



DIGGLE SCHOOL

Sam Road, Diggle, Saddleworth OL3 5PU

Headteacher: Mrs S Newton

Tel: 01457 601970

Email: enquires@diggleschool.co.uk

www.diggleschool.co.uk



Attendance Policy

Diggle primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its students. It recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting regular school attendance and excellent punctuality so that all young people take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on excellent attendance.

Aim

To promote a culture where excellent attendance and punctuality are seen as a fundamental requirement for all learners.

Objectives

To have systems and procedures in place that:

- Encourage attendance and punctuality to school and lessons
- Inform parents/carers of absences and involve them in any attendance concerns for their children
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data
- To promote effective partnerships with the Attendance and Pupil Support Service and with any other relevant services and agencies.





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- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Further Reference

Appendix A - Attendance guidance for parents and carers

Appendix B - Term time holidays

Appendix C - Absence request form

Reviewed : January 2023

To be reviewed: January 2026





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Appendix A - Attendance Guidance for Parents and Carers

WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring every child's regular attendance at school is the parents'/carers' responsibility and permitting absence from school without good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 **PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE** and helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Monitor whole school attendance continuously including patterns.
- Celebrate good attendance with pupils through weekly Celebration Assemblies
- Contact parents of children whose attendance falls below 90%, share attendance data alerting parents that attendance could soon be a cause for concern





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2. UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

- 2.1 Every half day absence from school is classified by the school (not by the parents) as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Absences for religious observance will also be authorised.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Repeated illness which is not supported by a doctor or similar professional





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2.2 PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our attendance monitoring systems. All our PA pupils and their parents are identified and meetings with the headteacher, classteacher and parents arranged . We work together to identify strategies to improve attendance/punctuality. All PA cases are made known to the Local Authority Attendance and Pupil Support Service and the Partnership Education Social Worker.

3. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

3.1 If a child is absent parents/carers must:

- Contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Report reason for continued absence;





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3.2 If a child is absent school will:

- Phone and text parents/carers before 9.30am on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them. If this is unsuccessful then we record this on SIMS.
- Invite parents/carers into school to discuss the situation with the Education Social Worker and/or Headteacher if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority Attendance and Pupil Support Service; if attendance falls below 90%.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have contact numbers at all times. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

4. LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.





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- The school doors open at 8.40am in KS1 and Reception and 8:50 am in KS 2. These doors will be closed in KS1 and Reception at 8:50 and 9:00 am in KS 2. Any arrivals after this time will be via the main entrance.
- Children will receive a late mark if they are not in school for registration. Registration is at 8:50 in Reception and KS1 and 9am in KS2 .
- All children arriving after registration period will be required to report to the office. The reason for lateness is also recorded.
- Children arriving between 9.00 and 9.15am will be recorded as Late (L). Children arriving after 9.15am will be recorded as Unauthorised (U).

If a child has a persistent late record parents/carers will be asked into school to meet with a member of staff to resolve the problem, but parents/carers can approach us at any time if they are having problems getting children to school on time.

5. ABSENCE REQUESTS IN TERM TIME - see Appendix B

6. ATTENDANCE AND PUPIL SUPPORT SERVICE

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problem together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Attendance and Pupil Support Officer from the Local Authority. He/She will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or





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the Local Authority. Alternatively, parents/carers or children may wish to contact the APSS themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

The table below is a guide to indicate what may happen when a student's attendance falls below a certain percentage. Previous attendance history and the time of the year will be taken into consideration.

First day absence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information from parent. 2. Text/Phone call home if no reason for absence given.
95%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Headteacher monitoring
Below 90% attendance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Letter home 2. Parent meeting
Below 90% attendance over a two term period.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Letter home 2. Parent meeting 3. Attendance and Pupil Support Officer (APSO) involvement 4. Use of Action Plan/Parenting Contract by Attendance and Pupil Support Service (APSS) 5. Warning letter from APSO 6. Fixed Penalty Notice

7. SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. All school staff are committed to working in partnership with parents, children and families to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Date: January 2023 Review Date: January 2026





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Appendix B - Term Time Holidays

It is well recognised that good, consistent attendance at school is crucial to a child or young person's future prospects and reducing absence from school continues to be a priority for our school. Reflecting national concerns around attendance, the Department for Education issued revised guidance in September 2013 strengthening the view that as a general rule, children should not be taken out of school for the purposes of a holiday. Time off school for family holidays is not a right and headteachers no longer have the authority to grant a leave of absence for this purpose unless there are exceptional circumstances.

At Diggle primary School, exceptional circumstances when leave of absence of up to 4.5 days may be considered are:

- for service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education (acknowledgement from the employer/employing body that the holiday cannot be taken during the school holidays must be included with the request)
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
- faith or heritage reasons

All requests from parents for leave of absence must be made in writing to the school in advance, using the "Application for Pupil Leave of Absence" form which is available on the website. The request should be sent for the attention of the headteacher and outline the specific reasons why the request meets the requirements of "special circumstances". When making the decision as to whether to authorise this absence the Headteacher will take into consideration current attendance.





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The school will not authorise holidays which are requested for the following reasons:

- availability of cheap holidays;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

The head teacher will determine if the request is reasonable. School will not approve any term time holiday in the following instances:

- During statutory Statutory Assessment Test (SATs) periods. These include Y6 SATs, Y2 SATs and Y1 phonic tests
In the case of the Y6 SATs this period is the time from the start of the summer term to the end of the test week In the case of Y2 SATs this is the period from the start of the Summer term until the end of the test period.

In the case of the Y1 phonics test
- In the first 2 weeks of September

Where leave of absences are taken without proper authorisation, the following are possible actions:

- The absence will be treated as unauthorised and recorded as such.
- Parents can be given a Oldham Penalty Notice or prosecuted for periods of unauthorised holidays. The penalty notice is currently £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.
- Children absent for more than 4 weeks can be taken off the school roll and may not be re-admitted to the school
- Parents may be prosecuted under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for repeat offences of unauthorised leave of absence.
- If a penalty notice is not paid and the case goes to court, a fine of up to £2,500 or 3 months imprisonment may be imposed.





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This form has been designed to clarify the process of requesting absence from school.. The school is expected to comply with Government guidance by the DfE (Department for Education) and the LA (Local Authority).

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

I wish to apply to have an absence authorised for:

Pupil Name (s):	Class:
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Do you have another child who attends at a different school that will also be absent?

If so, please state the child's name and school

Sibling name (s):	School:
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I request permission for my child to be absent from school between:

First Day of Absence from School:	Date of Return to School:	Total of School Days Absent:
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Please state your reason for your travel and include any supporting documentation:

Signature of Parent/Carer:

Date:

.....

Each request can only be judged on a case by case basis, you will receive a reply from the school in writing.





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Office use only:

Current attendance: %	Number of late marks:	Number of days requested:
Would granting this request mean attendance would fall below 95% Yes: ☹ No: ☹		
Signature:	Authorised: ☹ Unauthorised: ☹	Reasons:

The law does not grant parents/carers an automatic right to take their children out of school during term time. If the request is for an absence in term time you must have Parental Responsibility and be the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives. Permission **must** be sought in **advance**. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the school, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child(ren) attending satisfactorily up to the date covered by this request. If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Penalty Notices Under the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) grant the local authority and schools statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the Headteacher has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent. If your child accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absence you may be liable for a penalty notice (one days absence equals two sessions and a five day absence is equal to 10 sessions etc).

Parents should note that in normal circumstances, current practice is that only one penalty notice will be issued to a parent relating to the absence of a particular child within a two year period. Should a further period of unauthorised absence be recorded, then the parent(s) will normally be summonsed to appear at a Magistrates Court, unless an Education Supervision Order is considered more appropriate.

AVOIDABLE ABSENCE IN TERM-TIME

IMPORTANT: Please read carefully the information below.

WARNING: If you allow your child to miss school in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the school, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice* per parent per child, or made the subject of court proceedings under section 444 Education Act 1996.

As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason.

THE FACTS	THE LAW
School aged pupils in Oldham maintained schools are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are a number	The law allows schools to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However before the school can authorise any such





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of unavoidable reasons why a pupil might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, exclusions etc), the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances.

WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER

Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.

Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.

If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as **unauthorised absence** and you may receive a £60* fine per parent for each child.

requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are exceptional circumstances which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information/evidence in order to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides

If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.

If the child is away from school for a total of four weeks or more, the school may have the option to take the child off roll subject to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

In the case of unexpected extended absence, it is advisable that the parent fully informs the school as to the reasons. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.

Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible)
- Days of religious observance
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations

Other examples of absence from school that will not be authorised:

- Looking after siblings or unwell parents
- Minding the house
- Any type of shopping
- Resting after a late night
- Relatives visiting or visiting relatives
- Non-genuine illness

Please contact Mrs Newton if you wish to discuss this issue.

The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.





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We hope that when you have read these notes you will consider that your child's education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.

*Penalty Notice £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days and before 28 days

