



**PUPIL
ATTENDANCE and PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

Agreed by Governors on: 04.12.17

Signed by Chair of Governors: Sally Birkbeck

Sally Birkbeck

Statutory policy: No

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Safe Happy Learning

Education Co Location Co operation

At Delius Special School, Every Child Matters and we aim to provide Safe Happy Learning for all.

Our Aims

If pupils are to get the greatest benefit from their education, it is very important they have good attendance and punctuality. As pupils grow and prepare for their next stage of education, teenage and adult life, they and their families need to recognise that good attendance and punctuality are important qualities that are valued by future educators, carers, health and therapy workers, employers and show courtesy and commitment to others. At Delius we will do all that we can to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Where pupils and /or their families /carers are not fulfilling our high expectations for attendance and punctuality we will put into place effective support strategies to bring about improvement.

We aim to reduce the number of leave of absences in term time.

The expectation from the Department for Education and OfSTED, is that we as a special school strive to have an attendance of 97% or above, and at Delius we strive to ensure our pupils exceed this, whilst recognising that some of our pupils have a high level absences because of medical and/or therapy appointments and/or illness because of their medical conditions or Special Educational *Need Disability*(SEND) , or the reliance of educational transport to school which is not always available in extreme weather conditions. We will acknowledge this within our policy.

In acknowledging that for some of our pupils this 97% may be a difficult challenge, we expect to work with parents/carers, health professionals and education welfare in supporting those families who have attendance issues with positive strategies which encourage an upward swing in attendance or support where it is required to meet individual pupil/family needs

What we will do to ensure Delius meets attendance objectives.

- To ensure that all pupils (including those with specific medical and/or therapy appointments and/or illness because of their medical conditions or Special Educational Need Disability (SEND) , or the reliance of educational and or family transport to school) attend school as much as they can.
- To ensure that pupils who may not be 'available for learning' due to ill health are consulted sensitively and not required to attend school and registers are marked accordingly.
- To secure the support of parents and carers in ensuring their children have good attendance and arrive on time.
- To keep good records of attendance through the school registers twice daily, ensuring class registers are returned by 9.30am/1.30pm, and that office staff follow up any absence with prompt action, recording why a pupil has not attended.
- To investigate and act immediately if truancy is suspected or confirmed, through discussion with the Deputy Head Teacher.
- To investigate and act immediately if absences are not legitimate or condoned by parents/carers.
- To work effectively with the Local Authority and other agencies to follow up attendance issues promptly and efficiently, and to liaise with nursing team to discuss and support (where necessary) families with health/medical issues that are affecting pupil attendance.

- To offer home tuition for pupils not well enough to attend school, where an attendance mark for these sessions will be recorded.
- Refer parents and carers to the school 'Leave of absence, holiday in term time and extended leave of absence policy – pupils' and that they will be invited to attend a meeting with the Head/Deputy Teacher and a school governor, and the fact that they may be fined (issued Penalty Notices) for unauthorised absence of their child or children
- Publish the Pupil Attendance Policy and the Leave of Absence Policy on the website and hold information sessions, events and to highlight the new requirements and expectations to reduce Leave of Absence in term time.

How we endeavor to support pupil attendance

Strategy

- *Class teacher* will complete registers accurately for each session: by 9.30am for the first session and 1.30pm by second session, reporting any concerns to the Pupil Administrator, the Deputy Head Teacher,(DHT), a *Named Person for Child Protection*, or the *Home Tuition lead*, as appropriate.
- Pupils arriving late will be reported to Pupil Administrator, Deputy Head Teacher and each teacher. The Pupil Administrator will keep a record with their register of the times and occasions and any reasons given that a learner is late.
- If lateness is due to Educational Transport the Pupil Administrator will keep a record and contact the Passenger Transport Service (PTS) requesting improvement. This should be copied to the DHT and be monitored for improvement or work towards a solution if it is not within their remit e.g. a child vomiting on the journey has caused the delay. The DHT will meet half termly with PTS to resolve any issue of transportation which affects pupil attendance.
- Parents /carers will be asked to contact the school (telephone or email or letter) explaining why their child is absent or ill and the likely duration of the absence. This is recorded daily giving the reasons and monitored by the DHT with required actions minuted. Information is shared with other key staff and professionals for subsequent actions to be followed up.
- The pupil administrator or office staff will make contact with the parent/carer or home by telephone, email or letter (or other, including the Parental Involvement Officer) when a child is absent on the first day of absence if no explanation has been received and consequently, each day after if no contact has been made. If no explanation has been received by the third day of absence a letter will be sent asking for details of the absence.
- If a pupil is ill for more than three days, the Pupils Administrator will contact parents/carers every other day to make sensitive enquiries about the pupil's health

and likely return to school, and give any assistance they can. This is monitored by DHT, *a member of the Safeguarding team, or the Home Tuition lead, as appropriate.* and actions taken as appropriate.

- Pupil administrator will record and send out letters to all pupils falling under 90% attendance on a weekly basis, except for those whose absence has been authorised as 'exceptional'
- Where a pupil is developing a pattern of occasional absences, or more long term absences, the parent/carer will be contacted to discuss the pattern of absences, and be invited to meet with DHT, and /or school nursing team and parental involvement officer where required and supportive actions put in to place to help encourage a higher rate of attendance.
- Where a pattern or extensive period of absence ensues without a viable or explainable reason, the school will invite the parent/carers to an attendance panel meeting, and invite an Education Social Worker (if necessary). At this meeting the parents/carers have the opportunity to answer questions related to their son/daughters non-attendance. Once all the factors are established and agreed, an attendance action plan is written and signed by all, with key action and reviews points. Pupil attendance will then be monitored closely over the next school term.
- If attendance does not improve, where necessary the school will work closely with the Local Authority (LA) to take action against those unlawfully keeping pupils from school, and instruct appropriate actions to take place such as penalty notice fines.
- We will ensure that Pupils who rely on educational and or safe transport to and from school which may not be available in extreme weather conditions will be not marked as unauthorised but will be marked according to LA guidance.
- The school will monitor the correlation of attainment against pupil targets and attendance for those pupils who are in the low attendance/vulnerable groups bracket.

Monitoring:

- Looked After Child : (LAC) pupils
- Free School Meals : FSM pupils
- Pupils with irregular or low attendance patterns
- Pupils who have leave in term time

Pupils with medical/specific therapeutic needs

Identified pupils with specific medical, therapy or Special Educational needs, who have a high level of absence, will be supported by the following strategies:

- Weekly monitoring of attendance and absence
- Recording absence as authorised when in alternative settings such as 'Hospice care', Hospital admission with hospital schooling and home tuition time
- Hosting medicals and therapy appointments at school with school DHT and nursing team
- Working with the Local Authority to record such absences as authorised to reflect attendance as good as can be expected for these pupils and the school
- Provide home tuition (subject to staffing and the efficient use of resources)
- Work towards a sensitive approach to palliative care which recognises this is not the core purpose of a school, (education) but care and social stimulation (subject to staffing, training and the efficient and appropriate use of resources within a school)
- Recognise that some pupils are not 'available for learning' and work with the LA and other agencies to allocate appropriate provision which may not be within our school

Reporting and measuring school attendance.

Through the use of comparative attendance data from DfE *Pupil absence in schools in England 2015-2016*, and BMDC comparative for statistical neighbours we are able to draw comparisons in relation to our attendance.

(New comparative data figures 2015-16)

Cohort	Delius average	Bradford average	Statistical Neighbour average	National average	Persistent Delius	Persistent Bradford	Persistent Statistical Neighbour	Persistent National
Whole school	10%	11.5%(11.6)	10.2%(10.58)	9.1%(9.4)	24%	24.3%(21.4)	24.4%(19.4)	26.9%
PMLD	15%	21.2%	18.1%	14%(14.2)	40%	32.5%	28%	43.3%(28.2)
SLD	7%	10.6%	8.3%	7.3%(7.2)	22%	20%	18%	22.2%(10.2)
ASD	5%	7.1%	6.2%	6.2%	11%	19%	19.6%	16.6%(7.6)

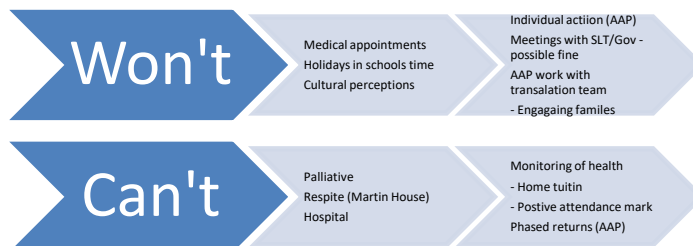
The table above allows School to compare attendance/absence percentages with local authorities which are seen as *statistical neighbours*.

The deputy head teacher and attendance team will analysis attendance data on a weekly basis and action accordingly.

The school will consider attendance individually and deal with each case with all the relevant information to allow a fair consideration on individual merit.

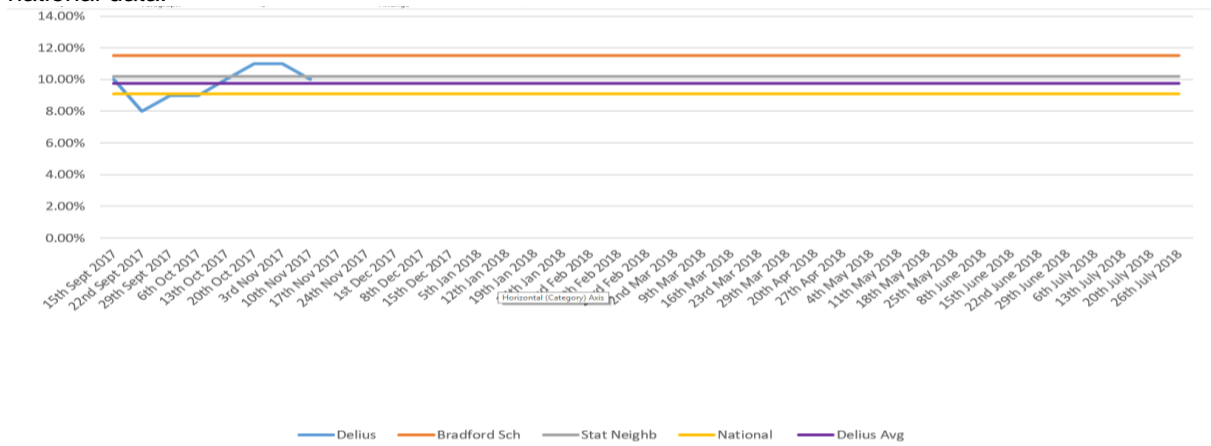
The diagram below illustrates how this may be considered:

Attendance	Reasons	Actions
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Approaches to tackling absence at Delius, led by Attendance Action Team which incorporates school nurse, safeguarding leads, parent involvement officer, attendance administration team, lead for personal care and therapy and deputy head teacher. His team addresses attendance issues on a half termly basis

Weekly graphed information is available to show comparative data set against local, regional and national data.



Safeguarding attendance procedures

Any unexplained or unauthorised absence is a safeguarding concern and children may be reported as “Missing in Education”

Statutory Guidance from the Department of Education includes the following

- “A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.
- “Staff should follow the school’s procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education ,particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and help prevent the risks of going missing in the future “ .
- “Schools should put into place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual trigger to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.”
- “All schools must inform the Local Authority (LA) of any pupils who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school’s permission for a continuous of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the LA.
- **Child Sexual exploitation**

“A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point”.

These procedures are followed by all staff to ensure that all pupils at Delius Special School who are deemed to be at danger due to indicators which may arise due to poor attendance as well as general signs of abuse, neglect etc. These reports are made through the school safeguarding team and attendance lead (Deputy Head Teacher) The school will notify the LA’s safeguarding team and education welfare team through the appropriate reports, such as missing in education report. We will also work closely with the multi-agency teams who may be working with our pupils and families.

What do we hope to achieve?

Delius Special School will do all it can to ensure that pupils come happily, willingly and punctually to school to ensure that they gain the greatest possible value from their education. The school will offer support encouragement and effective strategy to move forward attendance that is low, and reduce leave of absence in term time. We will work closely with all agencies to instigate key actions that may be necessary if attendance fails to improve.

Responsibilities

The governors are responsible for

- Ensuring the school complies with relevant legislation
- Ensures that this policy and any action plans are monitored and reviewed