Attendance Policy and Procedures

Parent Summary



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| **Policy Author:** | Lisa Tweed |
| **Date of Policy:** | 1st September 2024 |
| **Date approved by Governors:** |  |
| **Next annual review date:** | 1st September 2025 |

At Ditton Lodge Primary School we want all pupils to aim for 100% attendance. We set expectations of excellent attendance for all and expect pupils to be in school every day that school is open unless they are too unwell to attend. This is really important so we can give your children the best education we can, and the education that they are entitled to.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and we will work together with parents, carers, guardians, pupils and any relevant partners to remove any barriers getting in the way of pupils attending regularly. Pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance will be fully supported by our school, in partnership, where necessary, with any health or external professionals. Promoting and supporting excellent attendance is everybody’s concern within our school and community.

The provision of a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive school where all pupils feel that they belong, and want to be, is of paramount importance to us. We will work together with you to explore and support any child who is finding it difficult to attend school regularly.

# Key Attendance Contacts – Full List

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School Attendance Lead Name:** | | Sarah Eaton | | |
| **Telephone number:** | 01638 613001 | | **Email:** | [SEaton@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk](mailto:SEaton@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk) |

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| **School Attendance Champion Name:** | | Sarah Eaton | | |
| **Telephone number:** | 01638 613001 | | **Email**: | [SEaton@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk](mailto:SEaton@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk) |

Please see the end of the document ([***Appendix 1***](#_Key_Attendance_Contacts)) for a full list of our school’s attendance contacts.

# Why is attending school regularly so important?

Excellent attendance is important for pupils to feel part of the school community and develop a sense of belonging. This supports each pupil’s all-round development, mental health, and well-being.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| If attendance over the school year is: | …a pupil will miss this many days: | …and this many lessons: |
| 100% | 0 | 0 |
| 95% | 10 | 50 |
| 90% | 19 | 95 |
| 85% | 29 | 145 |
| 80% | 39 | 195 |
| 75% | 49 | 245 |
| 70% | 58 | 290 |

Please call the school on 01638 613001 to report your child’s absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence. We ask that you give full details of the absence and avoid using generic phrases such as “poorly” or “sick” - tell us what symptoms your child has and when you expect them to be back at school. You must repeat this for every day of absence, unless by prior agreement with the school. This helps us to safeguard your child as we will otherwise not know if they have left home and not arrived at school. We may call you back if we need more information or to offer support.

If we do not hear from you, we will call you at 9am to ensure your child is safe. If we are unable to get in contact with you, we will telephone other contacts that we have on our emergency contacts list. If we are unable to contact anyone on the emergency contacts list, we will complete a home visit.

# How do we reward good and improving attendance

* Direct praise to the child
* Positive telephone calls home and messages
* Weekly class of the week/half-term incentives
* Termly enrichment rewards, for example Discos

# Absence requests

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take a child out of school during term time for any reason, including a holiday.

Only in very, very exceptional circumstances will absence requests be authorised.

Requests using Appendix 2 must be sent/given to the school office at least 2 weeks ahead of any requested absence.

# Unauthorised absence

An absence will be unauthorised if your child is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst as parents you can provide explanations for absence, it remains the school’s decision whether to authorise an absence or not.

Unauthorised absences may include:

* Absences which have never been properly explained
* Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
* Absences for shopping, birthdays, day trips, errands
* Absences whereby parents state they are waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
* Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless in very, very exceptional circumstances as agreed in advance by the school)
* If a pupil is kept away from school longer than has been agreed -any additional absence will be unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in the use of penalty notices or prosecution.

# Support for school attendance

Sometimes your child may not want to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reasons for absence. If your child does not want to attend school, it is never better to cover up their absence or give in to pressure to let your child stay at home. This can give the impression to your child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why your child may not want to attend school so we can support you and your child in the best way possible.

Please do speak to your child’s class teacher or a member of the senior leadership team if you require support.

For pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance we will fully support each pupil to be able to attend as much as possible. Our school will use an individual pupil passport and will work alongside other relevant professionals such as health colleagues, and yourselves, to best support this.

Please speak to Miss Shicluna or Miss Eaton for support.

If our school is unable to work in partnership with you as parents, we may refer to the Local Authority. We will only ever do this if everything else has failed. We hope as parents you will work with us to best support your child so this does not need to happen.

If our school has any safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary to ensure a child’s safety and well-being.

At Ditton Lodge Primary School we want your child to thrive, be able to achieve their potential and be happy. School attendance is foundational for academic success, personal development, and for future opportunities and at Ditton Lodge Primary School we want to support all our families to ensure that every pupil can make the most of their time at our school.

Appendix 1

# Key Attendance Contacts – Full List

Below is a list of our key contacts for Attendance Support out our school. We will keep this document up-to-date and it will reflect staff changes when they happen. If you have printed this document, please see our school website for the most up-to-date version of this document.

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| **School Attendance Lead Name:** | | Sarah Eaton | | |
| **Telephone number:** | 01638 613001 | | **Email**: | [SEaton@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk](mailto:SEaton@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk) |

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| **School Attendance Champion Name:** | | Martin James | | |
| **Telephone number:** | 01638 613001 | | **Email**: | [SEaton@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk](mailto:SEaton@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk) |

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| **School Attendance Officer Name:** | | Chantal Colby | | |
| **Telephone number:** | 01638 613001 | | **Email**: | [CColby@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk](mailto:CColby@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk) |

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| **SENDCo Name:** | | Anna Shicluna | | |
| **Telephone number:** | 01638 613001 | | **Email**: | [AShicluna@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk](mailto:AShicluna@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk) |

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| **Designated Safeguarding Lead Name:** | | Sheena Datson | | |
| **Telephone number:** | 01638 613001 | | **Email**: | [SDatson@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk](mailto:SDatson@dittonlodgeprimary.co.uk) |

Appendix 2

# Leave of Absence Request - Exceptional Circumstances -

***I wish to apply for leave of absence for my child/children:***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Child’s/Children’s Name(s)** |  | **Class/Year Group(s)** |
|  |  |  |

***For the period:***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **From** (1st day of absence) |  | **To** (last day of absence) |
|  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Reason for Request:** (Continue on separate sheet if necessary) |
|  |

***Please list any siblings and school(s) they attend:***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sibling Name(s)** |  | **Sibling School(s)** |
|  |  |  |

# Please read the following and sign to indicate you agree:

I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absences during term time and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child’s progress. I undertake to make sure my child/children catch up with any work that is required of them – please note, the school is not obliged to provide catch up work.

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| --- |
| **What will be done to catch up on missed work?** |
|  |

***Each parent/carer should sign and print their name:***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Parent/Carer’s Signature(s):** |  | **Date:** |
|  |  |  |
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NB: Amendments to the 2006 regulations (2013 and 2024) make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw pupils from school and, in law, have to apply for permission in advance. The school will always want to discuss this with you personally. You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered by the school. Any absence which has not been agreed in advance by the Headteacher is marked as ‘Unauthorised Absence’ and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued (see Attendance Policy for more details).

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| **SCHOOL USE ONLY** | Specify dates unauthorised: |  | |
| Specify dates authorised |  | |
| ID Exceptional circumstances: |  | |
| Signature of Headteacher | | | Date: |
|  | | |  |
| A personal discussion with parent(s) is required: | | | Yes/No |
| Last Academic Year Attendance: | | Current Academic Year Attendance: | |
|  | |  | |