



# ASPIRATIONS

## Dashwood Banbury Academy

### Attendance and Intervention Procedures

Version Control	
Version control reference 5 Attendance & Intervention Procedures2023-02-23	Reviewed and updated
Version control reference 4	Appendix added
Version control reference 3	Updated in light of Covid-19 Restrictions
Version control reference 2	Updated in light with recommendations from Oxfordshire County Council

Date of next review	September 2023	Owner	Principal
Type of policy	Statutory	Approval level	Delegated by Regional Board to the Regional CEO

## Introduction

Dashwood Banbury Academy is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. Dashwood is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We 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. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

## Why Regular Attendance is so important

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Children are best safeguarded from exploitation and other risks in the wider community by attending school regularly where they are supervised by qualified and caring professionals. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. This policy works to meet the mandatory requirements laid out in Working Together to Improve School Attendance - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)). See appendix for further information.

## Attendance Awards

We will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance:

- Certificates given to pupils that have achieved 100% attendance termly
- End of academic year prize for children who have achieved 100% attendance for the whole year
- Class recognition for excellent attendance (school newsletters)

## Absence Procedures

### First day of absence

#### ***If your child is absent you must, on their first day of absence:***

- Contact us, by 9 am, on the ***first day of absence*** explaining the reason for their absence in detail. The telephone number is 01295 263240.
- Or you can call into our school reception by 9 am and report your child's absence in person. You must then call each subsequent day that your child is absent after the first day. The school may request a doctor's note.

#### ***If your child is absent we will***

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you by 9.15 am;
- In some circumstances, staff may visit you at home if we have not heard from you on the first day of absence;
- In cases of persistent absence, we may invite you in to discuss the situation with our Welfare and Inclusion Manager and/or Vice Principal or Principal to discuss the absence and offer relevant support;

Please see appendix for information on common illnesses and whether your child is too ill to attend school.

## Second Day Absence & Continuing Absence

- Parents/carers are expected to contact school daily, if no contact is made the school office will attempt to make contact each day of absence.
- If no contact can be made, school staff may conduct a home visit to check on the welfare of the child.
- School may ask for proof of ill health (e.g. Doctor's certificate).

## Contact details

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your current contact numbers and email addresses at all times. So, please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have at least two up to date numbers and email addresses – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on contact details throughout the year using our data collection sheets.

Please ensure we hold at least two contact phone numbers (one at least is a primary parent/carer) and a third emergency contact person's contact details is preferable.

## Pupil Missing

For any pupil who is absent without an explanation after 3 consecutive school days and the school are unable to make contact with the family, we are obliged to conduct a home visit and may refer to the police if we still cannot contact the family. If the school is concerned for a child's safety, referrals to the Police will occur sooner.

Pupils missing from school for 20 consecutive days will be passed to the County Tracking Officer and removed from the school role.

If the school is concerned for a pupil's welfare, the Police or Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub may be contacted immediately regardless of the number of day's absence.

## To notify you of decreasing attendance and to support your child, we will act in the following way

- If attendance moves below 95%, we will send a letter informing you and offer support if needed. This is to ensure attendance improves and rises above 95% and positively towards 100%
- If attendance moves below 90%, you will be invited in to discuss the situation with our Welfare and Inclusion Manager and/or Vice Principal or Principal to set a Parental Contract which sets out ways in which we will work together, pupil, parent and school, to ensure attendance improves and rises above 90% and positively towards 100%.

## The County Attendance Team

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the County Attendance Team at Oxfordshire County Council. At the school's request, they may issue a Penalty Notice per parent/carer, per child (currently £60 rising to £120 if unpaid after 21 days). If unpaid after 28 days a summons to Court will be issued for each unpaid Penalty Notice for prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. This can result in a criminal record and a fine of up to £2,500, a Community Order, Parenting Order or ultimately a custodial sentence). The legislation is the Education Act 1996 sec. 444(1) and 444(1A). The County Attendance Team, with the school, will encourage you to engage with a *Strengths and Needs Assessment*. Education Supervision Orders may be discussed with you to support rapidly improved attendance. Parents that have previously been issued with Penalty Notices for their children's unauthorised absences, in the event of further unauthorised absences may receive a summons to Court. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the County Attendance Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 01865 323513 [attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage further absence.

### **How we manage time keeping**

The school day starts at 8.45 am and we expect your child to be in class at that time. Registers are marked by 8.55 am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. At 9 am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists. Whilst there is no mandatory time for pm registration, the school will seek to take the register directly following the lunchtime period for the year group in order to support safeguarding. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with a member of the School Leadership Team (SLT) and/or Welfare and Inclusion Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

### **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.

### **Exceptional Leave**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

1. It is widely known that the link between a pupil's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.
2. Early poor attendance habits follow through into secondary school, further education and employment.
3. Graduates earn, on average, double that of young people that leave school with no qualifications.
4. All schools in Oxfordshire are encouraged to adopt a policy of not authorising Exceptional Leave. Dashwood Banbury Academy will **not** authorise Exceptional Leave for **any** reason.
5. The Principal will make contact with every family applying for Exceptional Leave to stress the importance of good school attendance habits and links between attendance & attainment.
6. Reasons for Exceptional Leave will be logged on the pupil's record and shared as part of the transfer/transition process.

The County Attendance Team can issue Penalty Notices for any unauthorised 'Exceptional Leave'. Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent/carer concerned. Please note that it will be per parent per child. Payment within 21 days of receipt of notice is £60 and £120 if paid after this period but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 28 days you will each receive a summons to Oxford Magistrates Court. If unauthorised leave is repeated the County Attendance Team may summons each parent to Court without a Penalty Notice being issued.

### **School targets**

The school has targets to improve attendance and you and your child have an important part to play in meeting these targets. Targets for the school and for classes are reported in the Whole School Newsletter.

The minimum level of attendance for Dashwood Banbury Academy is 96% attendance but we strive for better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in Oxfordshire. We will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. We analyse all absences carefully and draw trends based on pupils' characteristics,

vulnerabilities, days of the week, sessions missed and repeat illnesses. We focus our attention on addressing these trends of absence.

### **At Dashwood Banbury Academy, these people are responsible for attendance**

Katy Nesbitt – Welfare and Inclusion Manager

Annelise Gooch – Vice Principal

Kelly Gray – Office Administrator

Sarah Gordon-Weeks – Principal

The school has a legal duty to report and publish its absence figures & its attendance policy to parents and to promote attendance. School attendance data must be available to Oxfordshire County Council, the Multi-Academy Trust & the Department for Education. Our school is obliged to share all attendance data daily with our MAT, Oxfordshire County Council and the Department for Education. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their child/children attend regularly and on time. We have a lead Governor who scrutinises our attendance arrangements on behalf of all our pupils. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Regular attendance supports optimising your child's attainment, mental health and social wellbeing.

### **Attendance and Intervention Procedures at Dashwood Banbury Academy**

#### **Intervention at School Level Stage 1 – Monitor**

This section describes the role of school in relation to improving attendance. All pupils with less than 95% attendance or pupils where there are safeguarding concerns, are regularly monitored by SLT and Welfare and Inclusion Manager on a daily basis.

The class teacher and Office Administrator have primary responsibility for monitoring attendance of the pupils in the class group and for collecting notes explaining absence, maintaining an accurate register and informing SLT and the Welfare and Inclusion Manager with concerns about attendance and punctuality in a daily briefing.

<b>Term 1</b>	We understand that a small number of absences can make your child's attendance fall below 95%. If absence becomes a concern, we will make contact with parents/carers directly
<b>Term 2 Week 4</b>	We will review the attendance of every child at Dashwood Banbury Academy. Any child with an attendance figure under 95%, will receive a letter highlighting the importance of attendance and offering support

#### **Intervention at School Level Stage 2 – Attendance Concerns**

A record is kept by the school of all contacts and conversations relating to reasons for absence from school. Parents are encouraged to visit the school to discuss attendance and strategies for improvement, with SLT or the Welfare and Inclusion Manager.

Where attendance falls below 90%, SLT and the Welfare and Inclusion Manager discuss the pupil. The parent will be invited in to meet with SLT and the Welfare and Inclusion Manager where a supportive discussion will take place. It is important to establish the reason for poor attendance, the general health of the pupil, home circumstances etc. and the discussion seeks to remove barriers to positive attendance. Where necessary, Attendance Support Plans with targets will be put in place. The targets will be higher than their normal attendance rates and to be achieved over the stated timescale with no unauthorised absences recorded. Attendance for that pupil is then monitored for the duration of the plan and appropriate action taken if attendance remains a concern. Where a child has had an illness that requires them to be absent for a longer period such as Chicken Pox, Scarlet Fever, Covid etc. this will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

**If attendance has not improved**

- Parent/carer will be invited to review the Attendance Support Plan and set a new target from this point for a shorter-term period of 3 weeks. Concerns will be discussed with the parent and appropriate advice and support offered.
- We understand that a pupil may have a recurring medical condition such as asthma, and we will offer assistance suggesting the support of a Strengths and Needs assessment.

For absence related to illness, a doctor's note will be requested.

**Intervention at School Level Stage 3 – Attendance does not improve from Stage 1 and 2 interventions**

A formal contract is drawn up with the pupil's parent/carer. This is reviewed weekly for the duration set out in the contract.

If attendance targets from the formal contract are not met, a referral to the County Attendance Team will be made.

**Intervention at County Attendance Team Level Stage 4 – Attendance does not improve from Stage 1, 2 and 3 interventions**

Referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service which may result in a Penalty Notice/ Legal Proceedings. The Local Authority will decide to issue penalty notice fines to parents or proceed to court. Welfare and Inclusion Manager and SLT will prioritise the list of pupils to be referred to the Oxfordshire Local Authority Education Welfare Service. These circumstances include:

- If attendance continues to cause concern and the absence is unauthorised.
- Where Dashwood Banbury Academy has offered all support available but attendance fails to improve (a chronology of support will be kept).
- When Dashwood Banbury Academy has reason not to accept the parents' justification for absence on a regular basis.

## Appendix

### Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our regular Home – School Newsletters;
- Report to you at least 5 times a year, through a mix of face-to-face parents' meetings, interim reporting and end of year report, on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance in our newsletters;
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school such as 'attendance clock' mornings

### Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), 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 like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. If this occurs, school will require evidence of the appointment to be able to authorise the absence.

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 the Local Authority (County Attendance Team) using 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
- punctuality issues - children who arrive at school too late to get an attendance mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time (see more detailed information below)
- excessive illness without medical evidence

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 your child is reluctant to attend, never 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 makes things worse. You can support your child by:

- Ensuring regular and early bedtimes
- Helping with homework so that your child feels prepared for school and supported
- Having uniform and equipment prepared the night before
- Providing a healthy breakfast
- Reporting any academic or social concerns promptly
- Retaining open & honest communication with your child's school
- Being positive about school (even if your own experience was less than positive)

### Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. 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 absences daily and thoroughly. Any child that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system including our Welfare and Inclusion Manager, Senior Leaders, our Personal Development Lead and where appropriate, our Special Educational Needs (SEN) Lead. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an

Action Plan and the plan may include regular review meetings to raise attendance. If your child becomes a PA pupil, we will seek your consent, if appropriate, to complete an Early Help Assessment with you and consider convening a Team Around the Family.

**Severe Absenteeism (SA):**

A pupil becomes a 'severe absentee' when they miss 50% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level is doing significant damage to any child's academic and social progress and will have lifelong consequences. All SA pupils at our school will have an Individual Attendance Plan which will incorporate multi-agency input. You will be expected to engage with all partners to improve your child's attendance to 95+%. SA pupils are our highest priority at our school.

## **Illnesses**

Most illnesses can be classified as one of a few minor health conditions. Whether or not you send your child to school will depend on how severe you judge the illness to be. This guidance can help you to make that judgement. If you're concerned about your child's health, consult a health professional.

## **Questions to ask as a parent or carer**

When deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend school. Ask yourself:

- Is your child well enough to carry out the activities of the school day? If not, keep your child at home and consult your GP as appropriate.
- Does your child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff? If so, keep your child at home.
- Would you take a day off work if you had this condition? If so, keep your child at home.

## **Cough and cold**

A child with a minor cough or cold may attend school. If the cold is accompanied by raised temperature, shivers or drowsiness, the child should stay off school, visit the GP and return to school 24 hours after they're feeling better. If your child has a more severe and long-lasting cough, consult your GP, who can provide guidance on whether the child should stay off school.

## **Raised temperature**

If your child has a raised temperature, they should not attend school. They can return 24 hours after they're feeling better.

## **Rash**

Rashes can be the first sign of many infectious illnesses such as chickenpox and measles. Children with these conditions shouldn't attend school. If your child has a rash, check with your GP or practice nurse before sending them to school.

## **Headache**

A child with a minor headache doesn't usually need to be kept off school. If the headache is more severe or is accompanied by other symptoms such as raised temperature or drowsiness, then keep the child off school and consult your GP.

## **Vomiting and diarrhoea**

Children with these conditions should be kept off school. They can return 48 hours after their symptoms disappear. Most cases of vomiting or diarrhoea get better without treatment, but if symptoms persist, consult your GP.

## **Sore throat**

A sore throat alone doesn't have to keep a child from school. If it's accompanied by a raised temperature, the child should stay at home.

Further advice can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>



