



Attendance Policy

Governor Lead: Ms Janine Fox

Next Review Date: July 2022

This policy must be read in conjunction with The Dean Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

1. Statutory Duties

The parent of any child of compulsory school age has a legal duty to secure the regular attendance of that child at the school where he or she is registered. Failure to secure the regular attendance at school of a registered student is a criminal offence which can lead to prosecution of the parent(s) in a magistrates' court.

Regular attendance means that Dean Academy students must be in school 100% of school days in each academic year. A school day is between 8.50am and 3.15pm and students must attend all lessons during those days.

Definition of a parent

In Education Law (Section 576 of Education Act 1996), 'parent' means:

- All natural parents, whether married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

The fact that you do not live with the child is not a defense against securing their attendance at school.

Rationale

Excellent attendance and punctuality are critical to achieving academic success and fulfilling individual potential. The Dean Academy is committed to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all our students and promoting this as it is essential to ensuring

economic independence, enabling students to enjoy and achieve, and make a positive contribution to society.

2. Current guidance for COVID 19

- The Dean Academy will follow Local Health Protection Team advice and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process. **If a student tests positive for COVID the school must be notified immediately.**
- Where a student is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, The Dean Academy will provide access to remote education.
- The Dean Academy will comply with Health and Safety law as provided by the DFE. Students who have symptoms of Coronavirus must stay at home and get a test immediately. If this test is positive they must remain at home as directed by Test and Trace.
- If a student has been contacted by the NHS Test and Trace system, they must self-isolate as instructed.

3. Encouraging excellent student attendance

- It is The Dean Academy's expectation that all students will attend school every day, 8.50am – 3.15pm during term-time and be in all lessons.
- The school will actively encourage 100% attendance by all students and will support them so they can continue to attend school
- The school will take available opportunities to explain to parents the advantage of excellent attendance and disadvantages of absences.
- The school will discourage parents from taking students out of school during term time.
- The school will work with outside agencies to ensure that there are no barriers to attendance for students who have physical, medical, cultural, or economic needs.
- The school will work with parents to overcome issues of non-attendance, involving external agencies where appropriate. In cases of severe or extended illness, or hospitalisation, the school will work with the Local Education Authority to try to ensure that educational provision is continued.

4. Responsibilities of The Dean Academy

- The school will ensure that it fulfils its legal obligation to register students every morning at 8.50am and every afternoon. Electronic registration will also occur during lessons throughout the school day.
- If a student arrives after the school gates have closed, they must sign in at Reception. Anyone arriving after the gates have closed, without a valid reason, will be marked as late and will

have their Conduct card signed and a text will be sent to parents. The school register closes at 9.30am and students arriving after that time without a valid reason will be coded as unauthorised late. If a student has ten unauthorised marks the matter may be passed to Shire Hall and a fixed penalty fine issued to parents.

- When an absence is unexplained, parents will be contacted by text to establish the reason for absence.
- The Dean Academy expects students to be in for 100% of school days during the year and are only able to authorise absences for severe illness, non-routine medical/dental appointments, religious observance, and other unavoidable cause such as bereavement. Absences must be kept to a minimum and are authorised at the discretion of the school. Extended/regular illnesses may not be authorised without supporting medical evidence.
- We recognise that students make the most progress when they attend lessons punctually. It is unacceptable for a student in school to miss a lesson without prior authorisation or permission from a senior member of staff. Any unauthorised absences from lessons will be considered truanting and will result in the student being given an afterschool detention that day.
- The Deputy Headteacher and the Attendance and Welfare Officer will monitor the attendance of all students and will contact parents, by letter, to inform them when it drops towards 97%.

5. Responsibilities of parents:

Parents will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child attends 100% of the school year between 8.50am and 3.15pm and arrives punctually every school day during term time.

- Parents must inform the school in advance, wherever possible, of absence, by contacting the Attendance Office. All appointments should be made outside school hours. If this is not possible a full day's absence will not be authorised for one medical appointment. Students are expected to be in school before and/or after appointments and a copy of the appointment card or letter should be provided.
- In the event of unexpected absence, the parents must contact the school. This must be done before 8.50am on the first and every day until the student returns to school.

- Absences can be reported by:

Direct line: 01594 840912 (24-hour answer machine)

Email: attendance @thedeanacademy.org

Text: 07624 811 992

- Holidays during term time will not be authorised unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Parents must complete a Leave of Absence form at least two weeks before the holiday. A decision to authorise or unauthorise will be made by the Headteacher and parents will be notified. Should a student be absent for an unauthorised Leave of Absence, a Penalty notice for each parent in respect of each child may be applied for from the Local Authority.

- In the case of an extended absence due to ill health or other authorised circumstances parents will be given support by the school and, if necessary, referred to other agencies to facilitate the re-integration process. It is the responsibility of parents to be involved with this. This may include attending meetings in school.

6. Lesson absences

- Parents will be notified as soon as possible if a student is unexpectedly absent from a lesson and cannot be located on the school site.
- Students who have no good reason for being late to lessons will be given a conduct mark and will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

- A range of strategies will be employed to support the student in improving their attendance, including meetings with the child, and/or parents, home visits and formal meetings.
- The school will hold an Attendance Support meeting (ASM) with parents and students if the strategies employed to support the student in the first instance are not successful. At this meeting, the Attendance and Welfare Officer will discuss the issues of attendance and solutions will be sought for any problems that emerge. A My Plan document under the Graduated Pathway will be completed for the student and this will be regularly reviewed.
- For continued or concerning unauthorised absence, the Headteacher will issue a Prosecution Warning letter advising parents of their legal responsibilities.
- In the case of further unauthorised absence, the Headteacher may call an Attendance Improvement meeting (AIM) with parents and students. This will be a formal meeting with the Deputy Headteacher and Attendance and Welfare Officer where targets will be set and reviewed.
- Continued poor attendance following an AIM review will result in a request being made to the Local Education Authority to initiate legal proceedings.
- Students with attendance of 90% and lower are classed as Persistent Absentees. Parents are notified when a student's attendance reach this level.

8 Rewards

- A variety of rewards are given to students who have 100% attendance. These include:
 - Students with weekly 100% attendance will be entered into a Lotto draw for a £5 Amazon voucher for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
 - Cakes for Tutor groups where all students have 100% weekly attendance.

- Postcards home and achievements points awarded for each term of 100% or improved attendance