

DUMPTON SCHOOL 25 – ATTENDANCE POLICY

Person(s) responsible:	Head/Senior Deputy Head
Last updated:	September 2022
Review period:	24 months
Next review:	September 2024

1. **Policy statement**

For a child to reach their full potential a high level of school attendance is essential. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

Early Years

The *Early Years* Inspection Handbook states ‘Although attendance at the setting is not mandatory, providers should be alert to patterns of absence that may indicate wider safeguarding concerns, Inspectors will explore how well providers work with parents to promote children’s good attendance, especially the attendance of children for whom the provider receives the early years pupil premium’.

2. **Roles and responsibilities**

The overall responsibility for the implementation of the Attendance Policy lies with the Headmaster.

The Senior Deputy Head will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school’s work in promoting regular attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school.

The Senior Deputy Head will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed and that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents/carers the need and reasons for their child’s absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum.

A note or explanation from a pupil’s home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

Responsibilities of Class and Form Teachers:

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately.
- Promote the importance of good attendance with pupils’ at all appropriate opportunities.
- Liaise with the Senior Deputy Head on matters of attendance and punctuality.

- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.
- Support pupils who have been absent in engaging with their learning once they are back in school.

Responsibilities of pupils:

- Go to all their registrations and lessons on time.
- Take responsibility for registering at the Reception Desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

Responsibilities of parents/carers:

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act). We respectfully request that parents should:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence.
- Discuss with the tutor/class teacher any planned absences well in advance.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstances, using the **Request for Absence Form** on the Parent Portal.

Recording attendance:

It is a legal requirement that the register be marked twice daily.

Morning

Nursery – written registration is taken on the child's arrival and collection

Pre-Prep - registration should take place between 8:15-8:45 am

Prep School – registration is from 8:25 – leaving for assembly

After 8:30, pupils who have not been registered by the Form Tutor will be marked with a “?” and followed up. Pupils after this time should present themselves to the Front Desk at the school Reception so that their attendance can be confirmed. They will be marked L “late” in the register.

The electronic attendance registers close at 9:30.

After this time a pupil will be marked as O “unauthorised absence”, until the reason for their absence has been confirmed and the appropriate code applied.

Afternoon

Pre-Prep - registration should take place at the start of the afternoon teaching session (13:25)

Prep School – registration is from 14:10-14:15 pm (from 12:00 noon on Weds)

Afternoon register closes at 14:30. After this time a pupil will be marked as late until the appropriate code is applied.

Lateness

All lateness is recorded daily. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support will be offered.

3. What to do if my child is absent?

If your child is absent you must:

- contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

If your child is absent we will:

- telephone on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.

Request for leave of absence

Taking holidays in term time will inevitably affect your child's schooling - we respectfully request that parents do not take children on holiday during school time for this reason.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence should use the **Request for Absence Form** on the Parent Portal before making any travel arrangements. If leave of absence is granted, this information is passed on to the relevant personnel – Senior Management, Matron and the Form Tutor – so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headmaster to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the Headmaster's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Written permission should be obtained from the Headmaster. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the Headmaster's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the

absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Headmaster. Written permission for any sporting activities should be obtained from the Headmaster. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in high level sport is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

4. Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than when leaving at the end of Year 8) parents are asked to:

1. Give the school information about their plans, including any date of a move and their new address and telephone numbers, their child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to Dumpton in writing.
2. If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then the child is considered to be a child missing from education. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

5. Safeguarding

Schools are an important part of the wider system for safeguarding children. The process of registering attendance for each child is not only a legal requirement but helps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of each child in our care. Attendance at Dumpton is tracked via the registration module built in to the school's Management Information System (MIS) and attendance is monitored on a daily basis. Parents, carers or guardians where possible, should provide at least TWO up-to-date emergency contact numbers for the school.

If absence becomes a cause for concern the school will endeavour to resolve the matter with parents, carers or guardians in the first instance. If that process fails or concerns remain, the school will then liaise with Social Services or other safeguarding agencies.

6. Record preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least six years after the last dated entry. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups.