



DOWNSVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Originators: Lefko Charalambous Emma Ricketts
Approved: October 2024
Revision Date: October 2026

The name and contact details of the Senior Attendance Champion – the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school, is:

Emma Ricketts

She can be contacted by email: ericketts2.306@lgflmail.org, through Class Dojo or by ringing the school office.

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

Michelle Carter (Administrator-Receptionist)

She can be contacted by either ringing the school office, face-to-face at the front desk or via attendance@downsview.croydon.sch.uk

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact for more individual support with attendance is:

Lefko Charalambous (Attendance and Welfare Officer)

She can be contacted by either ringing the school officer for via attendance@downsview.croydon.sch.uk

The school also employs an Educational Welfare Officer via Team Education Welfare Services. They can be contacted at sdilley@teamewo.com.

The lead Governor for Attendance is Philip Eracleous.

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Introduction and Principles

The staff and Governors at Downsview Primary and Nursery School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. As such we aspire to high standards of attendance to build a culture where all can and want to be in school, ready to learn. We believe that regular attendance and punctuality is essential to enable all pupils in our care, from Nursery to Year 6, to gain the maximum benefit from the educational opportunities that Downsview provides. Any loss of time at school can adversely affect a child's attainment. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. Research demonstrates a clear link between good attainment and good attendance. We strive to make all of our schools a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We also aim to work with parents/carers to ensure that all children registered at school attend every day and on time, unless the absence is unavoidable. We expect that all children will achieve 100% attendance but recognise that there may be exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence, or absences relating to persistent health issues.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "[Working together to improve school attendance](#)" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and 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;
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school;
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance. ***Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.***

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Expectations (see Appendix 1 for a more detailed description)

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day.

- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or another trusted adult any problems that may affect their school attendance.

We expect all parents and carers will:

- Work in partnership with the school and encourage regular attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities to enable children to access learning.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and is prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that they contact the school by 9am on every day of absence whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from School.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of statutory school age (the term after the child turns five) attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting an absence from school without good reason is an offence. A pupil whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed the equivalent of two whole terms of learning.

We expect that the school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere and a safe learning environment.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's or parent's concerns.
- Keep regular and accurate records of morning and afternoon attendance and punctuality.
- Contact the parent or carer of the child if no message is received on the day before 09.30am explaining their absence. If no contact is then received from the parent / carer, the emergency contacts will then be used.
- Follow up unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence.
- Monitor individual pupils' attendance and punctuality. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant medical professional or body will be requested.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition when necessary.
- Inform parents of the percentage attendance of their child.
- Inform parents of the attendance/punctuality regarding pupils who are causing the school concern.
- Involve the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) for children with an attendance of 90% or lower, as this is classed as persistently absent.
- Make referrals to the local authority in terms of penalty notices and court proceedings.
- Involve parents in any plans for support and also seek support from external agencies and partners.

All members of the school staff have a safeguarding responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and lateness; with the Head teacher having overall responsibility for the monitoring of attendance and lateness of every pupil. Where there are concerns, parents will always be informed by letter / email and/or telephone conversation and given an opportunity to come into school to meet with designated staff.

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

(See Appendix 3 for the DfE attendance codes.)

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

School Procedures

The beginning of the school day:

- Children are not allowed on site before 08.45 am, unless they are attending a club, musical practice or special school event, as there is no adult supervision. The doors open at 08.45 am. and children will make their way to their classroom.
- The class teacher calls the register at the beginning of the morning (**09.00 am.**) and afternoon session (**1pm (EYFS and KS1) /1.15 pm for KS2**). They maintain a clear and accurate register and these are checked on a daily basis by the school office staff.
- The reason for absence is recorded by the school office using one of the symbols in the register list.
- The register closes at **09.05 am. all children who arrive after this time are late** and recorded as (L). Children arriving between 09.00 am. and 09.05 am. are recorded by the office for safety reasons. A child who arrives after 09.30 am. receives an unauthorised mark for the am session and coded as (U). All late arrivals will need to sign in via our electronic Inventory System, which ensures the accurate recording of your child's attendance. This system automatically updates the class register. The school will monitor lateness and the Attendance Officer will contact parents/carers where a child is frequently late.

Absence:

- Parents/Carers contact the school office, using the attendance@downsview.croydon.sch.uk no later than 9.00 am reporting their child's absence.
- The office follows "first day calling" procedures contacting parents/carers who have failed to inform the office of any absence. Initially a text will be sent and, if we haven't had a response by 11.00 am a follow up phone call will be made, initially to parents and then to emergency contacts if necessary. If there is still no contact a home visit may take place. If we are still unable to locate the whereabouts of a pupil, a referral to Croydon MASH or the police may then need to be made.
- Letters/ emails/ texts or face-to-face meetings are used to follow up absenteeism.
- If a pattern of irregular attendance occurs, the school's Attendance & Welfare Officer and possibly the Education Welfare Officer will become involved, and both will work with the school, child and parent/carer. External agencies and partners will be contacted for additional support if it is required.
- Sometimes, due to illness, it is unavoidable for a child to be absent. However, Children with mild coughs, colds, sore throats, sneezes and runny noses who are otherwise well can continue to attend school. If they develop a high temperature they should stay at home until their temperature has reduced and they are well enough to return to school. A guide to whether your child is able to attend school with minor illnesses is here: [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health/a-z/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/). The information is backed up by the Department for Education (DfE). We expect children to attempt to come to school unless they are too unwell to complete basic tasks. We will contact you if they need to return home. Children who are unable to attend school due to diarrhoea or sickness can return 48 hours after the last episode.

- When children are prevented from accessing school due to physical or mental ill health, the school will try to identify the barriers these pupils face, and use our tiered approach to supporting medical needs. This starts with the universal offer of support for all children and leads to higher tiers of need where increasingly specialist support is required. We will consider reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements. We will liaise with appropriate services to ascertain support, in the rare instances that a pupil is unable to access any education inside the school setting. We will work with the Local Authority Access and Inclusion Team to identify available options for education. Where a pupil's health needs mean they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, we may seek medical information to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision. This may take a variety of forms, which we will discuss with parents/carers on an individual basis.
- Where children have an EHCP, we will liaise closely with the child's SEN Caseworker to work towards the best attendance outcomes for the child.
- We are able to make adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments will be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with, the pupil and their parents/carers.
- If a pupil fails to attend school for 10 consecutive days, without explanation, and the school does not know where the pupil is, the school will refer the pupil to the Local Authority as a Child Missing in Education. After a further 10 days of absence with no explanation, your child is at risk of losing their school place with us. During this 20-day period, school will continue to try and contact you, and will liaise with any other services that your child is open to. The Local Authority will conduct investigations into the location and educational provision of the child.
- Data is used by the school to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve, and schools are required to submit pupil attendance data to the Department for Education on a daily basis Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. We also share our data with Croydon Local Authority via Studybugs. Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment. We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Promoting and supporting good attendance and punctuality: (See Downsview Attendance Roadmap – Appendix 2)

- The school Senior Leadership team monitors attendance and uses data to identify patterns of poor attendance so that all parties can work together to resolve them. The team, where necessary, help pupils and parents access the support they need to overcome barriers both inside and outside of school.
- The school celebrates the best class attendance in the weekly newsletter.
- The school celebrates 100% attendance and punctuality each term and at the end of the year.
- The school provides information to parents/carers about their child's attendance at parents' evening and in the end of year reports. Where needed and on an individual basis, parents/carers will also be made aware of their child's attendance and punctuality data during the year.
- Individual incentives/rewards will be put into place as appropriate and in partnership with parents/carers.

Requesting Leave of absence:

- Holidays are expected to be taken during school holidays. There is no parental entitlement to take children on holiday during term-time and school holiday dates are published a year in advance. The Head teacher is not allowed to authorise any holiday during term time. Leave can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. This will be considered by the Head teacher on an individual basis and are considered to be rare, unavoidable and short.
- If you wish to make a request to take your child away from school during term time you will need to complete the form, 'Request for term time leave'. Once completed it should be submitted to the school office for the Headteacher to consider the request before any arrangements are made, as

authorisation will not be granted retrospectively. Any absence for leave that has not been agreed by the Headteacher will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. The absence could also be referred to the Education Welfare Officer and may be subject to a fine. Similarly, if the school suspect term-time leave has been taken but parents / carers have not completed the request form, the school will write to you, giving you the opportunity to clarify the reason for the absence and provide supporting evidence. Failure to respond to or provide supporting evidence will result in a referral to Croydon Local Authority for unauthorised leave from school.

- If a leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parents / Carers are, however, advised to read with and to their children and to encourage them to write a diary while they are away.
- The school will only be able to authorise **one day** for each religious observance, which must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent /carers belong.

Pupils leaving during the school day:

- Parents are expected, as much as possible, to arrange medical and other appointments for their child outside school hours, however there are instances where this is unavoidable, e.g. hospital appointments. The school office should be notified of any child being taken out of school during the school day and evidence will need to be provided. Persistent early collection may result in a referral to our Attendance Officer. As such, children will not be allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school and ONLY when accompanied by an agreed adult.

Late Collection:

- Children who are not collected at the end of the school day are taken to the late area until the authorised adult collects them. We shall attempt to make contact, first with parents, then with those listed as persons who may assume responsibility, indicated on the child's Emergency Contact Form. Should late collection become a regular occurrence, this will then be considered as a safeguarding concern and a referral may be made to Croydon's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

Changing Schools:

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school, they inform Downsview School office as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until the following information has been received in writing and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next;
- the name and address of the new school; the new home address, if it is known;
- this school receiving communication from the new school that the child has now been enrolled there.
- If moving abroad, copies of tickets / boarding passes.

The school will send an electronic copy of the pupil's school record, including attendance reports, to the new school, to be followed by their paper file. If a parent/carer appears to have removed their child from school or the child has completely stopped attending without providing the above information, the family will be referred to the Education Welfare Service, Children Missing in Education and, if deemed necessary, Social Services.

Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10 school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to

the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

For second offences of unauthorised term-time leave (10 consecutive sessions or more) within a three-year rolling period, the fine is a flat £160 per parent, per child. For the third offence in a three-year rolling period, the referral will be automatically considered for prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities

Appendix 2: Downsview Attendance Road Map

Appendix 3: DFE attendance register codes

Appendix 4: Request for leave of absence form

Appendix 5: Attendance communication

Appendix 6: Different types of absence

Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance at Downview – Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is everybody's responsibility

Administrator - Receptionist:

- Monitoring the attendance texts and marking on the register when we are informed of an absence. If there is no contact with a parent, leave as an N code.
- First Day Calling – texting parent/carer if a child is absent but we haven't heard by 9.45am. Ringing if the text doesn't result in contact by 11am (parent/carer then working through the emergency contacts for that child). Where contact still cannot be made, refer to the Attendance Officer.
- Seeing appointment evidence, if a child is being picked up early or arriving late, and marking this on the register.
- Checking all registers are taken by the allotted time – morning and afternoon.

Senior Attendance Champion:

- Review in partnership with the A&WO termly Governors attendance report and the LEA termly general attendance document.
- Work effectively in partnership with all stake holders, including attending fortnightly attendance meetings.
- Ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities, offering support as needed, in line with the school's policies and procedures.
- Maintain an overview of attendance at the school and the actions being taken to support families.

Senior Leadership Team:

- Proactively supporting and monitoring their allocated families.
- Attend a fortnightly Senior Leadership meeting where case developments are discussed, any next steps agreed and best practice shared. Senior Attendance Officer to feedback to Attendance Office.
- Headteacher makes a decision about exceptional leave in consultation with other professional bodies. Liaise with A&WO in responding to parents/carers.

Attendance and Welfare officer:

- Checking all N and O codes and, wherever possible getting the evidence to change these.
- Manage the 'Request for leave of absence' system- communicating decisions to parents /carers and record on CPOMS
- Providing the EWO with all the necessary information / paperwork for penalty notices.
- Carry out home visits as needed, with either the Senior Attendance Champion or the EWO. This will happen where a response has not been received via First Day calling and the school cannot establish a child's whereabouts. In these circumstances a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will decide if a home visit is needed on the first day of absence. In all cases where there has been no contact, an email will be sent and a home visit will take place. A home visit will also take place when a child has not been seen by school, even if there has been parental contact, for more than 7 working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances (Senior Attendance Champion or another member of SLT will decide this).
- In conjunction with the EWO, work with identified key families to support – including a range of communications (texts, emails, letters, face to face meetings etc.) Put support in place quickly and monitor the impact.
- Produce weekly attendance data for the Head teacher (assemblies/newsletters)
- Fortnightly attendance meetings the Senior Attendance Champion / EWO.
- Work effectively in partnership with all stake holders.
- Set up, run and monitor individual reward systems in partnership with parents.
- In conjunction with the EWO, communicate with parents where there is poor attendance or punctuality and maintain a record of this.
- Liaise with other agencies and, in conjunction with the EWO/ Senior Attendance Champion, co-ordinate support meetings.
- Liaise with teaching staff to discuss particular children with attendance concerns.
- Compile termly Governors attendance report and the LEA termly general attendance document.

Year Group teams (including support staff):

- Actively promote good attendance with both the children and families – informal messages on Class Dojo etc...
- Ensure that the register is taken on time and is accurate.
- Discuss Year Group attendance regularly and Head of Year to alert Attendance officer and Senior Attendance Champion of any trends or concerns.

Educational Welfare officer (EWO):

- Work with identified key families (Persistence Absence (PA) and Severe Absence (SA) to support – including the setting up and monitoring of an attendance communication plan.
- In conjunction with A&WO, identify children under 95% and send appropriate communication, in liaison with the Attendance and Welfare officer.
- In conjunction with A&WO, identify children who are consistently late and send appropriate communication.
- Fortnightly attendance meetings the Senior Attendance Champion/Attendance Officer
- Produce data on a fortnightly basis, identify trends and then use these to suggest and implement actions and / or changes to policy and procedures.
- Compile / complete the paper work for penalty notices and possible court action and send to Croydon
- Liaise with other agencies and, in conjunction with the Attendance Officer/Senior Attendance Champion, co-ordinate support meetings

Parents:

- Ensuring that your child attends school on every day that it is open, unless there is an unavoidable and statutory reason why they can't.
- Ensuring that your child is punctual every day.
- Following the school absence procedure and notify the school as soon as possible when your child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Only requesting leave in exceptional circumstances and doing so in advance and in line with school procedures.
- Booking any medical appointments outside of the school day and, if this isn't possible, giving the school office relevant evidence.
- Having open conversations with school in terms of any home issues or other barriers that are impacting/likely to impact on school attendance.
- Proactively engaging with any support offered.

Local partners and agencies:

- Attending Multi-agency meetings, taking the lead if appropriate.
- Offering strategies, advice and support to ensure that individual barriers to attendance are removed.

Pupils:

- Attending school and being on time every day.
- Being well prepared for the day.
- Discussing any issues that may affect school attendance with a 'trusted' school member of staff.

Governors:

- Recognising the importance of attendance and promote it across the school's community, including across its ethos and policies.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including ensuring that the school:
 - has an attendance policy which meets the expectations set out in 'Working together to improve school attendance.
 - records data accurately in the register and shares the required information with Dfe and LEA.
 - Works effectively with local partners / agencies to remove barriers to attendance.
- Ensuring all school staff receive training on attendance.
- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support the school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to ensure that whole school cultures are set.
- Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus on improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.

Croydon Local Education Authority:

Providing a school attendance support team who will:

- bring schools together to communicate messages, provide advice and share best local practice.
- hold a 'Targeting support meeting' for our school.
- Provide multi-disciplinary support for our families.
- Provide legal interventions where necessary.
- Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker.



Primary and Nursery School

Attendance Roadmap

In line with the DfE Statutory Guidance (in force from 19th August 2024) we offer a supportive, stepped, attendance approach. We will offer a welcoming ethos with high expectations for all. We will assess data to identify absence trends & use preventative discussions/meetings with families to listen, understand & support to remove barriers. Where needed, we will formalise support to nurture improvement with Attendance Contracts & as a last resort we will consider intensifying support &/or enforce legal sanctions.



Did you know, arriving after the register has closed (30 mins from school starting) = an absence?



Did you know, 90% attendance = approx. 95 missed lessons/hours of learning?

STEP 1 - Identify, Assess & Prevent

Our daily actions & processes aim to promote relationship building with children & families to prevent absence. This involves monitoring data trends & absence patterns to inform our conversations with you (& your child where age allows). The trigger for conversations is where absence is at risk of reaching the new National Threshold (**10 sessions (10 half days/5 days) within a 10 week rolling period**). Other daily actions involve promoting attendance positively, using praise & incentives, swift absence follow up, email &/or letter communication to raise your awareness of emerging concerns, processing requested or unrequested 'Term Time Exceptional Absence' & doing Home Visits to meet our safeguarding duties as required.

STEP 2 - Early Absence Support

We move to this step if the National Threshold for absence is met (authorised or unauthorised) to prevent further absence occurring. Discussions & meetings will be offered to identify if early support or reasonable adjustments are needed. This will be done using discussions &/or meetings to create a supportive action plan. An Early Help Assessment (EHA) may be required for some support to be accessed along with a Team Around the Family (TAF) Meeting Process

Please talk to us about how we can support you &/or your child at any time.

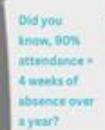
STEP 3 - Formalised Support

Where absence continues & initial support needs to be increased an Attendance Contract (AC) will be offered to formalise support. This is a 3-6 month nurturing plan of improvement to prevent further escalation. Achievable & individual targets will be set & reviewed regularly. Medical &/or other information will be actively sought at this point if required to work collaboratively with you & other agencies. An AC can run alongside other meetings e.g., TAF meeting.



STEP 4 - Warnings - Concerns Remain

Where STEP 2 or STEP 3 support has been unsuccessful &/or declined, a 'Formal Warning' if AC has failed, or a 'Notice to Improve' Letter if no AC appropriate, will be issued to reinforce the need for immediate improvement. A Family Court Order such as an Education Supervision Order will also be considered as an alternative to prosecution.



Did you know, 90% attendance = 4 weeks of absence over a year?

Did you know, good attendance increases academic success?



STEP 5 - Legal Action - No Improvement

Legal action (Penalty Notice or Prosecution) MAY be requested from the Local Authority (LA) if Unauthorised Term Time Absence is taken, or if overall absence continues to occur & reaches or exceeds the National Threshold for absence, despite STEPS 1-4 being attempted. Statutory Guidance States a Referral to Children's Social Care for children with 'Severe Absence' (less than 50%) should be considered to obtain 'Intense Support'.

PENALTY NOTICES & LEGAL ACTION

1st Offence (after 19th August 2024) of Term Time Leave &/or Irregular Attendance (10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence or more) = Fine of £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. If paid within 21 days fine is reduced to £80 per parent, per child.
2nd Offence within 3 years (from 19th August 2024) = Fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days, no reduction available.
3rd Offence within 3 years (from 19th August 2024) NO PENALTY NOTICE considered. The case will be presented to **Magistrates' Court** under s444(1) or (1a) of the Education Act. If found guilty, a fine of up to £2500 per parent, per child can be issued. Convictions for s444(1a) offences will show on DBS record.

DFE School Attendance Codes 2024

Present Codes	
/ \	present during registration
B	educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	Sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip
W	work experience
Absent Codes	
Authorised Absences	
C	exceptional circumstances
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	unable to attend due to whole school closure
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 due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)
#	planned whole school closure (eg holidays, insets and polling station days)
Unauthorised Absence	
G	holiday (not agreed)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Z	pupil not yet on register

DOWNSVIEW PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

ADVICE TO PARENTS/CARERS ON PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM-TIME

Parents and carers should not book holidays during the school term – these are rarely authorised. Please note that there is no parental entitlement to withdraw your child from school to attend a family holiday. Even a short absence may prove detrimental to your child's progress. Each child's attendance and the number of days pupils are absent is closely monitored by the school.

A leave of absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Any parent/carer wishing to take their child on a leave of absence during term-time must first make an application to the Head Teacher on the attached form, at least 14 days prior to the date of the request, giving full details and supported by an explanatory letter. In some cases, the school may request further information from parents or carers. Such applications may be referred to the Governing Board.

Parents/carers who withdraw their child from school without prior consent or who extend an agreed leave of absence without consent should note that such absence will be recorded as unauthorised and will be reported to the Education Welfare Officer.

Cases of unauthorised absence will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who may take action including:

- The issuing of a penalty notice of £80 per child, per parent* (please see note below)
- The use of a Parenting Contract
- Prosecution for non school attendance

*** National Framework for Penalty Notices**

Amendments to regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 19th August 2024, pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.



APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM-TIME

PLEASE READ THE NOTES OVERLEAF BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM

Parents who remove their child(ren) from school during term-time without authorisation may be subject to a Penalty Notice.

Full name of child/ren:	Class
.....
.....
.....
Address:.....	
.....	
.....	
Date of absence:..... Date of return to school:.....	
No. of school days absent.....	
Reason for request:.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	
Signature of Parent/Carer Date:.....	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LEAVE OF ABSENCE ▪ Dear Parent/Carer 	<p align="center">Date form received by school</p> <p align="center">Child's current attendance %</p> <p align="center">Number of late marks</p>
<p>Thank you for your application for leave of absence for:</p> <p>.....</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Your child's absence has been authorised fordays under exceptional circumstances from to</p>	
<p>N.B. Special circumstances If you do not return within the specified authorised time, your child's place cannot be guaranteed and they may be taken off roll. I must inform you that, in accordance with Croydon Protocol, if your child is absent without authorisation, each parent may receive a Penalty Notice of £80 per child from the Education Welfare Service.</p>	
<p>Signature of Head/SLT</p> <p>Date:.....</p> <p>Revised: September 2024</p>	

Appendix 5: **Attendance Communication**

Communication with parents / carers will be personalised. It will also take a variety of forms including, text messages, emails, letters, face-to-face meetings and phone calls.

Example text messages:

This is a reminder that regular attendance is key to your child's success at school. Thank you for your continued efforts to ensure they attend every day. Your support truly makes a difference to them!

Congratulations on your child's 100% attendance so far this week! Let's continue to prioritise their attendance and ensure they're present every day. Thank you for partnering with us and valuing the importance of regular school attendance!"

"Your child has missed X number of lessons this year. Lessons build on what children already know and missing one may make tomorrow's lesson more difficult."

"Your child has missed X number of days of school this year."

"One day could be as many as seven missed lessons, as well as time spent with friends and doing extracurricular activities."

"You can support your child's physical, social and mental wellbeing by ensuring they are in school every day."

"We know that parents and carers worry about their children's mental health. Rather than keeping your child off school, let us know about your concerns. We can then work together on supporting your child."

"It can be difficult to know whether your child is too ill to attend school. NHS guidance is clear that it's fine to send them in with a minor cough or common cold, provided they don't have a temperature."

"School is an enriching environment that can help your child with their social and mental wellbeing."

"School isn't just about learning. It's a warm, supportive environment where your child can get a healthy meal and see their friends."

"School attendance is important for equipping your child with skills for life."

"Attending school every day can help your child to achieve their aspirations, and the aspirations you have for them."

"We are delighted to celebrate that [NAME] achieved 100% attendance last week. We thank you for your continued support to ensure [NAME] attends school every day."

"We have the same expectations as [neighbouring primary or secondary school]. This means you will hear the same messages for the other children in your family as we work closely on attendance as a local partnership of schools."

"We know your child has special educational needs and this can lead to them sometimes not finding school straightforward or as easy as they would like. We understand this and want to work with your child, and with you, on helping your child feel confident to explain any concerns. We can then work together to help provide reassurance and support."

Example Letters:



«date_of_printing»

«salutation»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Persistent Absence
«forename» «surname», «reg», «percentage_attendance»%

I am writing to advise you that your child's attendance was below 90% last academic year. Pupils who have an overall attendance percentage of below 90% are classified as 'persistent absentees' leading to the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer.

I am the Education Welfare Officer for Downsview Primary School and I would encourage you to ensure that this academic year your child achieves over 96% attendance, which is the expected standard of schools and the Department for Education. Research has repeatedly shown that pupils who are persistently absent from school achieve lower outcomes than their peers.

Should attendance drop below 90% this academic year, I will make contact with you to bring this to your attention and to invite you to meet with me.

If you have any concerns or would like to discuss your child's attendance with me in more detail, please contact me on xxxxxxxxxxxx.

I wish you and your child all the best for the upcoming academic year.

Yours sincerely

Education Welfare Officer – Team EWO



«salutation»
«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Absences from School
«forename» «surname», «reg», «percentage_attendance»%

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils and in line with our Attendance Policy, which can be found on our website, we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. We would like to bring to your attention that «forename»'s level of attendance has dropped below 95%. I enclose a registration certificate for your information. The school's attendance target is 97% and anything below this is likely to impact on your child's academic achievement.

We understand that there are certain circumstances where non-attendance is unavoidable. Absences should always be reported to the school office and followed up with a letter of explanation and medical documentation, when the absence is more than three days in a row. If you have already done this, then thank you for your communication. Please avoid medical appointments and days off during school time whenever possible and encourage 100% school attendance. Absences that are immediately prior to or directly after a school closure, e.g. half term, inset day, etc, may be recorded as unauthorised, unless evidence is provided.

Hopefully «forename» will be able to achieve full attendance over the coming weeks so that «his_her» attendance improves to 95% or more.

If there are any issues of which the school is unaware, please do not hesitate to contact me on xxxxxxxxxxxx or your child's class teacher. In the meantime we look forward to working with you in supporting «forename»'s education.

Yours sincerely

Education Welfare Officer

Appendix 6: **Understanding Types of Absence**

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted as an absence for the session;
- shopping trips;
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments;
- their own or family birthdays;
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends;
- day trips;
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this. All pupils who have attendance levels of 90% or below are considered to be a persistent absentee.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent**'. Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.