



Djanogly Northgate Academy

Attendance Policy 2024-2026

Our Vision

At Djanogly Northgate Academy (**DNA**) all are welcome. We are committed to our children, families, staff and our community. We are an inclusive school where everyone embraces, respects and learns from our vibrant diversity. We inspire each other to value learning, seek challenges and to have high aspirations. Through innovative learning opportunities, we will equip our children with the skills, knowledge and attributes that allow them to make choices and take control of their future.

It's in our **DNA**...

DISCOVER – Being curious, exploring, asking questions, investigating, problem solving.

NURTURE - Being kind, collaborating, taking responsibility, supporting one another, showing respect.

ASPIRE – Being resilient, creative and ambitious, demonstrating perseverance and taking pride in our successes.

Introduction

We believe that good attendance at school has a direct impact on good progress and achievement. It is important for children to attend regularly to maximise both their learning and their social and emotional development. Children who miss a lot of school may feel left out and will not have the same shared experiences as their classmates and may find it difficult to follow what is going on in the classroom.

Missing school trips, special events and break time may affect their ability to make friends at school. Being in school gives students more time to interact with teachers and classmates. Irregular school attendance is a contributory factor in social exclusion and underachievement. We expect children to attend regularly and arrive on time.

Intent

At **DNA** our intent for attendance is for all students to be in school every day. We use the acronym '**H.E.R.O**', which stands for:

Here

Everyday

Ready

On time

Children who are at school as much as possible and have less than three days absence, will be rewarded with attendance badges and become an **Attendance H.E.R.O** at **DNA**. Children have the opportunity to earn their badges at the end of every term.

Aims

- Ensure that everyone understands the importance of regular attendance
- Ensure that our practice actively promotes excellent attendance
- Support children and families where attendance is a concern
- Communicate effectively at all levels to improve attendance

Legal Requirements

The law requires all schools to maintain an admission register containing the personal details of every pupil in the school, information regarding parents/carers and the date of admission. Such information will be entered on to the register on the pupil's first day of admission.

Schools must notify the local authority within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register in-year and must provide the local authority with relevant information held. This duty is for in-year admissions only and does not apply to pupils who are added at the start of the school's youngest year.

Where a pupil leaves, the school must record the date of leaving and the name of the receiving school. In the exceptional case where this information is not known, the school will complete a referral for Children Missing in Education Service.

Schools must inform the local authority when removing a pupil from the admission register. For reasons for removal of a pupil from the school admissions register see **APPENDIX 1**.

Upon written confirmation for Elective Home Education by a parent/carer, school will then complete a referral to the local authority and the pupil is to be removed from roll following the local authority's approval/ initial visit.

Responsibilities

➤ Parents

- Ensure that their children are here every day, are ready for school and arrive on time
- If for any reason children are unable to attend school, parents must inform the school office by 9:30am
- Parents must contact school for each day of absence
- If a medical practitioner has seen your child, proof of the appointment/consultation must be provided to school so that the absence can be authorised
- If you would like to contact the attendance team at Northgate, please email: dnaattendance@northgate.djanogly.org or s.scholes@northgate.djanogly.org

➤ Teachers

- Mark electronic register at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions and submit to office by 9:05am and 1:10pm
- If communication from parents/carers has been shared with the class teacher, teachers will share this information with the office for effective record keeping
- Continually promote the importance of good attendance and speak to parents if they are noticing patterns of absence and the impact that this has on children's learning
- To know how many children are present in their class every day and display this in the classroom

➤ Admin Team

- Check that all registers are completed in a timely manner and are accurate
- Ensure that all children who are late, sign in on InVentry and update registers to reflect this
- Check the school attendance voicemail and update reasons for absence on school reports
- If there are any children with no reason for absence, the admin team will contact parents to understand why a child is not in school. They will then log the reason for absence as a note for every child – this will be required every day a child is not present
- If parents do not answer, the admin team will leave a voicemail and send a text message requesting that the parent calls the school
- Build relationships with parents/carers to ensure good channels of communication, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance to remove the difficulties
- Maintain records accurately and ensure that all absent codes are up to date
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer to monitor and improve school attendance

➤ Attendance Officer

- Welcome children and members of the school community into **DNA** every morning, and be available to discuss any concerns that parents may have regarding their child's attendance
- Support children who arrive to school late and ensure that all children receive a positive start to the day
- Using the data, identify which families require a home visit if children are consistently absent or have not been seen in school for 3 days
- Monitor and analyse attendance data and compile effective strategies to support improvements, this could include arranging initial meetings to understand the barriers to attendance, direct parents to support and liaise with the inclusion team if needed
- Conduct home visits if required to safeguard children and families attending **DNA**
- To maintain regular contact with class teachers to ensure that they are aware and kept updated with attendance for children in their class
- Report and escalate any attendance concerns to the Senior Attendance Lead, Headteacher and Senior Education Welfare Officer if required
- Produce weekly attendance reports and share during Friday's Celebration Assembly the class with the highest attendance
- Produce reporting to enable teachers to monitor children at risk of persistent absence
- Working with the Trust team and Local Authority team to tackle persistent absence and severely persistent absence learners whilst recognising attendance is never "solved" but a continuous process
- Attend Trust Network meetings to discuss and share best practice for attendance
- Working with the local authority, the Senior Education Welfare Officer and the Trust team to make decisions of when to issue penalty notices
- Consider individual needs when implementing this policy, including having regard to the Academy's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Attendance officer will maintain regular dialogue with the school inclusion team
- Reporting those learners deemed "missing from education" using the statutory guidance (DfE Sept 2016 and DfE applies August 2024) and the local protocols to recognise missing education is a vital sign to a range of safeguarding issues
- Send out formal letters for regular lateness or regular patterns of absence:
 - o **1st letter** is for children requiring intervention and to understand any potential barriers for attendance and offer support
 - o **2nd letter** is when school are concerned that children are at moderate risk of persistent absence and will be asked to attend an attendance improvement meeting
 - o **3rd Letter**, if attendance does not improve, parents will be issued with a Notice to Improve letter (**APPENDIX 2**), and the Attendance Officer will work with the Educational Welfare Officer at Nottingham City Council
 - o **4th letter**, will be issued if there is still no improvement and will provide confirmation that they have been referred to the Educational Welfare Officer, and this may result in a Penalty Notice

➤ The Senior Attendance Lead:

- Working closely with the Attendance Officer, the Senior Attendance Lead will oversee attendance across the Academy with the support of the Senior Education Welfare Officer and Trust team
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations to establish and maintain effective processes for tackling absence
- Having an oversight of data analysis to focus the collective efforts of the school team and provide effective CPD to class teachers and the staff across the academy
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Ensuring that key attendance messages are communicated to parents/carers and learners consistently
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with learners and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to learners and families
- Adhere to the requirement of data sharing introduced through the Education (Information about Individual Pupils)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2024

- Attend the termly Target Support Meeting with the representative from the Local Authority to ensure positive working relationships and improvements are made
 - Support the Attendance Officer with Attendance Improvement Meetings
 - Arrange CPD for Attendance Officer and school staff
- **Headteacher**
- Liaise with Senior Attendance Lead and Attendance Officer and provide updates to local authority and trust when needed
 - Speak to parents/carers identified by Attendance Officer as appropriate
- **Governors:**
- Ensure that there is a strong attendance policy in place to support the academy in managing attendance
 - Ensure that the policy is publicised to all stakeholders and is available via the academy website.
 - Ensure that the policy and practice is reviewed regularly

Attendance Registers

- Registers are taken and submitted to the office at the beginning of the morning and will be closed at 9:25am, and afternoon sessions are closed at 1:10pm
- They are a legal requirement under current Government legislation
- Registers are automatically updated when children are admitted
- Registers remain open for 30 minutes after the official session start time
- Pupils are marked as late (L) if they arrive after the gate has closed but before the registers close at 9:25am
- If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, they will receive a (U) code which will then be marked against their attendance
- Registers are then electronically submitted

Late Arrivals

- Gates are locked at **8:55am** each morning, so children arriving after that time need to enter via the main entrance.
- Children arriving after the gate has closed **must** sign in at reception. Their time of arrival will be noted and recorded.
- Registers will close at **9.25am**.
- Please note, in line with government guidance, any children who arrive after the register closes will receive a 'U' code which will then be marked against their attendance.
- If a pupil is recorded as having **10 lates within a 10-week period**, we will refer to Education Welfare services.
- If you are struggling to get your child into school on time, please inform the office and our inclusion and attendance team can support and advise. For example, we could discuss transport, routines, breakfast club and explore all available possibilities to support you.

Routines

- Electronic registers are checked every day for unexplained absences and a reason for absence is added to the school MIS system (Arbor)

- Parents/carers are expected to contact the school office if their child is absent for any reason

Day 1 of absence

- A first day call/text is made by 10:30am. If there is no reason provided for the absence from parents/carers, the absence will be marked as unauthorised with the reason for absence logged on Arbor. This forms part of our safeguarding and child protection policy
- If parents are unreachable for any reason and no reason for absence is provided, a home visit may be carried out if required
- If the reason for absence is anything other than a minor medical diagnosis (such as: vomiting, diarrhoea, common cold or childhood illness) the school office team must inform the class teacher and the attendance officer – if a medical practitioner has seen your child, proof of the appointment/consultation must be provided to school and a scanned copy taken by the team must be obtained as soon as possible

Day 2 of absence

- A second day call/text is made by 10:30am. If there is no reason provided for the absence from parents/carers, the absence will be marked as unauthorised with the reason for absence logged on Arbor. This forms part of our safeguarding and child protection policy
- If parents are unreachable for any reason and no reason for absence is provided, a home visit will be carried out
- If the reason for absence is anything other than a minor medical diagnosis (such as: vomiting, diarrhoea, common cold or childhood illness) the school office team must inform the class teacher and the attendance officer – if a medical practitioner has seen your child, proof of the appointment/consultation must be provided to school and a scanned copy taken by the team must be obtained as soon as possible
- The office team will escalate the absence to the inclusion and attendance team, and this will be reviewed by a DSL

Day 3 of absence

- If the child is still absent on day 3, a home visit will be conducted by a member of the attendance team, regardless of reason for absence. All communication must be logged on Arbor
- If a child's absence is related to, or raises, a safeguarding issue then this will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and they may seek advice from the Social Care Duty Team

Home Visits

When we conduct a home visit, the attendance officer and/or a DSL will visit your home, usually before 12pm, to speak with the child and the parent/carer. This ensures we keep good channels of communication, listen to you, understand any barriers that might be affecting attendance and offer support.

Escalating

- After 3 days, if a child has still not been seen and sufficient contact has not been made (including medical evidence shared with the school), the School's Attendance Welfare Referral (**APPENDIX 3**) will be followed
- Please note, if there are safeguarding concerns, this will be escalated to social care, child missing in education and/or the police and documented on the child's file at the discretion of the headteacher

Monitoring

- Absence reports are reviewed weekly by our attendance team
- If a pupil misses 10 sessions of school, which equates to 5 days, they are monitored as a concern and a member of the attendance team will speak to parents/carers regarding our concerns. This may include letters, phone calls and home visits
- When a pupil misses 10 or more days of school, parents will be invited to an attendance meeting, where we will look to establish how we can further support
- If a pupil has missed 19 or more days of school, they will then be considered a persistent absentee (PA). A member of the attendance team will speak to parents/carers regarding our concerns. If there is no improvement following support packages which have been put in place, then a referral to the Education Welfare Service may be made
- Patterns of non-attendance, e.g. regularly absence on Fridays will be monitored and parents/carers contacted to discuss concerns
- Whilst we acknowledge that a child is not compulsory school age until 5 years old, we know that engagement in education at this stage in a child's development is crucial. Good attendance is a school requirement of all children on roll so attendance records and interventions will occur for all children on roll, at any age, if attendance is a concern

Reasons for Authorised Absence

- Illness (call school on the first morning of the absence, and every day they are absent until they return)
- Medical appointments (call the school - evidence must be provided)
- Any exceptional circumstances can be considered by our attendance team when a request has been submitted.

For any absence apart from illness and medical appointments, a leave of absence form **must** be completed. You can collect a paper copy of the form from the school office or download it from our website.

If you take your child out of school without completing a form, the absence will automatically be unauthorised. As a school, we reserve the right to authorise or unauthorise absences depending on circumstances and are within our right to request evidence. For any absence to be considered, we must be informed of the absence in advance via the leave of absence form.

Religious Observance

At Djanogly Learning Trust we celebrate our diverse communities and respect our family's religious and cultural differences. We will authorise one day for each religious festival (to a maximum of three days in any one academic year). Regulations state that absence for religious observance should be treated as authorised on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Additional days will be treated as unauthorised.

Children with Significant Medical Conditions

DfE statutory guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions specifically states that children should not be penalised for their attendance record if their absences are related to their medical condition e.g. hospital appointments.

We will not send attendance letters or take further action against any child or their parents where absences are related to a significant medical condition which prevents the child safely attending the school site.

In such cases children will be praised for their attendance and staff will ensure that every effort is made to support any gaps in learning during these absences. We will work with parents/carers to create risk assessments that enable the child to safely access school where possible.

The inclusion team and office team will agree on individual targets for attendance or improved attendance as appropriate and this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Persistent Absentees

These are defined as children who have missed 19 or more days. Actions to address this are taken on an individual level and may include other agencies; specifically social care or early help services as such extended absences may trigger a safeguarding concern.

Referrals will be made to the Local Authority Education Welfare team and appropriate actions taken. This may include formal meetings and lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or legal action. Parents/carers may be taken to court where they could be issued with a fine or even a custodial sentence.

Reintegration Plan

For children who have been absent from school for a long period of time, a reintegration plan may be introduced if all parties feel that this is appropriate. This will be a meeting with parents to discuss how the child is reintegrated into school, and how we can support.

Leave of Absence Requests

All leave of absence requests **MUST** be requested via the Leave of Absence Form in advance of the leave taking place. This is for all requests that are not an illness or a medical appointment. You can get a copy of this form from a member of the office team or there is a PDF version on our website under the attendance tab. Any evidence that you think is relevant to the request must also be included.

All requests for leave of absence will be considered by the attendance team. Full consideration will be given to requests, but these can only be authorised by the academy or executive leader and then only if they believe there are exceptional circumstances or compassionate reasons that justify the leave. The child's current attendance record and individual circumstances will form part of the decision-making process.

Any child who does not return by the agreed date of return will incur unauthorised absences until such a time as they return. This could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued against the parent.

If a child does not return for an extended period there will be an investigation to ascertain whether the child will be returning or not. The Attendance Officer will work with Education Welfare Officers at the local authority and the school reserves the right to remove a child from the school roll should parties agree that this is an appropriate action. The child could then be classified as 'missing' and 'Without a School Place'.

Parents/carers who take leave of absence without contacting the school or without authorisation, will have the absences recorded as unauthorised and this could then result in the school taking further action to investigate, which may result in a referral to Education Welfare Service which could result in a request for a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notices

Penalty notices are issued by Nottingham City Council Education Welfare Services and are issued per parent/carer, per child, and are set at £80 if paid within 21 days and £160 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, any resultant legal proceedings would relate to section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Championing and Rewarding Attendance

As a school, we also want to champion and reward attendance. This includes persistently high attendees but also pupils who have made significant improvement.

- We complete a weekly class attendance review, and the highest attending class will receive a reward, which is announced in assembly every Friday.
- At the end of every term, we reward pupils who have high attendance or have made significant improvements, with an in-school treat.

- We reward attendance with termly certificates and badges. We have 4 badges to collect over the course of the school year:
 - Bronze (awarded in Autumn)
 - Silver (awarded in Spring)
 - Gold (awarded in Summer)
 - Iridescent (awarded in Summer – 100% attendance)
- At the end of the year, before we break up for summer, we hold a big event for all high attenders, and for the students that we believe have made significant changes to improve their attendance.

APPENDIX 1 – Regulation 8 Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Deletions from Admission Register

8.–(1) The following are prescribed as the grounds on which the name of a pupil of compulsory school age shall be deleted from the admission register—

- (a) where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local education authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local education authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school;
- (b) except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school;
- (c) where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion;
- (d) in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school;
- (e) except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered;
- (f) in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence exceeding ten school days for the purpose of a holiday in accordance with regulation 7(3), that —
 - (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted;
 - (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - (iii) both the proprietor and the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is

- (g) that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- (h) that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and –
 - (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);
 - (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - (iii) both the proprietor of the school and the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is;
- (i) that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period;
- (j) that the pupil has died;
- (k) that he will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and the relevant person has indicated that he will cease to attend the school;
- (l) in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school;
- (m) that he has been permanently excluded from the school; or
- (n) where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school

APPENDIX 2 – Notice to Improve

186. A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is not appropriate and an authorised officer can choose not to use one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any behavioural impact (e.g. because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

187. Where a Notice to Improve is used, it should be issued in line with processes set out in the Local Code of Conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

188. The Notice to Improve is expected to include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and details of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.

- Opportunities for further support and the option to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued or prosecution considered if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period.
- A clear timeframe for the improvement period of between 3 and 6 weeks
- Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period. 59

189. What sufficient improvement looks like can be decided on a case by case basis taking the individual family's circumstances into account. For some families, no further unauthorised absences will be appropriate, for others some absence may be tolerable if considerable improvement is seen. Details of what sufficient improvement looks like for each case should be made clear in the Notice to Improve.

190. Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended. For example, a Notice to Improve stated there should be no further unauthorised absences in a 6 week period but the pupil is absent for unauthorised reasons in the first week. The parent should be informed before a penalty notice is issued if it is before the end of the improvement period.

APPENDIX 3 - School's Attendance Welfare Referral

- (i) Following a home visit on day 3, a letter will be issued outlining the attendance concerns and a written request made for parents and carers to supply sufficient evidence for the child's none attendance
- (ii) If still no contact has been made by day 5, a second letter will be sent requesting a meeting and an attendance improvement plan will be put in place. At this point, five school days equating to ten missed sessions requires a referral to Education Welfare which may result in a penalty notice
- (iii) If there are safeguarding concerns, any absence past day three will be escalated to relevant external agencies such as: social care, child missing in education and/or the police and documented on the child's file
- (iv) Contact will continue to be made via phone calls and home visits until the child is seen in school.