



DANES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Making the difference together

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

2025-2026

www.daneseducationaltrust.org.uk

01923 284169

c/o St Clement Danes School, Chenies Road, Chorleywood, Hertfordshire, WD3 6EW

To determine and approve policy and ensure compliance	Danes Educational Trust Board
To implement, deliver and comply	Headteacher and School Board
APPROVAL DATE	19 November 2025
COMMITTEE	Trust Board
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SLT LEAD	Director of Education
As part of the review process, this policy/procedure has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.	

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Statement of intent

Danes Educational Trust believes that in order to facilitate high quality teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

Danes Educational Trust understands that barriers to attendance are complex and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. Therefore there is an ongoing priority to cultivate safe and supportive environments in all our schools, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

There is a Trust-wide approach to securing good attendance, and recognising the impact that efforts in other areas (areas such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium) can have on improving attendance.

Danes Educational Trust are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits
- Ensuring equality and fairness of curriculum access for all
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance
- Working collaboratively across schools in the Trust, as well as other agencies
- 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 them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- Monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support

The senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in **Name of school** is:

Name: **####** (**Position**)

Contact details: Telephone: **####** Email: **####**

The member of school staff parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

Name: **####** (**Position**)

Contact details: Telephone: **####** Email: **####**

The Attendance Officer that parents should contact for more individual support with attendance is:

Name: **####** (**Position**)

Contact details: Telephone: **####** Email: **####**

1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing daily pupil attendance data'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school (S) and Trust (T) policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (including Children Missing in Education) (T)
- Complaints Policy (T)
- Behaviour Policy (S)
- SEND Policy(T)
- Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (S)

2. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

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

Authorised absence:

- 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

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained (this is at school discretion and evidence may be required to ascertain clarity over an absence)
- 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

Persistent absence (PA):

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

Severe absence (SA):

- Severe Absence is when a pupil misses 50% or more of sessions, whether authorised or unauthorised.

Missing education:

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Danes Educational Trust Board, and through relevant delegation, the School Board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school, which in turn contributes to Danes Educational Trust ethos and policies
- Regularly reviewing attendance data through the termly Headteacher Report
- Through delegation to the Directors of Education & Inclusion (Trust) sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across Trust schools
- 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 Trust's Complaints Policy
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education section of the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors termly
- Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence- pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation/grooming etc and this group must be a made a top priority for support and joint working between school, children's social care and other statutory safeguarding partners
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers

The designated senior lead for attendance and attendance officer are responsible for:

- Leading and promoting attendance across the school
- Developing a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of attendance data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls letters and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Informing the Local Authority (LA) of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers unless exceptions apply
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded
- Reporting attendance to the governing body and Trust attendance lead.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too
- Ensuring this 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
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day
- Emphasising with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number
- Updating the school if their details change
- The attendance of their children at school
- Promoting good attendance with their children
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and LA
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance

4. ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Attendance is everyone's business and forms an integral part of our school ethos and improvement strategy. The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

[Primary only] Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

[Secondary only] Pupils will be expected to attend all their lessons and any agreed activities every day they are required to be at school and to arrive punctually to all lessons when at school.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at **SCHOOL NAME** are:

- The children can arrive from **8.40 am**, when the gates open
- The register for AM registration will be taken at **time** and will be kept open until **time**
- The register for the PM registration will be taken at **time** and will be kept open until **time (for secondary you may want to include - PM registration is taken at the start of Period 4 (or similar))**
- **[Secondary only]** Class teachers will also take registers at the start of each lesson period to ensure that pupils are attending all timetabled lessons. These registers will be analysed alongside formal registers in line with the relevant section of this policy
- The end of the school day is at **3.20 pm**

How lateness is managed: **SCHOOLS TO ADAPT AS NECESSARY**

- The school day starts at **8.40am** when children can begin to come into school
- Registers are taken at **8.50am** and your child will receive a late mark 'L' if they are not in by that time
- Children arriving after **8.50am** are required to **come into school via the school office**.
 - **[Primary only]** They must be accompanied by a parent/carers who must sign them in and provide a reason for their lateness, which is recorded
 - **[Secondary only]** They are required to sign in at **insert where** and provide a reason for lateness
- At **9.20am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with [Dfe School Attendance Guidance](#), if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site - 'U', but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding lateness
- From time to time a member of school staff will undertake a 'Late Gate' check, greeting late arrivals at the **main entrance to the school**

Unauthorised lateness could result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with **XXXXX SPECIFY ALLOCATED STAFF MEMBER**, but you can approach senior leaders or the attendance officer at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. The school expects parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models and to celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to **their class teacher / form teacher (amend as appropriate)**.

5. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

First day absence

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If a child is absent, parents/carers must contact the school **by 9.00am on the first day of absence**.

If a child is absent the school will:

- Telephone or text the parent/carers on the first day of absence if no contact has been made— this is because the school has a duty to ensure the child's safety as well as their regular school attendance
- Invite parents/carers in to discuss the situation if absences persist and this is deemed appropriate

- Refer the matter to the local authority attendance advisory officer if absence is unauthorised and falls below 90 percent if the child is subject to a child protection plan the procedures set out for an unexplained absence below will be implemented immediately

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

When considering absence, the school will refer to the NHS guidance [‘Is my child too ill for school?’](#) to offer advice to parents on whether a child should attend. In conditions where the recommendation is to attend school, this should be done only once the child feels well enough to attend.

Second day absence [Primary only]

If a child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers on the second day of absence, the school will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact. This will include making enquiries to known friends, wider family or undertaking home visits. Where the school is unable to undertake a home visit, an appropriate colleague will contact the police to request they undertake a welfare check. This action will be taken on day one if the child has complex needs or is subject to a child in need or child protection plan.

[Secondary only]

Where a pupil is absent for more than three school days in a row, or more than 10 school days in one term, the parent will be expected to provide a signed letter or email with an explanation for the absence(s).

Ten days’ absence and beyond

The school has a legal duty to report the absence of any child who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing. Children’s Services staff may visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. This is known as a Child Missing in Education. The school will use the LA 10 Day Absence Reporting Form if this is the case.

Where a pupil is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will consult with the LA regarding the potential removal of the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Continued or ongoing absence – Persistent absence (PA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10 percent or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil’s education and the school will need the full support and cooperation of parents/carers to resolve this. Projected PA children are tracked and monitored carefully through the schools attendance systems. All PA children and their parents/carers will be monitored with appropriate support and intervention put in place aimed to improve attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority Attendance Advisory Officer during review meetings and cases may lead to legal action being initiated.

Severe absence (SA)

A pupil is defined as severely absent from schools when they miss more than 50% of their possible school sessions; this can be authorised or unauthorised. If a pupil is SA the school will closely monitor their attendance with work with families to provide support. If improvement is not achieved a multi-agency approach will be initiated, this could include a referral to external agencies. All SA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority Attendance Advisory Officer during review meetings and cases may lead to legal action being initiated.

Some children may have acute health conditions which, despite the best efforts of parents and carers, lead to significant ongoing periods of absence. The school will work closely with parents/carers to ensure support systems are developed which enable each child to attend school as often as is physically possible. Children should never be excluded from school or activities on medical grounds unless they are acutely unwell or hospitalised.

If acutely unwell, children will access hospital schools supported by their home school as appropriate. The school will maintain close links with children and their families during any sustained periods of absence to ensure continuity of relationships and provision. Children in recovery can be supported by a flexible return to schooling which is manageable for them.

Families of children with acute physical and medical conditions that lead to pervasive absence will not follow the same systems and procedures laid out in this policy.

6. ATTENDANCE REGISTER

The school uses **ARBOR** management information system (MIS) to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the AM/PM 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

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole or partial school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence authorised by the school for exceptional circumstances
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- **[Secondary only] S = Study Leave (for a public examination)**
- B = Off-site approved education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday (unauthorised)
- O = Unauthorised absence (unauthorised)
- U = Arrived after registration closed (whilst present will be classed as unauthorised)
- N = Reason not yet provided (unauthorised)
- X = Non compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school

- T = Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements
- V = Educational visit or trip
- W = Work Experience
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the whole school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause
- Z = Prospective pupil not on admission register

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, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register using the most appropriate absence code.

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, this is captured electronically.

The school will share its daily attendance data with the DfE directly from the MIS.

Where there is more than one afternoon session, and therefore the attendance register is taken more than once in the same afternoon, the school will use the codes from the last afternoon session as the basis for its statistical attendance data.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

7. AUTHORISING PARENTAL ABSENCE REQUESTS

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil’s education into account. The headteacher’s decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence (unless exceptional circumstances mean the full notice period could not be given, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur).

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. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. **The school will not grant leave of absence for the purposes of family holidays unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, exceptional circumstances do not include the cheaper cost of holidays within term time.**

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent
- **[Secondary Only] During Year 7 when a pupil is settling into the school, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. the death of a family member**

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. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Medical or dental appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 95 percent unless there are exceptional circumstances. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

The school will usually grant leave of absence where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution, e.g. school, university or college.

[Secondary only] Study leave for a public examination

The school may grant leave of absence for a pupil to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with.

Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition for the examination syllabus is complete and will be used sparingly. Provision will still be made available for pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Pupils subject to a part-time timetable

In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a pupil's best interests, the school will grant leave of absence to accommodate a pupil on a part-time timetable. In such circumstances, the days on which the pupil is expected to attend school will be agreed in advance.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Parent travelling for occupational purposes

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

Absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will include when a pupil is unable to attend because:

- Transport provided by the school, LA or parent 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
- Part of the school premises is closed, and the pupil cannot be practicably accommodated
- The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly
- The pupil is in criminal justice detention.
- Public health guidance or law legislates that attendance is respectively not advised or prohibited
- Any other unavoidable cause makes attendance impossible

The use of the seven 'Y' codes for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

Code Q will be used in circumstances where there is a lack of access arrangements, e.g. the LA has not upheld its duty to arrange the pupil's home to school travel.

8. SEND AND HEALTH-RELATED ABSENCES

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any Educational Health Care (EHC) plans that have been implemented or medical evidence with a diagnosed mental health need. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there have been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments
- Incorporating attendance as part of their Personal Learning Plan (PLP) or pastoral support plan (PSP).
- Carrying out a strengths and difficulties questionnaire
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Using an internal or external specialist
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable (this is usually a time limited approach)
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and break-times
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out
- Temporary late starts or early finishes
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs

9. LEAVE DURING LUNCH TIMES

[Primary Only] Schools should amend the following section to suit their school's specific rules and circumstances. Example text has been provided. Secondary should delete this section]

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher, It is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents will submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time and this request will be submitted to the headteacher. The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch-time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the headteacher will ensure a photo lunchtime pass is printed for the pupil and will include the pupil's name on the off-site register.

Pupils will leave the school premises within 10 minutes of the start of lunch and will return no later than 5 minutes before the end of lunch.

Parents will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises. The pupil will be signed out and back in using the lunch time register at the school office. A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff at the school office has given their permission.

The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time. This may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents will be able to withdraw their request at any time and the request will be submitted in writing to the headteacher.

Permission will be updated on a termly basis. Letters will be sent to parents at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

10. TRUANCY

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

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 **you may wish to add if there is a linked consequence in your behaviour policy**
- 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

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

11. ABSENT CHILDREN / CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher or senior leader 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 after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted
- **The missing pupil's teacher / Head of Year will fill in a record of concern incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing, this will be stored on Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS)**
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be added to CPOMS, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

12. ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the senior leadership team (SLT), will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance such as part-time timetables
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents (templates in appendices)
 - Having a regular tutor review
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams
 - Using fixed penalty notices
 - Creating attendance clinics

The school will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

Positive Attendance Recognition

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- List [Schools should amend the following section to include details of their own attendance reward schemes, or whether classes are celebrated in news letters etc.]

School trips and events will be considered a privilege. Where attendance drops below 90 percent, these privileges may be taken away. The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

13. WORKING WITH PARENTS TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are at least two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education. Parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

14. PERSISTENT ABSENCE and SEVERE ABSENCE

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to persistent absence (PA) and severe absence, such as:

- Disadvantaged pupils
- Pupils subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan.
-)Children Looked After (CLA)
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps
- Providing a transition support plan
- Meeting with pupils and parents / carers to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support
- Leading **weekly / bi-weekly** check-ins to review progress and the impact of support
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress
- Assessing whether a referral to the SEND team and / or external services may be appropriate
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups

Where a pupil at risk of PA/SA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear

in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

15. PENALTY NOTICES AND LEGAL INTERVENTION

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered..

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's [\[Hertfordshire link, amend if other LA\] code of conduct](#) and the DfE's '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Parents will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme

- Requiring the parents to access support services
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months

Failing to comply with an SEO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

16. MONITORING AND ANALYSING ABSENCE

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data **weekly/bi-weekly** to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole
- Individual year groups
- Individual pupils
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM
- pupils at risk of PA

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data as a minimum on a half-termly basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes
- Particular days of poor attendance
- Historic trends of attendance and absence
- Barriers to attendance

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The school board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against Danes Educational Trust, local, regional and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The board of trustees will ensure staff from different schools within Danes Educational Trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

17. TRAINING OF STAFF

Danes Educational Trust and the school recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The headteacher will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- The fact that absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The headteacher will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

18. DELETIONS OF NAMES FROM THE ADMISSION REGISTER

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

19. MONITORING

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The Danes Educational Trust attendance target is 96 percent .

APPENDIX 1 Attendance Monitoring Procedures

We have adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. **[Primary example]** A spreadsheet is maintained by the SLT responsible for attendance detailing weekly and annual attendance to date
2. **[Primary example]** Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to SLT
3. **[Secondary example]** A red, amber, green (RAG) rated spreadsheet will be sent weekly to Heads of Year (HOY) detailing weekly and annual attendance to date
4. **[Secondary example]** Attendance will be discussed with Form Tutors and pupils. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by FT should be passed immediately to heads of year (HOY)
5. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence where the parent/carer has not made contact with the school. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT and attendance officer daily
6. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence
7. If a pupil's attendance falls to 95 percent,
 - a. The attendance officer or member of SLT speaks to the pupil in school to discuss any issues or problems and how the school can help to improve attendance.
 - b. The attendance officer will also send a [first low attendance letter](#) alerting parents that their child's attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard. The letter also has an attached leaflet outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to improve attendance and invites parents to make contact with the school if they would like further information.
8. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90 percent, a [second low attendance letter](#) is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and the attendance officer arranges a meeting with parents to discuss- attendance is monitored to ensure it does not drop lower.
9. After a period of monitoring, if targets are met and attendance is improving, [a letter is sent home](#) from the SLT to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. The school will continue to monitor until attendance stabilises at 95%.
10. If absence includes 5 consecutive days of term time leave or 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period that has not been authorised a [Penalty Notice Warning Letter](#) will be sent. Template letters will be updated by the Local Authority in Autumn 2024.

APPENDIX 2 First Low Attendance Letter

Below 95% with no mitigating circumstances provided

(Include Parent Attendance Leaflet)

Dear

Re: (Pupil's Name)

Our records show that your son's/daughter's attendance has fallen to <current attendance>.

We would normally expect his/her attendance to be 95% or above as falling below this level can in the long term affect his/her academic progress. We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

We want to make sure we can support <Pupil name>'s education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help them to address gaps in learning due to absence. If there are any mitigating circumstances of which we are unaware or there are any other issues that you would like to discuss or have help with, please contact <name of person>, <title of person>.

Yours sincerely

<Title of Attendance Lead>

APPENDIX 3 Second Low Attendance Letter

Attendance below 90% absence

Dear

Re: (Pupil's Name)

I am writing to express my concern at <name>'s recent <absence/absences> from school.

<Name> has been absent from school for a total of <number> sessions (<number> days) on the following dates:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

Where appropriate, any dates in red are either unauthorised absences or no reason has been provided.

<Pupil name>'s current attendance is <percentage attendance>.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

I am inviting you to attend a School Attendance Meeting. The time and date have been set for at It is important that you attend this meeting for us to work together in exploring the issues around low attendance. The meeting will be led by <Name of person>, <title of person>.

If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact <Name of person> at school so that a mutually convenient time can be arranged.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

APPENDIX 4 Improving Attendance Letter

After a monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the SLT to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance.

Dear

Re: (Pupil's Name)

I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate <Pupil name> on improving <his / her> attendance since our previous communication. Attendance is now at <insert percentage attendance> and has been steadily improving. I would also like to thank you for your support in achieving this.

The school will continue to monitor attendance as we do with all pupils, however I am hopeful that the recent positive attendance will continue. As always, the school is here to work with parents, and if you require further support with attendance or other aspects of school please do get in touch.

Kind regards

Headteacher

APPENDIX 5 Notice to Improve and Penalty Notice Warning Letter

(Sent to each parent separately on headed notepaper via first class post

Template letters will be made available by the Local Authority that apply from August 2024.

An information sheet from the Local Authority should be included when sending these out.

Equality Impact Assessment Form

People responsible for overseeing the EIA
Sara Crute-Mussell, Inclusion Director
Name of the policy, procedure or project
Attendance and Absence Policy
What is the main purposes or aims of the policy, procedure or project?
To create a clear and consistent system to support and improve attendance in schools
Who will be the beneficiaries of the policy, procedure or project?
DET schools
Have you consulted on this policy, procedure or project?

Complete the following table and give reasons/comments for where:

- a) The policy, procedure or project could have a positive impact on any person or group because of one of the following aspects of their identity (including equality of access to opportunities)
- b) The policy, procedure or project could have a negative impact on, or disadvantage, a person or group because of one of the following aspects of their identity.

(At this stage, it is important to consider the requirements placed upon a school as per the Equality Act 2010.)

Groups	Positive impact		Negative impact		Comments
	High	Low	High	Low	
Race	x				The policy takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and works to promote attendance of all pupils and does not discriminate based on race.
Religion or belief	x				The policy takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and works to promote attendance of all pupils and does not discriminate based on religion or belief. The policy allows for non-attendance for religious holidays.
Sexual orientation	X				The policy takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and works to promote attendance of all pupils and does not discriminate based on sexual orientation and actively recognises all vulnerable groups.
Sex	x				The policy takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and works to promote attendance of all pupils and does not

					discriminate based on sex and actively recognises all vulnerable groups.
Disability	x				The policy takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and works to promote attendance of all pupils and does not discriminate based on sex and actively recognises all vulnerable groups.
Age	x				The policy takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and works to promote attendance of all pupils and does not discriminate based on age
Gender reassignment	x				The policy takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and works to promote attendance of all pupils and does not discriminate based on gender and recognises all vulnerable groups.
Pregnancy and maternity					N/A
Marriage and civil partnership					N/A

Where there is negative impact, what actions could be taken to amend the policy, procedure or project to minimise the negative impact?
N/A
If there is no evidence that the policy, procedure or project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improves relationships between people with different protected characteristics, what amendments could be made to achieve this?
N/A
How will the policy, procedure or project be implemented including any necessary training?

Version control (to be removed by Policy Officer prior to publication)

Version	Date	Document name	Details
1	20/10/2025	Attendance and Absence Policy	<i>Trust policy created from previous DET Attendance</i>

			<i>and Absence policy in line with the School Bus template.</i>
2	xx.xx.xxxx	Document name	
3	xx.xx.xxxx	Document name	



DANES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Making the difference together

Danes Educational Trust is a multi-academy trust, our vision is to develop hubs of excellence comprising primary and secondary schools, focused around their local community. We equip our pupils with the skills they need to become curious, creative and courageous and ensure that our school environments are places where their talents are nurtured, so that they become happy and confident 21st century global citizens. We are a family of schools and we make the difference together as one trust.

Visit our website for more information

www.daneseducationaltrust.org.uk

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