedures will allow returned absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other pupils in the class.

Consultation will take place with staff and the Education Welfare Officer to develop and maintain the school Attendance Policy.

Procedure

Rights and Responsibilities

Improving attendance at Daubeney Academy is the responsibility of everyone in the school community; pupils, parent/carers and school staff.

Pupils are expected to attend school and lessons regularly and punctually. Pupils who do experience difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support.

Parent/carers are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually, properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parent/carers are required to notify the school of the reason on the first day of absence and each day their child is away from school. Parent/carers whose first language is not English or have literacy problems, will be offered support from school in matters of communication.

A pupil's absence from school will remain unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is given by the parent/carer. Parent/carers will be promptly informed of any concerns over their child's attendance. Parent/carers should avoid, wherever possible, making medical or dental appointments during school hours and taking family holidays during the school term.

School staff will encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Staff should convey high expectations to pupils regarding attendance and punctuality. Staff will promptly investigate all absenteeism, liaising closely with parent/carers. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

Registration

Registers will be called promptly at 8:50am and 1:25pm.

Registers will officially close at 9:30am (at the beginning of the first lesson of the morning) and 1:30pm (at the beginning of the first lesson in the afternoon).

Where pupils arrive late and the register is still open, they will be marked late but counted as a present for the session. Where pupils miss registration and do not provide an adequate explanation, they will be marked as late but counted as unauthorised absent. Where pupils miss registration but provide an acceptable explanation – eg. medical or dental appointments, they will be marked as absent but as authorised absence for that session.

Lateness – lateness is actively discouraged and challenged immediately if and when it arises. Pupils who arrive late after the registers have closed should report to the School Office and have their names entered into the **School In/Out/Late Book**. If a child does not have a satisfactory reason for being late, they will be required to attend a breaktime detention in the Entrance Hall, to make up for the time they missed by arriving late.

The Attendance Officer, whose responsibility it is to check the registers each morning and contact parent/carers where necessary, will also inform each Head of Year if an individual pupil is persistently late. This may result in a breaktime detention, or if this continues, an after school detention and a letter sent to parents.

Absences will be totalled and analysed to inform policies.

Documentation re- Registration, please see **Appendix A**.

Recording Absence

All staff must record absences, either as authorised or unauthorised, using the agreed symbols.

Consistent criteria should be applied to decision making. If staff have reasons to doubt the explanation offered about whether a particular absence is genuine, the absence should be recorded as unauthorised and the Head of Year should be informed. Absences should not be authorised once a warning letter for court action has been issued to parent/carers by the Education Welfare Service, unless a medical certificate is received. If in doubt the Attendance Officer will seek advice from the Education Welfare Officer.

Annual Holidays Taken During Term Time

The 2008 Pupil Registration Regulations state that “time off school for a family holiday is not a right. It is at the discretion of the Headteacher to grant the holiday if they believe that the circumstances warrant it” (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations May 2008 paragraph 60).

In keeping with the Kempston Schools’ Joint Policy regarding holiday requests, adopted in July 2010, Daubeney Academy will code all holiday applications in term time as “unauthorised”, unless there are special circumstances*.

Any application for a holiday in term time should be made, in writing, via the application form, prior to booking a holiday and at least 6 weeks before the date of departure. Parents/Carers may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss this request with the Joint Headteachers or another senior member of staff.

Parent/carers may be subject to a penalty warning letter if a pupils’ attendance falls below the schools’ 95% target.

These special circumstances (‘Keeping Pupil Registers) May 08’ paragraph 61) include:

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time where the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil’s education;
- When the family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;
- At the discretion of the Headteacher based upon individual circumstances.

Requests for the following reasons are not accepted reasons for taking pupils out during term time, and will result in not only the holiday being “unauthorised” but parent/carers possibly being issued with a penalty warning letter or fixed penalty notice:

- Availability of cheap holidays;
- Availability of desired accommodation;
- Poor weather experienced in the school holiday period;
- Overlap with the beginning or end of term;

No requests will be granted during internal or external examination periods.

Any application from a pupil with attendance below 85% may result in involvement of the Education Welfare Service and may be subject to a £50 Fixed Penalty Notice. The Penalty Notice is £50 if paid within 28 days or £100 if paid after the 28 days but before 42 days (per parent/carer, per child). If the parent/carer/carer does not pay the Penalty Notice it may lead to prosecution.

Unauthorised Absence

Parent/carers of all pupils with unauthorised absence/s will be asked to attend a Parent Contract meeting with the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) where the parent/carers’ statutory responsibility and reasons for the unauthorised absence will be discussed. The EWO is actively involved in any case of persistent/frequent unauthorised absences.

Follow-up of Absence

If no information is received from the parent/carer of the absent pupil on the morning of the first absence, the school will contact the parent/carer by telephone. If this action does not result in an explanation or the return of the pupil to school, then a letter will be sent after four days. The matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer if the absence continues without explanation from the parent/carer.

Action on irregular attendance will initially involve the Attendance Officer contacting the parent/carer to discuss the matter. If the attendance does not improve the Attendance Officer will invite the parent/carers to a meeting. The aim of the meeting will be to identify and resolve any difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parent/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance.

If the pupil’s difficulties are not resolved and the attendance does not improve, a formal referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer and formal intervention planned. A penalty notice can be made when attendance is a continuous problem.

In the event of a pupil returning after a long absence, then an individual re-integration strategy will be implemented.

If a pupil is absent from school for a long term illness (broken leg or virus etc), then they will be referred to Greys Education for home tuition.

Review/Strategies

Part of the evaluation process will be to consider what interventions, as listed below, have been successful.

- Attendance Officer telephoning parent/carers on the first day of absence;
- Statistics produced from SIMs Attendance Software each month;
- Education Welfare Officer checks and analyses attendance statistics at least once every half term during consultation with the Attendance Officer.
- Attendance discussed as an agenda item at least once every half term at the Heads of Year meetings;
- Heads of Year inform their Year Team of individual pupil concerns;
- Targets are set annually with the LA;

Conclusion

Maintaining and improving attendance at Daubeney Academy requires all staff to be vigilant at all times.

The current Attendance Co-ordinator is: Mrs Z Bennett

This policy was reviewed and agreed at the meeting of the full Governing Body.	
Date :	3 May 2012.
Signed :	<i>K Deveson</i>
Chair of Governors:	Mr K Deveson
Review date:	May 2015

Appendix A

INSTRUCTIONS FOR KEEPING OF THE REGISTER

- The register is a legal document and as such must be marked at morning and afternoon registration. Failure to do so could lead to problems should a fire drill be called or the EWO visits to check the registers. We could also be prosecuted for non-completion.
- If a new pupil is assigned to your Tutor Group during the first week of the Autumn Term or part-way through the year, simply write their name ON THE NEXT FREE LINE after the last named child and mark them in the usual way. The pupils will be included alphabetically on the following week's Registration Form.
- Registration officially closes at 9:10am (ie., at the beginning of Lesson 1). If a child is not physically present when you are ready to send the register up to the School Office then that child must be marked absent. (Any child attending an early morning Club/Activity should write their name on the board of their Form Room indicating that they are in school, and these pupils will therefore be marked Present). If any child comes into school after the register has been sent up to the School Office and before the 9:30am cut of time, then the School Office staff will change the mark to Present. If the child comes into school after 9:30am then the School Office staff will code the pupil with a late mark or a 'M' if the child has been to the doctor or dentist etc. Any child who is late will have their name entered into the In/Out Book kept in the School Office, noting the reason for lateness and then any persistent lateness for no particular reasons can be monitored.
- All absences and reasons for absence **must be recorded daily** on online Register.
- All letters and messages received by telephone regarding absence should be kept in the folder in the front of your register until the end of the week, by which time the reason for absence should have been recorded on SIMS. **Please date the note/s you have from parent/carers, as often there is no indication in the notes as to which date/s the absence note/s refer.** Thereafter, these letters and messages will be filed away in a special blue folder which is kept at the front of each Form's batch of Yellow Record Cards in the School Office filing cabinets.
- If no notification is received giving a reason for a child's absence, then a letter should be sent to the parent/carers (see supply attached). If no replies are received in response to this letter then letters will be re-sent, then referred to the EWO.
- At any time you require an in depth attendance record for a specific child, please request one from the Attendance Officer or office staff.
- If a pupil has a doctor/dentist appointment in the afternoon and they are therefore going home for lunch and then on to the appointment from home, would you please remind pupils that they must sign out at the office **before they leave school at lunchtime.**
- If for any inconceivable reason a register is not marked and as such it is discovered at afternoon registration or the next morning – would you please ensure that it is completed at time of discovery – do not leave it unmarked, and send a message to the Attendance Officer to let her know.