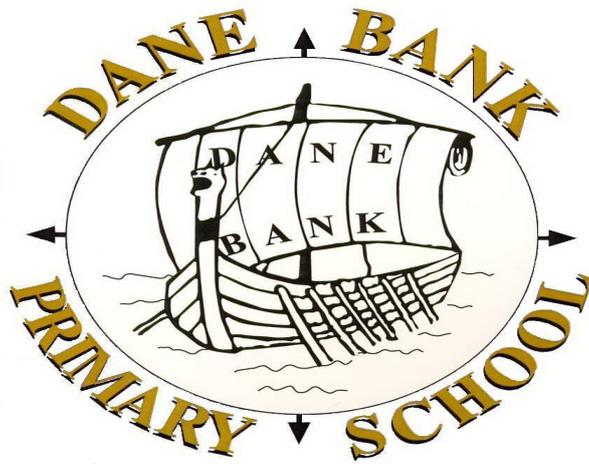


Dane Bank Primary School



Attendance Policy

This Attendance Policy was reviewed and amended by Lisa Fox, Pastoral Manager.	<i>June 2019</i>
This policy was initially reviewed by Alicia Todhunter, Headteacher	<i>June 2019</i>
This Attendance Policy was approved by The Governing Board	<i>June 2019</i>
The Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments. The next anticipated review date will be:	<i>June 2020</i>

Dane Bank Primary Attendance Policy

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children, and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment. [See Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018]

This policy reflects the commitment of the staff and Governors of Dane Bank Primary School to promote equality. We will work to ensure that groups with the protected characteristics of gender, race, disability, age, gender reassignment, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and sexual orientation are free from discrimination and harassment. Our school will endeavour to address any barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for identified groups.

1. Introduction and Background.

Dane Bank Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and attainment.

Our statement of purpose is:

+Enjoy and Achieve Together+

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and it underpins our school ethos to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled to.
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that pupils have access to a range of extra curricular opportunities to enhance social and life skills.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and punctually. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

2. Arrival and Registration.

All children should be in the playground ready to come into school at 8:55am. Registers are completed electronically twice a day; once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Gates are closed at 9:00am. If a child arrives after this time, s/he will need to be signed in by a member of staff in the signing in/out book. (This is in the Reception Area).

Children arriving after registration but before 9:10am will be marked in as **Late** Children arriving after 9:10am will be marked with a U (Unauthorised Absence). This is because s/he will have missed an essential part of the school day.

Afternoon registers are completed electronically straight after lunch and checked by the school office

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils' attendance or absence as either authorised or unauthorised. A certified extract of the register can be used in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance, or in seeking an Education Supervision Order in respect of the pupil.

3. Responsibilities of Parents.

By law, parents are required to:

- Ensure that their children of compulsory school age [5] are registered at school and attend regularly, on time and in a condition to learn.
- To inform the school daily, with a reason for a child's absence by 9:30am. This can be done by email, telephone, text or in person.
- To try and arrange appointments outside the school day (where possible).
- To work as partners with the school: instilling confidence, self belief and motivation to attend regularly.

4. Responsibilities of the School.

- To ensure that attendance registers are completed in accordance with legal requirements.
- To monitor attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise with staff, parents and outside agencies e.g.: Education Welfare Officers, School Nurse etc.
- To offer support and advice regarding attendance and punctuality issues where necessary through Attendance Panels etc.

5. Responsibilities of Pupils.

- To attend school.
- To arrive on time for school.
- To remain in school for the duration of the day.

6. Promoting Regular Attendance.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is all our responsibility and Dane Bank has an attendance target of 97%.

As a school we celebrate good attendance by displaying class achievements. Every Monday during the Whole School assembly, the Head teacher updates the school with attendance figures from the previous week. The class that has the best attendance receives either an extra play or a small treat that week. The class that has the best half term attendance chooses to do something extra special at the end of that term.

Attendance certificates are awarded on a half termly basis to children who have achieved 100%. A pupil will receive a progression of certificates in line with the Whole School Reward Scheme every term (Bronze, Silver and Gold.) Any pupil who has full attendance throughout a school year receives a small attendance prize.

Parents/carers are sent a report on their child's attendance every half term. These are colour coded according to attendance:

- Yellow = Excellent attendance.
- Green = Good attendance
- Amber = Requires improved attendance
- Red = Attendance is cause for concern

We contact parents/ carers if their child's attendance becomes a concern and the school Pastoral Manager offers support and strategies for parents/carers who find their child's attendance an issue.

7. Punctuality.

It is important that children arrive at school in good time because it can be disruptive for the whole class if a child arrives late. In Primary schools, English and Maths lessons are often held at the beginning of a school day. Also, peer group sessions and friendship times happen first thing, so if a child regularly misses the start of the day then these important subjects are missed. We understand that on occasions there may be a genuine reason for lateness, but we would ask that parents/carers try and ensure that all children arrive on time daily for school. If there is a particular reason for lateness, parents should discuss this with the relevant school staff.

A punctuality week is held during the school year where an incentive treat is given to the class with the least amount of late marks throughout the week.

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) works in close partnership with the school to try and combat any punctuality issues. They attend the school on various days throughout each term to do spot checks for punctuality. This means that any pupil who arrives late and has to be signed in at the main entrance on a day when the EWO is in will be asked for the reason for lateness. They also offer support and strategies to help improve punctuality. Any pupil that continues to arrive late will receive a letter from the EWO and their attendance / punctuality will be monitored.

8. Understanding Types of Absence.

- Only the school can authorise a child's absence, not the parents. The fact that a parent has notified school does not oblige the school to accept it, if the school does not believe it to be a valid reason for absence. Stating that a child is ill does not guarantee that the absence will be authorised.
- Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other avoidable causes. (pupils attending appointments have to be signed in and out of the school signing in/out book for emergency evacuation purposes).
- Unauthorised absences are those that school do not think are reasonable for a child to not attend school. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority prosecuting the parents. Unauthorised absences can include: parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily, truancy throughout the school day, absences that are not explained properly, shopping, looking after other children or birthdays, day trips and holidays in term time that have not been agreed.
- 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, parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root of the problem and, where possible, help to address it.

9. Persistent Absenteeism (PA).

A pupil becomes a `persistent absentee` when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and requires parents/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence and the reasons given 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 we will inform parents/carers within that half term.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully and we also combine this with academic tracking because it is a proven fact that absence affects attainment.

10. Absence Procedures.

If a child is absent the parent/carer must follow the following Procedures:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 9:30am. The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take the call. The telephone system can also accept text messages if this point of contact is more suitable. An email may also be sent to admin@danebank.tameside.sch.uk

If a child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text parents/carers on the first day of absence if we have not received any notification.
- Send a letter questioning a child's absence if we have been unable to contact the parent/carer by telephone.
- Invite parents/carers in to discuss the situation with our Pastoral Manager and School Nurse if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer if attendance falls below 90%.

11. The Education Welfare Officer.

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. However, if difficulties cannot be sorted out this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer. S/he will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve a child's attendance have failed; and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

Alternatively, parents/carers or children may wish to contact the Education Welfare Officer themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

12. Holidays in Term Time.

Since 1st September 2013, the law states that there is no entitlement for parents/carers to take their child on holiday during term time. Parents/carers can be fined by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from school.

A letter of application must be given to the Headteacher in advance of the holiday. It will only be granted at the Headteacher's discretion in exceptional circumstances.

These exceptional circumstances have been agreed by the school Governing Board and are as follow:

- The marriage of an immediate family member . i.e. parent or sibling.
- Bereavement of an immediate family member . i.e. parent, grandparent or sibling.
- Where parents holiday entitlement is set by a professional body e.g. Armed Forces, Police Force, Fire Service etc. A letter of proof will be required in addition to the letter of application.

School is **not** obliged to authorise any other holidays in accordance with the new legislation.

Absences for holidays taken without prior permission of the school will be marked as 'unauthorised' in the register.

13. Penalty Notices.

Where a pupil is absent for 10 sessions [5 days] due to an unauthorised holiday, a penalty notice will be applied for.

Holidays during term time

- The period of absence must be at least 10 sessions (5 school days).
- The absence relating to the holiday must not be authorised i.e.: G code.
- The attendance over 24 weeks prior to and including the absence will be below 90%. This may include any absences whether authorised or not.
- Where the attendance over 24 weeks is between 89% and 90% the length of the holiday will be used as a determining factor i.e.: if the absence is more than 7 days the penalty notice will be issued.
- Where queries are raised submissions will be looked at on an individual basis.

Other unauthorised Absences

A penalty warning will be issued where the criteria below are met:

- Minimum of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence codes O & U (this could also include some G codes where it does not fit the above criteria) over 12 week period.
- If there is further unauthorised absences during the following monitoring period a view will be taken by EWO to ensure the attendance pattern fits the criteria for a penalty notice to be issued.

These criteria will remain under review and in the event that Magistrates take a different view, it may be amended accordingly.

Tameside Local Authority is committed to supporting schools in reducing all unauthorised pupil absence. It is very important that parents do not get a message that 90% attendance is satisfactory and that any amount of holiday during term time or other unauthorised absence is acceptable.