

James Dixon Primary School

James Dixon
Primary



Attendance and Punctuality

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Policy developed by: Michelle Aldred

Approved and adopted by Governors:

Proposed date of review:

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Introduction

James Dixon Primary School aims to ensure that all its pupils receive a fulltime education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her potential. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels secure. All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will provide a system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives James Dixon Primary school will ensure there is an effective system of communication with pupils, parents and outside agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support. This policy will be made available to the school community.

Aims

Improve and maintain the attendance of pupils and ensure attendance and punctuality is a high priority for all staff, parents, pupils and governors.

Target

Achieve 97% overall school attendance at the end of the year.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time unless in exceptional circumstances.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better for parents to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason** (i.e. attend for less than 90%). Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our attendance monitoring system.

Communication

All attendance related communication between school staff will be recorded in attendance registers. Parents/carers will be notified of attendance and/or punctuality issues by the Attendance Officer or teachers by phone contact, letters or meetings.

Methods used to inform parents & pupils of the link between attendance and achievement:

- School attendance notice board
- Attendance for each class published weekly in newsletter
- Attendance policy available on the website and paper copy available
- Attendance and punctuality of pupils recorded in reports
- Discussion of attendance & punctuality during parents evening
- PSHE lessons & circle time with teachers in class

- Special attendance & punctuality Assemblies
- Letters
- Special attendance & punctuality Award Assemblies
- Meetings with educational welfare officer
- Contacting parents/carers re attendance/punctuality at an early stage
- Registration

The school will keep:

- An admission register, which records personal details of every pupil at the school
- An attendance register which records every pupils attendance at both morning and afternoon session that the school is open to the pupils
- The admission register includes the following information for every pupil: Full name, gender, DOB, admission date of the pupil and name of the previous school attended; name and address of each parent/carer of the pupil; which of the parents/carers the pupil normally lives with; emergency contact details of parents/Carers of the other named persons if parents/carers not available

The school day:

- ✓ School starts at 8:45am
- ✓ A bell will sound in the playground at 8:45am
- ✓ In Year Two, when the bell is rung all pupils will line up in their designated area of the playground, where the teacher will be waiting. Key Stage Two pupils should make their way to their classrooms – doors open at 8.40am.
- ✓ On arrival in the class, the register will be completed
- ✓ The school attendance officer will complete a list of the names of pupils who are absent from the registers
- ✓ First day calling will commence at 9:15am

Late System:

- ✓ A record will be kept of pupils arriving after 8:45am
- ✓ At 9:00am the entrance of the school will be closed
- ✓ Pupils arriving late are recorded in the late book
- ✓ The attendance officer collates the late book and the class register

Punctuality Procedure:

- ✓ Pupils with three or more lates in a week will result in a text message or a phone call home
- ✓ Pupils who are persistently late will receive a late letter home

- ✓ Pupils who do not respond to the letter and remain persistently late – the parents/carers will be called to a meeting with the Headteacher and the attendance officer

Attendance Procedure

- ✓ Teachers and Teaching Assistants are responsible for taking and maintaining daily registers
- ✓ All pupils who are not in school by 9:15am will be recorded as absent and be marked in the register as an unauthorised absence
- ✓ Reasons for absence will be recorded on the register
- ✓ First day calling will commence at 9:15am to find out why pupils are not in school
- ✓ If phone contact with parents/carer is not achieved then a letter or text message will be sent out on the first day of absence
- ✓ If there is no contact from a parent, first day calling will continue every day until contact has been achieved or until the child returns to school
- ✓ If following the first day of contact, a child is absent for at least 10 days without further contact from parent/carer then the attendance officer will contact the EWO and make a referral
- ✓ Pupils who have two or more separate periods of absence in a half term will result in the parent/carer being sent a letter requesting their attendance at a meeting with the attendance officer and Headteacher. Targets will be set at this meeting
- ✓ Failure to meet targets will result in the parent having to meet with the school attendance panel which includes a governor
- ✓ The panel will agree the next action and set appropriate targets
- ✓ Failure to meet targets will result in parent penalty notices or parent prosecution proceedings being initiated

Attendance & Punctuality Meetings

At the first meeting the attendance officer will discuss the following:

- ✓ Enquire the reasons for absence or persistent lateness
- ✓ Identify areas of need and offer support
- ✓ Remind parent of the school policy and expectations
- ✓ Set achievable targets
- ✓ Use incentives and rewards

At the second meeting the attendance panel will meet which includes the attendance officer, a governor and the Headteacher who will discuss the following:

- ✓ Enquire why the previously set targets have not been met
- ✓ Discuss attainment and progress of the pupil

- ✓ The link between good progress and good attendance to be made clear
- ✓ Identify any areas of need and offer support

The attendance policy will be referred to, to remind parents/carers of the school's and Ofsted expectations. Failure to meet targets will result in parent penalty notices or parent prosecution proceedings being initiated.

Religious Observance

The school will authorise one day's absence that is due to religious observance but the day must be:

- ✓ Exclusively set apart for religious observance
- ✓ Set apart by the parents' religious body (not the parents)

Term Time Holiday

- ✓ Holidays will not be authorised during term time
- ✓ The Headteacher is the only member of staff who can authorise a special leave request
- ✓ A special leave request is granted only for exceptional reasons and is at the discretion of the Headteacher

Resources

In order to achieve and maintain good levels of attendance and punctuality the school will utilise the following:

- ✓ Registers
- ✓ Assemblies
- ✓ Late book
- ✓ First Day calling – the attendance officer will call the parent/carer of pupil not on school after 9:15am and information and reasons will be recorded
- ✓ Attendance letters will be sent to address attendance issues
- ✓ Attendance meetings
- ✓ School attendance panel
- ✓ Incentives and rewards

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- ✓ A designated Governor will sit on the attendance panel
- ✓ Will review the attendance policy each year
- ✓ Contact parent/carers not engaging with the school regarding attendance issues

- ✓ Trace a pupil if there if there has been no contact with the parent and the pupil has been absent for 10 days
- ✓ Provide information, support and advice

Monitoring and Evaluation

The schools attendance policy will be reviewed every year.

Links to the other policy include:

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy