DURLSTON

Policy 1.1

Durlston School Attendance and Registration Policy, including the response to Children Missing Education

(Including EYFS pupils)

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Reviewed By:	BRS
Next Review date:	01.09.27

Durlston School 1.1 Attendance and Registration Policy

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments) The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also adheres to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Children Missing Education, updated 2025

1. Aims of the Durlston School with regard to attendance and registration:

1.1 Durlston strives to ensure a high attendance to allow for pupils to achieve academic excellence in a nurturing environment.

1.2 All teachers with responsibility for a class or tutor group are, as part of their basic professional duties, to mark the school's registration class attendance register at the times denoted on the timetable (both morning and afternoon). Codes are used that correspond to the 'What to do when a child is absent' for children who are not present for registration.

1.3 The Head is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 and Working together to improve school attendance (2024)

1.4 We aim to work in partnership with parents and recognise that:

1.4.1 Parents are responsible by law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children as stated in their school contract
1.4.2 Parents and school staff should work closely together to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance
1.4.3 The school will encourage and value high attendance rates
1.4.4 the school will recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parents to deal with any issues
1.4.5 The school will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents and will provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements
1.4.6 Where possible, the school holds emergency contact details for more than one person who can be contacted in case of absence of a child.

1.5 The DfE provides guidelines for schools on the effects that poor attendance can have on children's learning. This policy provides guidance on the poor attendance thresholds and the intervention Durlston School will implement to highlight and support those pupils affected by poor attendance.

1.6 Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the "School Roll," and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met.

1.7 The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very prescriptive, reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon for all day pupils. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.

2. Objectives

2.1 We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is creating a happy and inviting school environment. For this reason, we aim to make our school a rewarding experience for all children. At the end of each term, we will recognise those children whose attendance is very good. Equally, we will make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

3. Registration

3.1 Registration is taken twice a day as follows:
Morning Registration
8.20-8.40 - Middle School and Seniors
8.30-8.45 - Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
8.30-9.00 - Kindergarten
Afternoon Registration
13.10-13.20 - Pre-Prep (including Kindergarten)
13.50-14.00 - Middle School and Seniors

3.2 If at the end of morning registration, a pupil is registered as absent without reason (N) will be followed up by office staff (ordinarily the receptionist) to establish whether or not the child is on site, or a reason has been given for absence (e.g. double-check absence requests and telephone messages)

- If a child is not on site, and no reason has been provided for the absence, the receptionist will telephone the child's contacts to try to establish the whereabouts of the child, and mark the register accordingly, with the correct code.
- If a child's whereabouts cannot be established, but there is reason to believe they are on/should be on site, the Missing Child Protocol will be enacted.
- In cases where the whereabouts of the child cannot be established, the DSL or another member of SLT will be informed and appropriate action taken. The receptionist will continue to try to make contact with the child's named contacts during this time.

4. Authorised absence

4.1 An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason (such as illness, work experience, medical/dental appointment, interview or religious observance) and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child is unwell, the parent must inform the school. If the absence is planned in advance, the parent must complete a request for absence form.

4.2 The Head will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Only the Head can authorise a leave of absence, and not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

5. Unauthorised absence

5.1 An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without permission from the school. Family holidays will not be authorised unless in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are granted at the discretion of the Head. In general, family holidays taken in term time will be recorded as unauthorised absences.

5.2 If a parent does not inform the school of a reason for absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised. Any absence for a legitimate reason which the school is unaware of in advance will be recorded as unauthorised.

6. What to do when a child is absent

6.1 Parents and guardians should:

6.1.1 ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually

6.1.2 inform the school as soon as possible if their child is not coming into school

6.2 It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible. If a child is not coming into school, parents should contact the school via the main office or their class/form teacher. If the absence is planned, a Request for Absence form must be completed in advance.

6.3 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will attempt to contact a parent or guardian. If a reason for absence is not provided, the absence will be unauthorised.

6.4 Form teachers/Class teachers will mark registers according to the following Government codes:

Present Codes	**Explanation**
/\	Present in school for registration /am \pm
B	off-site educational activity
D	dual registered - at another educational establishment
K	attending education provision arranged by the local authority
P	participating in an approved sporting activity
V	educational visit or trip
W	work experience
L	Late - Before Registration Closes
Absence Codes	**Explanation**
Authorised Absences	
C	leave of absence authorised by the school (exceptional circumstances)

C1	leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
E	excluded but no alternative provision made
J1	at an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)
M	medical or dental appointments
R	religious observance
S	study leave (not relevant due to no Y11 pupils in school)
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, where the child is a mobile child. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.
X	authorised absence as the pupil is non-compulsory school age
Unauthorised absences	
G	unauthorised family holiday
N	reason for absence not yet provided
O	absent from school without authorisation
U	arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	**Explanation**
Y1	unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Z	pupil not on admission register

#	planned whole or partial school closure

7. Request for absence

7.1 REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE - We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the best progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child.

7.2 Family holiday requests will only be granted during term time if there is an exceptional circumstance; any other requests will be deemed unauthorised. Unless parents are advised that their request has been authorised, they should assume that it will be recorded as unauthorised.

7.3 The school has produced guidance to parents to highlight the importance of attendance within school.

8. After school and morning clubs

8.1 A register is taken for each club or match via the SOCS website.

8.2 A register is also taken of all late stays and clubs before and after school.

9. Dismissal

9.1 Children will be dismissed by a member of staff or external club provider at the end of the school day or after school provision. For younger children, this is usually their class teacher. Children in Year 3-9 must sign out with a member of duty staff.

9.2 If children are to be collected by anyone outside of their normal arrangements, the school must be notified in advance by the parent.

9.3 Children in EYFS are only released into the care of individuals of whom the parent has explicitly notified the provider. The school operates a password system in case there is any doubt about the identity of someone attempting to collect a child in EYFS.

10. Rewards

10.1 Attendance is rewarded with termly certificates. These are awarded at Prize Giving for good attendance. The following thresholds are used for rewarding good attendance:

94-96% - Bronze award
97-99% - Silver award
100% - Gold award.

10.2 Individual and tutor group attendance is available for each tutor to view. A leaderboard of tutor groups is also available. Classes with 100% attendance for the week are celebrated in Assembly.

10.3 At the end of term, there will be a reward for the tutor group/class in each section of the school with the best attendance.

11. Monitoring

11.1 Class teachers and Form tutors will be responsible for monitoring the attendance records of their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. Any concern about a child's absence will be reported to the School Office immediately. Any longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Deputy Head Pastoral, who acts as the Attendance Champion.

11.2 The Attendance Champion will provide weekly overviews of attendance on the attendance tracker; this will include persistent absentees.

11.3 The attendance tracker is a standing item on both SLT and SMT meeting agendas; attendance will be reviewed weekly, and appropriate actions in line with this policy will be undertaken as required. Formal half-termly reports of children whose attendance falls below thresholds will be produced, and parents of these pupils will be contacted using the template letters.

11.4 LONG TERM ABSENCE - In instances when children are ill for longer periods of time, teachers will enable access to learning material at home, where possible, so the child can continue with their programme of study. Any absence relating to a pupil's illness is confidential and will only be discussed on a need-to-know basis, following discussion with parents.

11.5 REPEATED ABSENCES - Should there be a problem of repeated absences, these will be observed through registers and will be reviewed regularly by the Deputy Head Pastoral, who acts as the Attendance Champion. In the first instance, a letter will be sent from the class teacher/form tutor addressing the concern with parents (appendix 1). If there is continued concern for attendance, a second letter will be sent from the Deputy Head Pastoral (appendix 2), asking the parent to meet to address concerns, and a Pastoral Support Plan will be put in place. If attendance is still a concern, further action such as attendance contracts, education supervision orders or statutory children's social care may be considered. If further action is required following this, a letter will be sent by the Head (appendix 3)

11.6 The DfE recommends that no term time holidays are granted and therefore, as a rule, requests for term time leave will not be approved. All pupils are expected to be in school from the first day of term until the last day of term. Pupil absences affect not just the individual but may affect the whole teaching group and the teachers' programmes of work and their marking. In exceptional circumstances, permission for absence may be granted if a letter is received from parents in advance. Pupils' attendance is included on all school references and is requested by prospective colleges and employers and used as part of their admissions and interview procedure. Absence through unauthorised holiday will be reported to the local authority in line with local procedures.

11.8 Attendance is published as a percentage on Grade Cards and the End of Year report

11.9 Appendix 4 highlights the Durlston Attendance Thresholds.

12. Children Missing Education

12.1. Schools have a safeguarding duty to discover the whereabouts of children who have not attended school. Where reasonable enquiries have not established a reason for absence, there may be a safeguarding concern for the child, in which case, the school will notify the local authority.

12.2. Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten consecutive school days after a leave of absence or is absent from school for reasons statistically recorded as unauthorised absence for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil's name can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to find out the location and circumstances of the child or have succeeded but agree there are no reasonable grounds to believe that they will attend the school again. In deciding there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again both school and local authority must agree, including that there are no reasonable steps that could be taken (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance. Neither ground for deletion applies if there are

reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

12.3. CME are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.
CME includes children who:

- are in the process of applying for a school place
- have been offered a school place for a future date but have not yet started
- are receiving elective home education (EHE) that has been assessed as unsuitable
- have been recorded as CME for an extended period, for example where their whereabouts is unclear or unknown
- CME are not children who:

- are receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school (for example, pupils who are electively home educated or attending alternative provision) which is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have
- are EHE but the local authority has not had an opportunity to assess whether the education being provided is suitable
- are registered at a school, even if they are persistently or severely absent from that school

12.4. If a child who is on a school roll is absent from school and this absence is unexplained, the school should immediately make enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts. The school should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly enquired about. If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care (and the police if appropriate).

12.5. If enquiries lead the school to reasonably believe that the child will no longer be attending the school and the parent has not provided the school with written notice that the child will be attending another school or that education provision otherwise than at a school will be provided, they should make a referral to the child's home local authority CME team as soon as possible.

12.6. Schools should continue to undertake reasonable enquiries to identify the whereabouts of the child during this time, and regular communication between the school and the local authority carrying out these enquiries should continue until it is mutually agreed that enquiries have concluded or that there are no further actions the school can take.

Appendix 1

Form Tutor Letters

Dear [parent/carer's name],

I am writing to you because [pupil's name]'s attendance has become a cause for concern. It currently stands at [add percent]. Pupils with below 90% attendance are on track to miss at least three weeks of school within an academic year, while 80% attendance equates to a half term missed over the course of the year.

Regular attendance is an important factor in a child's academic success. When pupils are frequently absent, it is difficult for them to keep up with their school work and there is strong evidence that this affects future exam results. For this reason, we take school attendance very seriously and inform parents as soon as possible where there is a concern, in order that we can work together to improve attendance.

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is important that you contact the school on the first day of the absence to inform us of the reasons. If this continues for more than one day, you should make contact with the school on a daily basis to keep us updated. Planned absences must be requested in writing, using the absence request form {link}. Absences will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Whilst we recognise that a short period of illness or necessary absence can significantly impact attendance figures at this point in the year, we are keen to work with you to address any barriers to your child's attendance which may have arisen. If you require any advice or support on this matter, please get in touch with me, or Mrs Gill (DeputyHead Pastoral) to discuss this and we will do our best to help.

Yours sincerely,

[Name of staff member

Class Teacher/Form Tutor

First Attendance Letter (2nd or 3rd term)

Dear [parent/carer's name],

I am writing to you because [pupil's name]'s attendance has become a cause for concern. It currently stands at [add percent]. Pupils with below 90% attendance are on track to miss over three weeks of school within an academic year.

Regular attendance is an important factor in a child's academic success. When pupils are frequently absent, it is difficult for them to keep up with their school work and this could affect their future exam results. For this reason, we take school attendance very seriously and inform parents as soon as possible where there is a concern, in order that we can work together to improve attendance.

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is important that you contact the school on the first day of the absence to inform us of the reasons. If this continues for more than one day, you should make contact with the school on a daily basis to keep us updated. Planned absences must be requested in writing, using the absence request form. Absences will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Whilst we recognise that children will be absent from school on occasion, we are keen to work with you to address any barriers to your child's attendance which may have arisen. If you require any advice or support on this matter, please get in touch with me, or Mrs Gill (Deputy Head Pastoral) to discuss this and we will do our best to help.

Yours sincerely,

[Name of staff member

Class Teacher/Form Tutor

Appendix 2 Deputy Head Pastoral Letter

Dear [parent/carer's name],

Following our previous letter dated [date of first letter] regarding [child's name]'s attendance, there continues to be a cause for concern. Our records show that [insert name of child]'s attendance is currently at [add percent].

School attendance is an important issue and something we take very seriously. I would therefore like to meet with to discuss any barriers to attendance that may have arisen, and put a plan in place to improve [child's name]'s attendance going forward.

I have arranged for this meeting to take place in school on [add date] at [add time]. Please could you confirm that you are able to attend this meeting. If you are unable to attend, please contact the school office to make an alternative arrangement.

Regular school attendance is the responsibility of parents/carers. If your child's attendance remains at the current level, with no engagement or improvement, the school may need to contact the local authority to access further support to work towards improving your child's attendance.

I look forward to meeting with you, and supporting you in helping your child to improve their school attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Head Pastoral

Appendix 3 Letter from Head -Final Warning

Dear [parent/carer's name],

Following previous letters, we are now writing to formally express our ongoing concerns about the irregular attendance of your child, [add name and date of birth].

If a pupil fails to attend school regularly, the parent could be guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. I am therefore warning you that, if further unauthorised absences are recorded, or your child fails to attend school regularly, we will need to refer this matter to the local authority.

Following this notification, if your child's attendance and/or punctuality does not improve, the local authority may start legal proceedings against you. If it is determined that an offence has been committed, this could eventually result in a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or imprisonment.

We will not issue further notification should we need to escalate this matter to the local authority.

We have attached a record of your child's attendance with this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Head

Appendix 4 - Durlston attendance thresholds

Any authorised or unauthorised absence or lateness at school will affect your child's education. The percentage figures for attendance take into consideration all authorised and unauthorised absences and lateness at school.

100% Attendance	Perfect Attendance - Gold Award
97-99%	Excellent Attendance - Silver Award
94-96%	Good Attendance - Bronze Award
90-93%	Monitoring. This may be brought up informally with parents by the form tutor, especially if absence is sporadic and not related to a specific illness or leave of absence.
Below 90%	Cause for concern. A letter will be sent by the form tutor, indicating that there is an issue with attendance. Parents/carers are invited to meet with the Form Tutor/Class Teacher to discuss improving attendance
Below 85%	Significant cause for concern. A letter will be sent by the form tutor in the first instance. If attendance does not improve, the Deputy Head Pastoral will invite parents/carers to attend a meeting regarding attendance. A Pastoral Support Plan may be put in place depending on the reasons for absence.
Below 80%	Serious cause for concern. A letter will be sent by the form tutor or Deputy Head Pastoral (depending on the circumstances of the absences) requesting that parents/carers attend a meeting to discuss attendance. A Pastoral Support Plan will be put in place, and further action such as attendance contracts, education supervision order or statutory children's social care will be considered. Where an attendance trend identifies that it is likely that a child will miss at least 15 days of school due to illness in an academic year, this will be reported to the local authority in line with local procedures.

At any point, if an improvement in attendance is not seen following a meeting with the parents/carers, the local authority attendance team may be notified.

A term is a reference to Michaelmas, Lent and Trinity terms. Regular monitoring will take place.