

Dykehead Primary School

'Determined Pupils Succeed'

Managing Attendance Policy



Rationale

A child's absence from school, for whatever reason, is disruptive to important educational experiences. Poor attendance has been linked to lower levels of attainment, difficulties with peer relationships, emotional and behaviour needs and poorer post school outcomes including employment opportunities.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school until they reach school leaving age (section 30, Education (Scotland) Act 1980). Furthermore, under the National Child Protection Guidance 2014 schools have a responsibility for protecting children and young people and promoting, supporting, and safeguarding their wellbeing. Non-attendance at school can be an early indication that a child is at risk.

Children and young people are more likely to be motivated to attend school when they feel fully included, engaged, and involved in the wider life of the school. This means that promoting good attendance is a complex activity and requires schools and parents to work in partnership, with other agencies where required, to reduce barriers to attendance and promote positive relationships within an inclusive ethos and culture.

This policy was devised in line with North Lanarkshire Council's revised 2024 Managing Attendance & Absence Operational Policy, in order to share with parents and carers how we work together to support good attendance at Dykehead Primary School.

Our Aims

In partnership with parents and families we aim to:

- track the attendance of all children in the establishment to identify patterns of absence and supports which may be required.

- respond quickly to absence to ensure that children and young people are safe and well.
- recognise early signs of potential non-engagement and take steps to enthuse and engage learners, by developing effective responses to support the needs and reintegration of children and young people into learning following absence from school.
- involve children and young people in any areas of development around attendance and encourage children and young people to engage in wider school life.
- where a child or young person's attendance is causing a concern or there is prolonged nonattendance, act as a link between the family and integrative practice with partner agencies who may support.

The Impact of Absence

The cumulative impact of missed days at school can have detrimental and long-lasting consequences for children and young people. The table below illustrates the cumulative effect of random days missed from school, in any single academic year, and the potential impact on participation and learning.

100 % Attendance	0 Days missed	Gives your child the best chance of success and ensuring their full potential is achieved
95% Attendance	9 Days of Absence 1 week and 4 days learning missed	Makes it harder to achieve full potential and secure the best possible outcomes
90% Attendance	19 days of Absence	
	3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed	
85% Attendance	27 Days of Absence 5 weeks and 3 days of Learning Missed Almost half a term missed	Impacts significantly on learning and progress which can lead to poorer outcomes in achievement, wellbeing, and social and emotional development
80% Attendance	36 days of Absence 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed. Half of a term missed	
75% Attendance	45 Days of Absence 9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed. Almost 1 whole term missed	
If a child has 90% attendance, they will have the equivalent of <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ½ a day off per week• 18 days off per year• 247 days off over their school career of 12 academic years, equivalent to over 1 year of lost education.		

Absence Communications

Absence Notification

In the event of a child's absence, we ask that parents and carers always notify us prior to the start of the school day.

This can be done in any of several ways, to make this as easy as possible.

- Via the Parents Portal app
- By emailing enquiries-at-dykehead@northlan.org.uk
- Telephoning the school office on 01501826707

Contacting us by the Parents Portal or email for routine absence, reduces the administrative burden on school staff. The school have a duty to establish a reason for **every** absence. If no reason is provided, a text notification is sent to parents/carers informing them of an absence and seeking clarification. This will be sent to the key contact within one hour of the beginning of the morning and/or afternoon sessions, where possible. There may be occasions when the attendance issue may require to be escalated to the Principal Teacher, or Head Teacher, and a telephone call might be made to discuss the absence with the parent or carer.

Where the contact (e.g. text) has not been responded to, this will be followed up by telephone call, and where there is no response could require trying the emergency contacts provided by the parent, or contacting other agencies involved with the child or young person and/or family.

Attendance Information Letters

Once per term, the school will communicate with **all** parents and carers by letter, to notify them of their child's current attendance percentage and number of late arrivals. This is for parent information, to allow them to monitor the potential impact of their child's absences.

Attendance Support Stages

Outside of the information letters, absence is monitored weekly by the Head Teacher, in order to support pupil attendance and wellbeing. If a child's attendance at school falls below certain trigger points, additional actions will be taken in line with North Lanarkshire Council policy.

Attendance falls below 95%

- School will examine reasons for absences and if unexplained or unauthorised, will make contact with the parent or carer to discuss attendance.
- Attendance will continue to be monitored for improvement.

Attendance falls below 90%

- School will examine patterns or absence, reasons, and whether these were authorised or unexplained.
- If deemed necessary Head Teacher will issue North Lanarkshire Council letter 1.
- Head Teacher or Principal Teacher will arrange a wellbeing planning meeting with the child and their parent or carer.
- The planning may be recorded in a 'Getting it Right for Me' (GIRFme) Plan.

Attendance falls below 85%

- School will examine patterns or absence, reasons, and whether these were authorised or unexplained.
- If deemed necessary Head Teacher will issue North Lanarkshire Council letter 2.
- Head Teacher or Principal Teacher will arrange a further meeting, where involvement of other support agencies will be discussed, such as cluster resources, school counselling service, Social Work, Community Learning and Development, or third sector agencies.

Attendance falls below 80%

- School will examine patterns or absence, reasons, and whether these were authorised or unexplained.
- Head Teacher will issue North Lanarkshire Council letter 3.
- The case must be discussed with the Cluster Integration and Improvement Lead (CIIL).
- A multi-agency meeting may be held at cluster Level.
- If attendance continues to fall below 70%, the Head Teacher may be required to consult with NLC Child Protection Coordinator on potential risks to the child.

Absence Due to Illness

All children fall ill from time to time. If your child is too unwell to attend school, then please follow the notification procedures outlined earlier in this policy. If your child is well enough for school, but requires administration of a medication during the school day in order to support them to be at school, for example an anti-biotic or paracetamol, school staff can administer this. A parent or carer should attend the school office to fill in a quick form, and the medication handed in should have a pharmacy label on it with the child's name and dosage instructions. For further guidance, please see our administration of

medicines policy, which is available from the school or can be found on our school website.

[School Policies | Dykehead Primary](#)

Certain illnesses have a prescribed 'exclusion period', i.e. a time period during which the child may not return to school. However, some others which you may think may require your child to stay off school, in fact do not need time off if your child feels well enough to attend. This means it is always worth checking if you are unsure. You can contact the school to ask, or alternatively consult government guidance using the link below.

[Children and young people settings: tools and resources - GOV.UK](#)

[Attendance Support & Advice](#)

Parents and carers requiring any support or advice in relation to attendance should contact the school in the first instance. However, there are a range of additional sources of support for parents, which are outlined in North Lanarkshire's advice leaflet for families 'Attendance Matters'. Copies of this are available from the school and via the school website, and signpost parents to a wide variety of supports.

[Family Support Worker](#)

Using our Pupil Equity Fund, Dykehead Primary School have secured the services of a Family Support Worker from Action for Children, for school session 2024-25. Our worker, Eilish, works with families who are experiencing barriers or challenges with school or community engagement, and would like or benefit from a more personalised level of support. If you would like to have a conversation with Eilish, please telephone to school to talk this over with the Head Teacher, and an appointment can be arranged for you either at school, or in your home or the community.