DANES HILL SCHOOL

School Attendance Policy

This policy applies to Prep School and Pre Prep School, including EYFS

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1. Aims and Statement of Intent

- At Danes Hill, we believe that regular attendance is vital for a successful and holistic education. This attendance policy outlines our expectations for pupils' attendance, the responsibilities of parents/guardians, procedures for reporting absences, and the steps taken to support and monitor attendance in compliance with the Surrey County Council.

1.1 Regular attendance is critical for our pupils are to be successful. Missing out on school can leave children vulnerable to falling behind academically and can increase the risk of wider harm.

- The purpose of this policy is to set out how we plan to work with families to overcome barriers that might prevent regular school attendance, and how we will support to resolve any difficulties. We recognise that attendance is matter for the whole school community. Our aim is to provide guidance to parents, pupils, staff and Governors to:
- to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
- to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
- to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, to reduce absence in order to prevent children becoming children missing education (**CME**), and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;
- to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and
- to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection
- This policy should not be viewed in isolation, as we recognise that attendance does not stand alone and is fundamental throughout many aspects of school improvement. It is closely linked to our policies on safeguarding, behaviour and mental health.

2. Legal Framework and definitions

2.1 Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive, full-time education suitable to the age, ability and aptitude to any special education needs that the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

2.2 A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday on June in the year in which they reach the age of 16.

2.3 This policy has due regard to all the relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2026) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

- DfE (2026) Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2026'
- DfE (2026) EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers
- DfE (2015) Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school
- DfE (2023) Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'
- DfE (2023) Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance
- Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**) and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (together referred to as data protection laws'
- Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, August 2024
- "Is my child too ill for school?" NHS guidance 2024
- Guidance for parents on school attendance (Office of Children's Commissioner, 2023)
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (2017)
- Mental Health and behavious in school (2018)

2.4 This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Rewards Policy
- RSHE Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy
- Inclusive Education and Equal Opportunities Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

Attendance refers to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.
Parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and
- any person who has day to day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).

References to a **pupil** includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school except a person who is 19 or over for whom further education is being provided, or a person for whom part-time education suitable for people over compulsory school age is being provided.

References to **children missing education (CME)** mean children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a School and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at School.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 At Danes Hill there is a whole school approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibilities.

Role	Description	Name	Contact details
Senior Attendance Lead	Senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school	Leanne Sutton	DSL@daneshillschool.co.uk
Attendance Officers	School staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis and	Zana Clarke Caryl Hodgson	reception@daneshillschool.co.uk
Named Governor/Trustee for Attendance	School safeguarding governor who parents should contact for more detailed support on attendance	Samantha Price (Safeguarding Governor)	Sprice@daneshillschool.co.uk

- The Governors of Danes Hill recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:
- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the school engages and work effectively with the local authority Surrey School Attendance Service and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities and pupils with a social worker.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

3.2 **The Senior Leadership Team will:**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Ensure staff receive suitable attendance monitoring training
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.

- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence. All persistently and severely absent children will be tracked and monitored on a regular basis with specific attendance action plans, or individual health care plans, implemented where appropriate.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

3.4 All staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents, communicating in a supportive, non – judgemental manner.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
  Seek to understand and address barriers to attendance before concerns become entreched.

3.5 Form Teachers will:

- Take registers on the same day, with both morning and afternoon sessions consistently recorded.
- Review pupil attendance weekly, identifying patterns or trends and raising any concerns during year group meetings.
- Record any pupil who is persistently absent (PA) or at risk of PA on CPOMS attaching an attendance report from ISAMs.
- Hold a conversation with any pupil who is persistently absent after each absence, focusing on identifying barriers to attendance and exploring any support needs. Share attendance percentages and concerns at all pastoral parent/teacher conferences.

3.6 The Attendance Officer will support good attendance and promote an improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data daily, including, children who are persistently or severely absent.
- Undertaking regular attendance meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other relevant staff members.
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from school without contact from parents.

3.7 The Head of Safeguarding, Deputy Head Pastoral, Heads of Section and the SENCO will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. The relevant staff will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote an improvement in attendance by:

- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole school attendance.
- Ensure attendance registers are taken at the same time, twice daily for the whole school
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Managing individual pupil casework files.
- Coordinating individual action plans for pupils causing concern including the instigation of an Early Help Assessment and Plan and/ or the implementation of a parenting contract.
- Taking an active lead in delivering whole school initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.
- Evaluate and authorise absence requests in line with this policy
- Issue penalties, where applicable
- Providing the local authority with monthly attendance data
- Ensuring any child with a social worker, has their attendance data shared with them, especially where there are any unexplained absences
- Analyse and monitor attendance data and identify patterns and priorities.

3.8 Danes Hill requests that parents/carers:

- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, notify the school on the first day of absence by, phoning reception and providing the reason for the absence.
- Contact the school on a daily basis if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible.
- The school may require a doctor's note for prolonged or recurring illnesses.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

3.9 Pupils will:

- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Sign in at Reception if arriving late or leaving during the day (with permission).
- Register at the start and end of the school day.

4. Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) and Additional Needs

4.1 If a child is experiencing EBSNA or school-based anxiety, early identification and a supportive, collaborative approach are key to improving attendance and wellbeing.

The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

The School will make reasonable adjustments, where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

It will also work with Parents , and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupils education, health and care plan is accessed.

Where a pupil has an education, health and care plan the School will communicate with the local authority where the pupil's attendance falls or the School become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

In cases of both long term physical or mental ill-health, the School will facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue.

Where a pupil's health need means they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, the School can seek medical evidence to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision.

Suitable strategies and support will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.

Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with Parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days

4.2 Parent/Carer Responsibilities and Support:

- Inform the school promptly if your child is struggling to attend due to emotional distress or anxiety.
- Engage with the school to explore the reasons behind non-attendance.
- Work in partnership with staff to implement agreed support strategies.
- Attend relevant meetings and seek external support where advised (e.g. GP, CAMHS, Early Help).

4.3 School's Supportive Approach:

- Approach EBSNA with empathy, understanding, and early intervention.
- Maintain regular, open communication with families to develop a shared understanding of the issues.
- Provide reasonable adjustments and a personalised support plan where appropriate.
- Offer access to pastoral support, the MHL (Mental Health Lead), and external agencies as needed.
    - Monitor progress and adapt support to help the pupil re-engage with learning safely and gradually.

Where a pupil subject to a part-time timetable has an EHC plan, the school will discuss the arrangement with the LA so that the pupil's support package can be reviewed as appropriate. Where the pupil has a social worker, the school will keep them informed and involved in the process.
[Updated] The school will not routinely request medical evidence to support illness-related absence. Reasonable evidence may be requested where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, or where a pupil has prolonged or repeated illness and further information would help the school understand their needs, identify appropriate support or reasonable adjustments, or accurately record the absence. The school will not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and will consider other appropriate evidence provided by parents.

The Attendance Lead will ensure that attendance data for pupils with SEND and/or long-term physical or mental health conditions is regularly monitored so that emerging patterns are identified and additional support from the LA or other partners can be accessed where necessary.

5. Managing Attendance

5.1 We will investigate any pupils who are on track to be persistently or severely absent (PA and SA) and will not wait until attendance is below 90%. Persistent and severe absence are defined as:

- Persistent absenteeism (PA): Missing 10% or more of schooling for any reason
- Severe absence (SA): Missing 50% or more of schooling for any reason

5.2 The School will comply with statutory duties to provide information to the local authority regarding pupils who leave the School roll, are missing education, or become educated otherwise than at school, where required by law. Please see the Safeguarding Children Missing Education Policy for detailed procedures.

5.2 Interventions:

Attendance Percentage	Staff Responsible	Possible Interventions
96 – 100%	Form Teacher	• Form teacher rewards consistent positive attendance within the class.
90 – 95%	Reception Form Teacher Head of Year	• Phone calls on each day of absence if reasons given are concerning or regular pattern is appearing. • Informal chat with student on return to school • Concern noted on CPOMS • Concern raised in year group meeting • Head of Year to share concerns with Head of Section
Under 90% (PA)	Head of Year Head of Section SENCO Head of Safeguarding	• Informal chat with parent if any issues / followed with email confirming discussions and any actions • Form teacher/Head of Year phone call with parent to discuss any issues and why absences are ongoing. • Form teacher/Head of Year to follow up conversation with an email. • CPOMS updated with agreed action • Concerns to be raised with appropriate staff i.e., SENCO, Senior Leadership, Attendance Lead • Regular check ins with student • Head of Year invites parents to a formal meeting • Medical evidence request. • Parent meeting with relevant SLT staff & SENCO • Referral to Surrey School Attendance Service
Under 50% (SA)	Head of Section SENCO Head of Safeguarding Deputy Head Pastoral	• Consideration given to alternatives i.e., reduced timetables, changes in classes, ELSA etc • Medical evidence request • Formal support such as parenting contracts put in place • Intensify support through different channels • Referral to Surrey School Attendance Service

5.3 Persistent absence and Local Authority Interventions:

5.3.1 A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Absence at this level causes considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

5.3.2 Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support, including the Surrey School Attendance Service.

5.4 Request for absence:

5.4.1 Leave of absence in term time (5 days or 10 sessions or more):

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

- The Head is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

- In such cases the Head must decide whether there are exceptional circumstances.

5.5 Part-time Timetables:

5.5.1 All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils and at Danes Hill we are committed to ensuring this. In exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents child from attending full time, or where a part-time timetable is considered as part of a reintegration package.

5.5.2 A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution. Surrey Guidance recommends that a part-time timetable should not exceed a six-week period unless there are exceptional circumstances. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carer and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate.

5.5.3 This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family.

6. School Procedures

6.1 If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the morning of the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return

6.2 In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Refer to an external agency/ support service to offer support, guidance, and advice.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, a refer to the Surrey Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA) will be made.

6.3 Absence and Attendance Coding:

- An electronic attendance register will be taken at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session for the whole school. On each occasion we will record whether a pupil is present, attending an approved education activity, attending a medical appointment or absent.

- The School will use the national codes as set out by the Department for Education to record and report attendance and absence, as listed below:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

6.3.1 The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole or partial school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- [New] S = Study leave
- [New] C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- [New] C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- [New] J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- [New] K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed

- N = Reason not yet provided, where the reason cannot be established within five school days, the school will amend the entry to Code O
- Q= Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements, in accordance with the circumstances set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- [New] Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity

6.3.2 When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

- Absences will either be recorded as authorised or unauthorised and only the Headteachers can authorise absence.

- Pupils who are not physically attending school but are receiving remote education will continue to be recorded as absent using the appropriate absence code. Remote education will only be used in accordance with the DfE's guidance, including as a last resort where appropriate and as part of a plan to reintegrate the pupil into school

6.4 Lateness:

6.4.1 All pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. Pupils arriving outside these times must enter school by the main entrance and report to Reception where their name and the reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L'). Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence. Please see below the registration timings and attendance codes used as per the updated DfE statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve Attendance 2024.*

- **Registration Times**

6.4.2 *Pre-Prep School* registration occurs daily from 8:25am to 8:55am. The register officially closes at 9:25am.

- Pupils arriving between 8:55am and 9:25am will receive an "L" (Late) code.
- Pupils arriving after 9:25am will receive a "U" (Unauthorised Absence) code.

6.4.3 *Prep School* registration occurs daily from 8:15am to 8:30am. The register officially closes at 9:00 am.

- Pupils arriving between 8:30am and 9:00am will receive an "L" (Late) code.
- Pupils arriving after 9:00am will receive a "U" (Unauthorised Absence) code.

6.5 Deletions from the Register:

6.5.1 At Danes Hill we will only delete pupils from our school roll in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations. In most circumstances, we will know in advance about pupils

leaving our school; this will be planned and discussed with the parent in advance of the pupil leaving. We will always work with families to gain information about the pupil's next school and/or address before the pupil leaves to reduce the risk of pupils becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

- Danes Hill will follow Surrey County Council's Children Missing Education Policy. When a pupil's whereabouts or school destination is unknown, we will carry out joint enquiries with Surrey County Council School Attendance Service to establish the whereabouts of the child.

- Every entry in the attendance register will be kept for 6 years from their entry date.

7. Information Sharing

Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familiar harms).

Where enquiries following the absence of a pupil lead the School to reasonably believe that the child will not return, and no alternative provision has been confirmed by the parent, the School will make a referral to the child's home local authority CME team without delay.

Where appropriate the School will attend regular targeting support meetings.

The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

- New pupil and deletion returns
- Attendance returns
- Sickness returns.

The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State.

The School meets this requirement by having an electronic management information system containing the required information that can be accessed by the DfE. The School also uses this tool to monitor pupil level attendance and understand trends in attendance patterns.

Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and / or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences

8.Record Keeping and Confidentiality

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data