



GREENWOOD ACADEMIES TRUST

Danesholme Infant and Junior Academies

Attendance policy



Approved by:

Sonia Kendal
(Executive Principal)

Date: September 2025

Last reviewed on:

12th February 2026

Next review due by:

September 2026

Introduction

Danesholme Infant and Junior Academies are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all pupils. We believe it is extremely important for pupils to attend regularly and on time. This will give them the best opportunity to progress and succeed at school.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent / carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason may result in prosecution.

At Danesholme Infant and Junior Academies we:

- provide a welcoming and caring environment where all members of the Academy feel secure and valued
- expect students to arrive on time every day
- will support parents in their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time
- believe leave of absence should not be taken during term-time. We will not authorise requests for leave of absence during term-time, except in exceptional / unavoidable circumstances.

How to notify the Academy of an absence

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or unavoidable circumstances, please contact the academy on each day of absence by calling and leaving a message

Danesholme Infant Academy

01536 741732 – call and leave a message

Email - admin@danesholmeinfantacademy.org

Danesholme Junior Academy

01536 741657 – call and leave a message

Email admin@danesholmejunioracademy.org

Please inform us of any planned absence in advance, this includes unavoidable medical appointments during the school day. Evidence of the medical appointment will be needed.

To inform us about a planned absence you must complete a leave of absence form which can be requested from the school offices or downloaded from the website.

1. Aim

Ensuring all pupils have high attendance is a key priority of the academy. Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, and we know that pupils with high attendance do better at school than those with high absence rates. We also know that absence can be a sign of other risks in a young person's life. This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

The aim of this document is to set out how we create and maintain a positive culture that supports and values good attendance. It includes how we:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality.
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of GAT's Attendance Policy. The Trust policy details the relevant legislation and guidance documents. This policy carefully follows DfE guidance in this area.

Our work on attendance is linked closely to our approaches to safeguarding and behaviour.

3. How we promote a culture of high expectations in attendance and punctuality

We value to importance of good attendance and punctuality. We encourage and support this by building partnerships with families, listening to them, and understanding any barriers to attendance. We employ a range of support and strategies to ensure families understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Children who have had absences are well supported to reintegrate them into school and learning.

4. Our expectations of attendance and punctuality

Gates are opened between 8:40am and 8:45am.

Pupils must arrive in school between 8:45am and 8:55am on each school day.

Classroom doors will be opened at 8:45am.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55am and will be kept open until 9:05am. The register for the second session will be taken within 10 minutes of the afternoon session starting.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at a school, they have a legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, this means their child must attend every day the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the academy. (Note - where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them).

Parents/carers are expected to:

Make sure their child attends every day on time.

Contact the academy on 01536 741657 (Juniors) or 01536 741732 (Infants) or you can email admin@danesholmejunioracademy.org or admin@danesholmeinfantacademy.org to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and if possible advise when they are expected to return

Provide the academy with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.

Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the class teacher initially or Head of Academy, who can be contacted via 01536 741657 (Juniors) or 01536 741732 (Infants) or you can email admin@danesholmejunioracademy.org or admin@danesholmeinfantacademy.org

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day on time.

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis using Arbor, or paper registers when Arbor is not available, using only / or N, and submitting/sending this information to the office by 9:05 am

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

Implementation of this policy at the academy

Monitoring academy-level absence data and reporting it to the trust

Monitoring the impact of processes and attendance strategies

Monitoring the impact of work with local partners to improve attendance in identified cases

Working with local partners when formal procedures such as parental contracts, supervision orders and penalty notices are required

Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers

Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

Communicating the Academy's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

The attendance officer is Karen Sellers and she can be contacted by phone 01536 741732 or emailed at ksellers@danesholmeinfantacademy.org

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Creating a whole-school culture of leading, championing and improving attendance across the school

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Educating pupils through assemblies on why good attendance is required as well as wider curriculum work.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families through our pastoral team
- Inform social workers of attendance concerns if a family is working with one.

The attendance champion for 2024 / 2025 is the **Mrs Stuart** (Infants) and **Mrs Ives** (Juniors)

Class teachers are responsible for:

- recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the office.
- Promoting positive attendance in the classroom through PSHE lessons and classroom routine.

Office staff will:

Take calls from parents/ carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the academy system

Review registers from 9.05am.

Follow up any unreported absences via phone call before midday.

Amend the attendance code if required

Absence phone class made to identified vulnerable cohort (as identified by Head of Academy).

Notify Head of Academy/Safeguarding team of vulnerable children absence by 10.00am.

Confirm with Head of Academy any absence codes when not reported illness.

Building Strong Relationships and removing barriers

5. Recording attendance

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register 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

We will use the DfE codes to detail the attendance and absences from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by emailing / calling the academy /office

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Pupils with an attendance level below 96% may have a home visit at any point during their absence as they are near the absence trigger point.

A home visit will take place if the absence is longer than 3 days or the authenticity of the illness is in doubt.

It is highly likely that the academy may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the academy in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence via a form available from the office.

Go to section 6 to find out which term-time absences the academy can authorise.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

Before the register has closed (9:05am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

After the register has closed (after 9:05am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. This will affect a pupils overall attendance figures.

We will work with families where lateness is an issue to establish any barriers to punctuality and ways to overcome them.

We will send reminder letters to families setting our expectations.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend does not, or stops attending without reason, the academy will:

Text and/ or call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the academy cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the academy may conduct a home visit, contact social care and/or Police.

Identify whether the absence is approved or not

Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the academy will consider involving an education welfare officer or similar.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

The academy will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels, through regular communication via the class teacher, at parents' evenings and annual reports.

At the end of each half term we will send out celebration or concern letters to parents with the 4 different attendance brackets:

1. Over 95% which will be a celebration
2. A at risk of persistent absence (94.99% - 90%)
3. Persistent Absence (Below 90%)
4. Severe Absence (Below 50%)

Celebrating Attendance

In weekly reward assemblies each week the class with the highest attendance is recognised.

Good Attendance certificates are awarded at the end of each term

Half-termly letters to parents celebrating attendance over 95%

Whole academy Dojo messages

Celebrating improving attendance in review meetings

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The Head of Academy will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances' and if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). A leave of absence is granted at the head of academy's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the leave of absence request form. Evidence may be required to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the academy, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

'Family holidays should not be taken in term time as they damage progress and continuity of learning. We will not authorise any holidays, unless in very exceptional circumstances.'

Legal sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions including, but not limited to, penalty notices to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis and we will use the local authority arrangements for doing so.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Identifying and Removing Barriers to Attendance

We understand that pupils may face a wide range of emotional, practical, social, health-related or learning-based challenges. Our approach is rooted in *early identification* and *early intervention*.

Understanding the Root Cause

We seek to understand the underlying reasons for absence through:

- conversation with parents and carers
- pupil voice discussions, particularly for anxious or reluctant attenders
- classroom observations and pastoral monitoring
- cooperation with external agencies where appropriate

We avoid assumptions and always look for the reason behind the behaviour.

Tailored Support Plans

When barriers are identified, we create an Individual Attendance Support Plan, co-produced with parents and the pupil, which may include:

- gradual reintegration timetables
- morning check-ins with a named adult
- pastoral mentoring or ELSA support
- strategies to reduce separation anxiety
- behaviour support or emotional regulation coaching
- SEN adjustments to reduce overwhelm
- reward and motivation systems
- attendance charts, trackers or personalised routines

Support for Pupils with Anxiety or Emotional Barriers

For pupils with emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), we offer:

- a quiet start or meet-and-greet routine
- access to the pastoral room upon arrival
- key adult mentoring
- anxiety-reduction strategies (worry boxes, emotions check-ins, relaxation techniques)
- collaboration with external mental health services (e.g., MHST, CAMHS)

Practical Support to Remove Physical or Logistical Barriers

Where appropriate, the school may provide:

- support with uniform, breakfast, or resources
- “meet at the gate” support
- help arranging transport for families who are struggling
- flexible start arrangements in the short term

Support for Families Experiencing Difficult Circumstances

We work sensitively with families facing:

- housing instability
- domestic difficulties
- poverty
- parental mental or physical health needs
- SEND or high-needs siblings

We may signpost to Early Help, strengthen pathways services, family support workers, or local authority attendance teams.

Escalation Only When Necessary

Our commitment is always to supportive intervention first.

However, where attendance does not improve despite collaborative support, we will:

- hold formal attendance review meetings
- agree structured attendance contracts
- involve external agencies such as Early Help or Education Inclusion
- use legal sanctions only as a *last resort*

Our aim remains to work *with* families, not *against* them.

Pupil Voice and Empowerment

We empower pupils to take ownership of their attendance by:

- celebrating improvements, not just high attendance
- involving them in support planning
- asking them what helps them feel safe, confident, and ready to learn
- using school council to discuss attendance culture and ideas

Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

We support pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or SEND by:

- working closely with families to understand individual needs
- providing adjustments such as personalised learning plans and remote learning resources
- offering additional support through referrals to external services and targeted interventions
- ensuring a carefully managed and supported transition back into school
- informing the local authority where a pupil with an EHC plan has falling attendance or when barriers related to their needs are identified

Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

We support pupils returning after extended or unavoidable absence by:

- maintaining open, proactive communication with families
- collaboratively creating a tailored re-entry plan based on the pupil's needs
- providing regular updates and feedback to keep families engaged and informed
- ensuring a supportive, gradual, and successful reintegration into learning

8. How we monitor attendance

Monitoring attendance

The academy will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly, and yearly across the academy and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term by the trust and DfE and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The academy will compare attendance data to the trust and national average.

Analysing attendance

The academy will:

Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.

Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

Using data to improve attendance

The academy will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The academy will:

- regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the academy (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, at risk of or persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance such as (strengthening families, Early Help Assessment (EHA), Mental Health Support Team (MHST), Education Inclusion Partnership Team (EIPT) etc.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the trust or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Head of Academy / Executive Principal. At every review, the policy will be approved by the academy's Education Director.

The Trust Board and Governance have oversight of this policy through the annual compliancy check. Further details can be found in the Trust policy.

9. How this policy is communicated

To ensure this policy is understood by all stakeholders, the academy will:
 share the policy with parents annually or when it has been reviewed with parents
 It is published on the academy website and staff internal systems.
 It is shared with staff annually and annual training is given.
 Will be referenced to during review meetings with parents and other stakeholders

10. Visuals that we use to promote positive attendance

Be Ready:
In school, on time, and ready to learn.

Attendance at Danesholme Academies:
what parents and carers need to know

Why Attendance Matters

- Children who attend school every day achieve better and feel more confident.
- Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to make sure their child attends school regularly.
- Unauthorised or frequent absence can lead to legal action, including fines.

Reporting an Absence
Contact the school before 9am each day of the absence.
 Infant Academy: 01536 741732 | admin@danesholmeinfantacademy.org
 Junior Academy: 01536 741657 | admin@danesholmejunioracademy.org

For planned appointments, please tell us in advance and provide evidence (e.g. appointment card). Try to arrange appointments outside school hours wherever possible.

Arrival Times

- Gates open: 8:45am
- Children must arrive by 8:55am
- Arrivals after 9:05am are recorded as unauthorised absence

We will work with families if punctuality becomes a concern.

Leave of Absence (Holidays in Term Time)

- Holidays in term time cannot be authorised except in very exceptional circumstances, in line with national regulations
- Requests must be made using a school form at least 2 weeks in advance
- Unauthorised holidays may result in a penalty notice (fine).
- Leave of absence forms are available from the academy offices and on our school website.

How the School Supports Attendance

- We: Monitor attendance daily and regularly review patterns.
- Contact families if a child is absent without explanation.
- Carry out home visits where needed.
- Offer support where attendance is affected by illness, SEND needs, or personal circumstances.

Who to Contact

- Attendance Officer: Karen Sellers - ksellers@danesholmeinfantacademy.org
- Attendance Champions: Mrs Stuart (Infants) & Mrs Ives (Juniors)

DANESHOLME ACADEMIES
TWO SCHOOLS ONE COMMUNITY
Kindness. Respect. Achievement

Attendance Matters

100%	0 DAYS	0 HOURS MISSED
99%	1 DAY	6.5 HOURS MISSED
99%	3 DAYS	19.5 HOURS MISSED
99%	1 WEEK	32.5 HOURS MISSED
96%	1.5 WEEK	49 HOURS MISSED
94%	2 WEEKS	65 HOURS MISSED
94%	2.5 WEEKS	81 HOURS MISSED
92%	3 WEEKS	97.5 HOURS MISSED
90%	3.3 WEEKS	197.5 HOURS MISSED

**Maximise your potential.
Attend School every day.**