

Denton and Harlaxton Church of England Schools



WE CAN!

Learn
Encour.
Aspire
Respect &
Nurture



Attendance Policy

Policy : Attendance	Date	Signatures of Chair Of Finance / Personnel & Head
Last Reviewed:	July 2026	Changes made
Admitted as school policy:	Summer 2026	
Lifespan:	2 Years	
Date of next review:	Summer 2028	

This easy to remember statement sums up our vision for our children within our community.

With God, together we can...Learn Encourage Aspire Respect Nurture

DENTON AND HARLAXTON C. E. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular, uninterrupted attendance at school is in the best interests of children so they can experience the full curriculum. When children are away, they inevitably miss out on what is happening in school, which means that as well as coping with new learning on their return, they have to catch up on what has been missed; new learning frequently depends upon building blocks and steps in learning, so gaps in learning can cause problems for a child as they move through school. Absence may also affect how others within the child's class access the curriculum.

Parent/ Carer Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time at school each day.

Absence on account of illness should be notified by the parents either by telephone, e-mail or in person to the office before 9:30am on the day of absence.

The school will make every effort to contact the home to make enquiries if a child does not attend and the school has not been notified.

We believe that regular school attendance is crucial for children to achieve their full potential and make the most of their educational opportunities. We also recognise that there may be circumstances where absence is unavoidable or necessary, and we encourage parents to communicate with us in these cases.

Absence can be authorised only by the school, and for bona-fide reasons, such as illness and medical appointments. Where possible medical appointments should be arranged outside of the school day. If this is not possible, parents should show the notification of the appointment to the admin team to notify them of the appointment and when their child will need to be excused from school.

Other activities such as family visits and birthdays do not constitute satisfactory reasons for absence from school and cannot be authorised by the school.

Granting leave in exceptional circumstances

Head teachers may grant leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances should be unexpected, unavoidable and could not be scheduled outside of term time. Holidays and leisure activities may not be considered as exceptional circumstances. Please remember that under the Education Act, parents have a legal duty in England to ensure their child is getting an education once they reach compulsory school age (5 years old). If the child attends school, then this means attending school every day that it is open. (please note that there are authorised reasons why your child may not attend school – such as being ill -which do not incur a penalty)

Parents are asked to make every effort to avoid taking their children out of school during term time, unless absolutely necessary. Where children are requested to attend an elite sporting event or attend rehearsals or performances for commercial show such as TV or Theatre, a letter must be sent from the organisers to request that the child be released from school at a specific time on a specific day. The decision whether to authorise this absence rests with the Head Teacher.

Non-attendance on account of a parental annual holiday may not be authorised. The cost of holidays cannot be used a reason why a holiday may only be taken at this time. Parents must make their request via written email to the School Office. Please note that in most cases, holidays are unauthorised absences.

What is good attendance?

Attendance is monitored half termly. Attendance is good where it is at or above 97% and is designated **persistent absence at below 90%**. Attendance between 90% and 95% is at risk of persistent absence.

Class teachers and the school administrator also monitor attendance, bringing to the Headteacher's notice any child whose attendance is cause for concern.

Descriptor	Threshold attendance	Actual attendance	Whole days of absence	Learning Hours Lost
Excellent	100%	190 days	0	0
	99%	188 days	2	10
Good	98%	186 days	4	20
	97%	184 days	6	30
	96%	182.5 days	7.5	37.5
Cause for Concern	95%	180.5 days	9.5	47.5
	94%	179 days	11	55
	93%	177 days	13	65
	92%	175 days	15	75
	91%	173 days	17	85
Unsatisfactory	90%	171 days	19	95
	89%	169 days	21	105
	88%	167 days	23	115
	87%	165 days	25	125
Serious cause for concern	86%	163 days	27	135
Critical	85%	161.5 days	28.5	142.5
	84%	159.5 days	30.5	152.5
	83%	158 days	32	160
	82%	156 days	34	170
	81%	154 days	36	180
	80%	152 days	38	190

The school will follow a series of steps to help challenge poor attendance and support good attendance:

Persistent absence can have a significant negative impact on a child's education, as well as disrupt the learning of other students. Therefore, we take a firm stance on persistent poor attendance, and we have developed the following steps to address the issue:

1st Step-Expect

Our schools aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and on entry to the school parents are informed of the importance of good attendance and how this impacts on their child's learning. Good attendance is rewarded at the end of the summer term with a certificate of excellent attendance for any child achieving 97% and above for the academic year.

2nd Step-Monitor

Attendance is rigorously monitored by all members of staff. Absences are checked daily and medical appointments or other requests for absences are checked. During parent teacher consultations, attendance is discussed and the impact this is having (positively or negatively) on the child's learning.

Children at risk of or already at persistent absentee levels attend 90% or below. These absences are more closely monitored and early engagement with parents is initiated and maintained to ensure the attendance improves consistently.

3rd Step-Listen and Understand

The family of any child whose attendance is a cause for concern will be invited to discuss the matter with the school. The purpose of the discussion will be to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them. Each discussion is held on a case by case basis to ensure that our approach is not indirectly discriminatory.

4th Step-Facilitate Support

Once a barrier has been identified, the school can help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers. The family will have the opportunity to access support from the school or other appropriate agencies through an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

5th Step-Formalise Support

In the case of regular, prolonged absence and where voluntary support is not working or has not been engaged with, school and parents / carers should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is in place to allow families to respond. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract or electing to continue an EHA through TAC (Team Around the Child)

6th Step-Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or being engaged with, attendance can be enforced through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

We believe that this stepped approach strikes the right balance between encouraging regular attendance while being fair and reasonable in our approach. We also hope that this policy will encourage parents and carers to work with us to ensure that their child's attendance is good.

These steps are based on good practice detailed in the Department of Education's document 'Working together to improve school attendance'. [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Unauthorised absences

In the case of unauthorised absences, a Notice to Improve letter may be issued. If, after receiving the letter, a child has further unauthorised absences which means that they have more than 4.5 days absence due to unauthorised reasons within a 10 week rolling period, this may result in a fine which is a penalty fine issued by the local authority.

In the cases of holidays taken with or without informing the school which meet the 4.5 days threshold within a 10 week rolling period, a penalty notice will be issued; in this case a Notice to Improve letter is not required because parents are already aware that holidays may not be authorised during term time.

These fines are per parent per child and may be issued up to a maximum of two fines in a 3 year period. If there is a further offence then this may lead to prosecution as per the working together to improve school attendance document.

Unauthorised absences could be (not an exhaustive list):

Holidays

Days off to celebrate birthdays / support siblings / visit relatives etc.

Feeling tired

Bad weather

Moving house

Car won't start

Parent unwell and so cannot bring child to school

Child refusal

Birthdays

Being late for school after 9:30am

Holidays or unauthorised absences taken during SATs week for any Year 6 child will also trigger the fining process.

Parents should address any questions regarding this policy to the school office.

The school will audit absence figures termly, and these will be reported to Governors.

The school will submit absence information to the DfE and the Local Authority as required.

This policy has been approved by the Governors and will be reviewed in two year's time.

