



DISS HIGH SCHOOL WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Diss High School is committed to providing a full and effective education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by The Department for Education.

Each year we will review our attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets.

Here at school we will review our systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that we are achieving our set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that we will use to meet our attendance targets.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised, unexplained or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on her behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unexplained. If the absence is still unexplained after a two week period, this will be changed to unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration takes place at the start of school at 8.40am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked late unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the relevant staff will be arranged to discuss what support can be offered.

The afternoon registration is 2.10pm.

Pupils arriving after the start of school, but before the end of the registration period, will be treated for statistical purposes as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day of Absence

If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school on the first day, stating the reason for the absence. A note should then be sent into school on the day the child returns explaining the absence.

If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day, the school will try to phone to secure an explanation. Where the school is unable to make contact by phone, a letter will be sent.

If attendance falls below 95% a letter will be sent home outlining the importance of good attendance and offering support. If the attendance rate does not improve, a formal attendance meeting will be convened with parents, pupil and senior staff.

Persistent Absence (defined in legislation as 10% or more absences)

Either authorised or unauthorised. A child who is persistently absent is at risk of failing to achieve their full potential within the school environment.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Nurse etc. if the problem appears to be a medical one.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to other pupils.

Absence Notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/School agreement can be used in this way.

Holidays in Term Time

Term time holidays and extended leave are not allowed and will not be authorised as stated in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

The school will only grant leave of absence **in exceptional circumstances** that are not related to holidays.

Key Stage 3 parents/carers must complete the leave of absence form in good time (at least six weeks before a trip) to request permission to take their child out of school during term time. The six week time period is necessary in order for the school to give due consideration to the request.

Key Stage 4 parents/carers must write directly to the Headteacher for permission to take their child out of school during term time. The six week time period is necessary in order for the school to give due consideration to the request.

If the request is denied, school will inform the parent/carer of the reason. If the parents/carers choose to continue with the planned holiday it will be taken as an **unauthorised absence** and could result in a penalty notice.

In the rare circumstance when the Headteacher is satisfied that there are genuine reasons for an absence, she will determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Penalty Notices

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA Officers, Headteachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004 and have recently been amended in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

If a minimum of 10 sessions or 5 school days of unauthorised absence are taken during the current term for:

- Overt Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Holidays taken in term-time
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 9am)

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

- Attendance is monitored by the Attendance Officer, Form Tutor and Head of Year.
- Awards are given to pupils with excellent attendance and punctuality from each year group.

Attendance Targets

The school sets attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets is established and a senior member of staff is responsible for overseeing this work.

The Registration System

The school uses a computerised system and/or manual paper registers for keeping the school attendance records. National codes are used to record attendance information.