



## School Attendance: A Guide for Parents

### Why is Attendance and Punctuality Important?

*'Every child has a right to a good education to help them fulfil their potential and to develop the skills required to access the world of work and other opportunities.'*

Your child's education is very important to us at Danemill. In partnership with you, we want to help to prepare your child for a successful future. To do this, we expect parents and carers to make sure that their child is here **every day** and **on time**. We want your child to learn at the same pace as everyone else. If they are late or are absent from school, this becomes more difficult to achieve. It is also your legal responsibility as their guardian to make sure they are at school on time.

### Absence - Illness

1. Telephone the school office on the day of the absence and each day thereafter (if appropriate)
2. Provide the school with medical evidence where it is available e.g. medicine bottles, prescriptions etc.
3. Ask the GP and/or school for advice on exclusion periods.
4. Don't condone absence! Only allow time off if your child is genuinely ill!
5. Communicate with the school if there is a problem at the earliest possible opportunity.

### Authorisation for an absence may be given if

- Any absence where medical proof has been provided to the school.
- Attendance Officer/School has made home visits and they consider the child too ill to attend.
- Your child has been seen in school by a qualified first aider.
- Authorised absences have been agreed by school and will not result in any legal consequences for the parents/carers.

### Medical Appointments

- Wherever possible **avoid** medical appointments in school time.
- If appointments in school time cannot be avoided, ensure an appointment card (or letter) is handed to the school **prior to the appointment**.
- If parents do not have an appointment card etc. ensure that the school have **provided a slip to be stamped by clinic/dentist etc. to confirm appointment**.
- Wherever possible **attend school prior** to appointment and return to school **following** the appointment.
- If your child does not return to school on the advice of the GP, **always contact the school to inform them of the outcome**.

### Attendance and the Law

The law says that **it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their child attends regularly and on time to the school at which they are on roll**. Failure to ensure regular attendance can result in legal action. Legal



action can result in a court appearance, which may result in a fine or even court appearance sentence where appropriate. A Fixed Penalty Notice is a fine that can be issued to each parent for 'each child' in the event of persistent absenteeism and failure to pay the fine will result in further court action.

Reference: Section 7 of the Education Act 1996

**What is your Child's Attendance?**

The school will provide you with regular attendance reports in relation to your individual child to help you to monitor your child's attendance.

<b>%</b>	<b>Days</b>		<b>Lessons</b>
<b>100%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b><i>Your child WILL be achieving their FULL potential!</i></b>			
<b>95%</b>	<i>Missing 19 days across the year!</i>	<i>Missing around 50 lessons a year</i>	<i>Missing over ½ a year education in their school life!</i>
<b>*90%</b>	<i>Missing half a day per week</i>	<i>Missing 100 lessons a year</i>	<i>Missing over a years education in their school life</i>
<b>80%</b>	<i>Missing 1 day a week</i>	<i>Missing 200 lessons per year</i>	<i>Missing over 2 years of education in their school life</i>
<b>70%</b>	<i>Missing 1.5 days per week</i>	<i>Missing 300 lessons a year</i>	<i>Missing over 3 years of education in their school life</i>



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Primary School

*Only the best is good enough.*

**\* Your child will be deemed to be 'Persistently Absent' if their attendance is 90% or below. This will mean possible legal action from the Local Authority. If your child's attendance does fall into this bracket you will be required to attend meetings in school and may be subject to home visits from the Attendance Officer.**

### **Unauthorised Absences:**

**If there is no reason given to the school for your child's absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised.**

- No medical proof is provided and your child already has attendance below 90%.
- Holidays taken in term time, these will not be agreed by school (exceptional circumstances apply)
- Unauthorised absences have not been agreed by school and can result in legal action being taken against parents/carers.



**Attendance levels are monitored according to the school Attendance Protocol.**

Below is the attendance process that we will now be following. The benchmarks detail what action will be taken at each stage in relation to your child's attendance levels.

<u><b>96% and above</b></u>  This is the school's attendance target and your child will be on course to reach his/her full potential.
<u><b>95%</b></u>  <b>Initial concern letter</b> will be sent to all parents as attendance begins to fall. Attendance will be monitored closely to ensure that it begins to improve.
<u><b>93%</b></u>  Second concern letter to be sent and a request for medical evidence before any future absences will be authorised. You will begin to have regular home visits from an Attendance Officer to ascertain reasons for absence.
<u><b>90% (YOUR CHILD WILL BE DEEMED TO BE PERSISTENTLY ABSENT WITH ATTENDANCE LEVELS AT 90% AND BELOW)</b></u>  Parents will be invited into school for a meeting to engage in a parent contract with Attendance Officer to discuss the reasons for the declining attendance.
<u><b>Continued Decline</b></u>  If attendance continues to decline, a referral will be made to the Local Authority, which could result in parents being taken to court.

## **Punctuality**

It is understandable and acceptable that any child can be late on an odd occasion for any number of reasons, all of which should be verified by the parent/carer.

Lateness in school causes immense disruption and inconvenience and actively disadvantages the progress of pupils whose lessons are constantly interrupted by the arrival of latecomers. It is also often embarrassing for the pupil to be constantly arriving late.

**5 minutes late every day = 3.5 days missed each year**

**10 minutes late every day = 7.2 days missed each year**



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**20 minutes late every day = 14.4 days missed each year**

**NB - Excessive lateness can result in legal action being taken against parents/carers.**

### **Holidays in Term Time -**

From the 1 September 2013, the law gave **no entitlement** to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must now only be in **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Head teachers are not expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional, indeed parents can now be fined by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from school.

**A family holiday is NOT an exceptional circumstance.**

The School will issue you with term dates in advance of the academic year and these are also available on our school website.

### **Attendance Concerns or Worries?**

**School Attendance Officer: Julie Hickinbottom**

**Contact Details: 01162 862674**