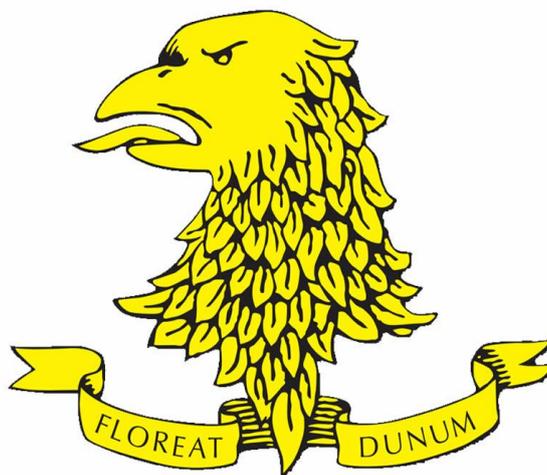


DOWH HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS POLICY



“NOTHING ACHIEVED WITHOUT EFFORT”

Updated: August 2022

Vision

Down High School recognises that punctual and regular attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning and is, therefore, committed to improving levels of attendance and punctuality. The school believes that if pupils are to maximise the curricular and extra-curricular opportunities provided by school it is essential that attendance levels remain high. We also recognise the important link between academic attainment and good attendance and therefore encourage parents and pupils to ensure regular attendance throughout the school year.

Aims

- To promote regular and punctual attendance at school
- To establish clear and consistent procedures for recording pupil attendance
- To have a strong attendance monitoring system in place
- To recognise and reward good attendance

Procedures and Expectations

Attendance and Punctuality

A high standard of attendance and punctuality is required of all pupils throughout the school year. The school expects pupils and parents to ensure that attendance levels remain high. Furthermore, it is an expectation that students are punctual so that the school day starts on time, that is, at **8:50am**.

Summary of key times

8.50am- All students are expected to be in school

8.55am-9.05am- Registration (Registration to be "called" by 9.00am)

9.05am-9.15am- Form Time or Assembly

Registration

- Pupils should arrive in school by **8.50am** in time for registration at **8.55am**. Students who arrive in school before 8.50am are expected to remain in school and not to leave school for any reason.
- Pupils who have not arrived to registration by **9.00am** will be marked '**late**' by their Form Teacher. Any occasional lateness must be accompanied by a full explanation. From time-to-time, school buses may be late. Pupils will not be penalised if this is the case. If pupils are persistently late, without good reason, they will be subject to appropriate sanction.
- Anyone arriving in school after registration has formally closed (9.05am) must report directly to the main office and sign the appropriate "Late Book", recording both the time of arrival and reason for lateness. Students **must** then inform their Form Teacher they are in school. This is essential in the event of a fire evacuation or an emergency.
- Students arriving into school after 9.30am must provide a note from a parent/guardian.
- Persistent lateness will be dealt with by detentions, lunchtime or after school. In the case of Sixth Form, students may also be denied the privilege of leaving school at lunchtime.
- Pupils are also expected to be punctual to class at all times.

Absence

- Pupils should only be absent from school due to illness, unexpected emergencies or activities authorised by school.
- Parents will be informed via SchoolComms (text message or email via the School Gateway App) if their child has not been marked present during registration. Parents should promptly reply by text to this message to explain their child's reason for absence.
- Pupils not at registration because of a medical appointment or similar should provide a signed written note from a parent to their Form Teacher the previous day to enable the correct absence code to be added. Parents should not email or telephone the school.
- Parents can still contact school if they would like to discuss their child's absence, especially in situations when absence is likely to be prolonged and requires the support of pastoral staff.
- Except in emergencies, medical, dental, and similar appointments should be arranged outside school hours.
- Pupils who need to leave school during the day must provide their Form Teacher, at registration, with a signed and dated note from a parent explaining the reason for leaving school, the time they are to leave school and if they are returning to school. The Form Teacher will provide the pupil with a signed permission slip to leave school which the pupil **must** present to the main office where they will be signed out of school by a member of the office staff. This is an essential safeguarding and fire safety procedure. Under no circumstances should a pupil leave school without permission or contact their parent by mobile phone to collect them from school. Unless it is an emergency parents should not email or phone the school to request that their child be signed out of school during the school day for an appointment.
- Parents and Pupils will be given appropriate notice of the dates of school terms. Guidance from the Department of Education makes it clear that parents should not arrange holidays during term time. Consequently, approval cannot be given for pupils to be absent from school during term time to go on holiday. Any such absence will be recorded as "unauthorised".
- Students with long term illness or difficulties that necessitate periods of absence from school will be supported through the Pastoral Care structure.

Parents and Pupils should also note that:

- Attendance that falls below 92% is considered to be 'poor attendance' and of great concern to the school
- Absence of 15 days in any one school year will bring attendance below 92%
- Attendance which falls below 85% is considered unacceptable and in all cases the school has a statutory responsibility to notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)

Attendance Matters- How Can Parents Help?

- Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead
- Make sure that your child attends school every day and that they arrive on time
- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible and provide your child with a signed written note explaining why they need to leave school
- If your child is absent, promptly reply by text to the SchoolComms message to explain the reason for absence
- Take family holidays outside term time
- Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their schoolwork (including homework)
- Attend parent evenings and school events
- Praise your child's achievements at school
- Contact school if your child is experiencing any difficulties that may be impacting on their attendance at school

Sixth Form Attendance

Having chosen to study A Levels at Down High School beyond the age of compulsory schooling, it is expected that Sixth Form students will set and maintain high standards of punctuality and attendance. Employers and Universities increasingly ask for information regarding attendance when seeking references, so it is essential that students do not disadvantage themselves by having a poor attendance record. Students claiming an Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) must have a record of good attendance and any absence from school must be explained. Attendance in Sixth Form will be monitored by Form Teachers, Subject Teachers and Year Heads, and action will be taken when levels of attendance or punctuality become a concern.

Monitoring and Promoting Good Attendance

Importance of good attendance and punctuality

- Regular attendance allows students to get the most out of school
- Good attendance improves peer relationships, allows students to achieve their full potential and therefore contributes positively to the school community
- Pupils take responsibility for their own time management and are prepared for the challenges of the school day
- Pupils develop important life skills that are demanded when they leave school, especially by employers
- Pupils receive important information during Form Time and being punctual ensures they don't disadvantage themselves in school
- Being on time leads to understanding that school is important, and education is valuable
- Attendance at school directly contributes to academic achievement- if pupils are to succeed, they need to be in school
- Unnecessary absence creates more work for the pupil who is responsible for copying up any missed work

The Form Teacher

At Down High School the Form Teacher is seen as the key figure in promoting regular punctual attendance.

The Form Teacher should:

- Provide a good example by always being punctual
- Use Form Time to reinforce the School's policy on attendance and lateness; stress pupils' responsibilities if they are absent from school; offer praise to individual pupils whose attendance and/or punctuality is good or improves
- Stress the benefits of regular attendance and the importance of punctuality
- Complete registration accurately each morning, ensuring the correct absence code is recorded
- Monitor patterns of absence and lateness of pupils in their Form Class and speak to pupils whose attendance and punctuality is a cause for concern
- Report concerns regarding absence and persistent lateness to the Year Head, explaining the nature and extent of the concern e.g., Days late/absent, action taken
- Contact the parent of a pupil who has been absent due to illness for more than 5 days

- Inform staff if a pupil will be absent for a longer period of time and arrange for the collection of work if requested by parents. Form Teachers should also liaise with Year Heads if a pupil will be absent for a prolonged period of time
- Meet briefly with any pupil who has been absent for more than 5 days to assist them with their return to school

The Year Head

At Down High School the Year Head is seen as the key figure in monitoring the attendance and punctuality of students in their year group

The Year Head should:

- Provide a good example by always being punctual
- Monitor attendance and punctuality on a regular basis using data provided by the SIMS attendance module and by liaising with the Form Teachers in their Year Group
- Use attendance information to identify students with **poor attendance (below 92%) or persistent lateness**. This information should be kept and discussed with Heads of School and Pastoral Vice-Principal on a regular basis
- Investigate any concern raised by a Subject Teacher worried by the level of attendance or persistent lateness of a student in their class
- Meet with students whose attendance has been identified as poor (below 92%) and investigate the reasons for this. In the case of persistent casual absence, the Year Head should contact parents (by telephone and/or in writing), highlighting the school's concerns and explaining the detrimental effect poor attendance can have on a student's academic attainment. In cases of persistent inattendance parents will be asked to come into school.
- Sanction students who have been reported by their Form Teacher for persistent lateness.
- Monitor and support the work of the Form Teacher in promoting good attendance
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through Year Assemblies
- Organise the presentation of attendance certificates for their Year Group

Heads of School

The Heads of School should:

- Should ensure that Form Teachers and Year Heads clearly understand their roles and responsibilities within the School Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Support Year Heads in the monitoring of poor attendance and advise on the best strategy to promote higher levels of attendance
- Include attendance on the agenda of pastoral meetings and use attendance reports to discuss issues related to poor attendance or lateness
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through Year Assemblies

- Manage the Reward Scheme for students who have exceptional attendance

Subject Teacher

The Subject Teacher Should:

- Provide a good example by always being punctual and inquire about the lateness of any pupil or pupils to class
- Take a Register at the beginning of each lesson noting any student who is absent
- Monitor the attendance of students in their class and speak to students whose attendance is a cause for concern
- Challenge any pupil or pupils considered to be walking slowly or indirectly to their next class.
- Report in writing any persistent and serious attendance concerns to the relevant Year Head explaining how this relates to their attainment

The Pastoral Vice-Principal

The Pastoral Vice-Principal should:

- Monitor and review the role of the Heads of School as identified by the School's Attendance and lateness policy
- Discuss attendance issues with Heads of School and Year Heads
- Liaise with the EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) in cases when attendance has fallen below 85% despite intervention by the school
- Inform the Principal of any concerns in relation to trends in attendance
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through Assemblies

The Principal

The Principal should:

- Take overall responsibility for whole school attendance
- Set the annual school attendance target with the Senior Leadership Team
- Ensure that the whole-school Attendance Policy is implemented and regularly reviewed
- Ensure that the policy is communicated to pupils, staff, parents and Governors
- Report to Governors on attendance matters
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through Assemblies

Rewarding Good Attendance

The school recognises the importance of rewarding good attendance and will award attendance certificates to pupils whose attendance for the year is exceptional. Certificates will be presented at a Year Assembly at the start of the new academic year, recognising the previous year's achievement. Students in Year 14 will be presented with certificates prior to their departure on home study leave.

Communication

Down High School's Attendance Procedures will be communicated through:

- Form teacher discussions during Form Time
- School Assemblies
- Pupil self-evaluation discussions with their Form Teacher
- The Attendance Policy will be published on the school website
- End of year letter
- Attendance leaflet given to all Year 8 students