



**SOUTH WESTMORLAND
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Committee:	Local Advisory Committee
Date of adoption:	20 May 2019
Date of next review:	Spring Term 2025

Review Sheet

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Review
1	Original	20 May 2019
2	Minor amendments to procedures and pastoral team – reviewed and approved by the Local Advisory Committee	24 February 2022

1.0 Introduction

Dallam School recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. The aim of this policy, is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for students within Dallam School to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our young people every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all students attend regularly and on time. Students should aim to attend every day that The School is open setting a challenging target for all students to aim for 100% attendance and the expectation for all students to achieve at least 97%.

Dallam School believes Teachers, Parents, Carers, Students and all members of Dallam School community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring students attend to achieve. This Policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

2.0 Aims

- Maximise the overall percentage of student attendance and punctuality at Dallam School.
- Reduce the number of students who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, students and staff.
- Develop and monitor clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for students.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other agencies.

2.1 Promoting regular Attendance at Dallam School:

This is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and students themselves. To help us all focus on this, Dallam School will ensure:

- Appropriate interventions are in place to deter poor punctuality.
- An appropriate curriculum is essential and will be reviewed regularly.
- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.
- Students are provided with appropriate support to minimise disaffection with school. This includes Dallam School and multi-agency provision as appropriate.
- Special Educational Needs, Disadvantaged and Looked After students and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.
- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- Parents/carers are kept informed of students' attendance and punctuality through first day contact, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.
- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular individual student incentives.
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with students in form time and at assemblies.
- Staff members' attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed.

Dallam will use a range of strategies to promote student attendance. The range of rewards and sanctions will include:

- Regular rewards and recognition for 100% or improved attendance
- Tutor attendance discussions
- Attendance report
- Parental Meeting
- Written warnings
- Attendance Panels
- Visit from the Local Authority
- Penalty Notice
- Prosecution

1. Tutor attendance discussions

Each week student attendance will be reviewed using the weekly pastoral data. Where a student's attendance is less than 95%, the Form Tutor will hold an informal conversation with the student and explain the importance of good attendance (97% and above) and the impact of poor attendance.

2. Parental Meetings

Parental meetings will be arranged with the Pastoral Coordinators and parents of the students who either have been given an unauthorised absence during their two weeks' attendance report; or who show a rapid decline in attendance; or whose absence patterns shown concern to the school; or who are at risk of becoming a persistent absentee. Agreed targets will be set in this meeting and a follow up phone call will take place within an agreed period of time.

3. Written Warnings

Where a student's attendance shows concern or falls below national average, parents will receive a written warning, which will outline the attendance concern and potential next steps. Up to four letters will be sent, depending on the student's attendance percentage and level of intervention already received.

4. Attendance Panels

Context: The attendance panel is not a disciplinary panel. It is a 'positive' panel charged with helping a student improve their attendance to school to help avoid being referred to the Local Authority for Penalty Notice charges or Court Action. The panel can recommend such actions as:

- Signing an attendance contract
- Being placed on an attendance report
- Applying a reduced timetable with home support
- Developing a Pastoral Support Plan
- Involving external support agencies

The process:

Attendees

Member of the Senior Leadership Team, Head of House, Pastoral Coordinator, student and parent/carer.

Opening remarks

The chair will introduce all of the attendees to the parent and explain the nature of the panel stressing its positive nature. He/she will then outline the process which will be:

- The Pastoral Coordinator will outline the school's causes of concern
- The right of the parent to query or request further information regarding these causes of concern
- The panel discuss with the parent and child the concerns as the panel tries to determine the root cause of the concerns
- An attempt to produce a jointly agreed programme of improved attendance

Presenting the case:

The case for Dallam School

The Pastoral Coordinator will be responsible for drawing up the case but it will be presented by the EWO. The EWO will outline the school's cause of concern. He/she will:

- Give the date that the student first attended the school and state the year group that the student is now in
- Present the student's attendance in percentage terms for each year at the academy and how many days and periods were missed that year
- Sum up the total number of days and periods missed in his/her school career
- State the number of lates that the student has had in each year of his/her attendance

The right of reply

The Chair of the panel will ask the parent if he/she would like to ask or query anything in the school's report.

The discussion

The Chair will now lead a discussion that will attempt to determine the underlying causes for the student's attendance problems. The discussion needs to be robust, yet positive, in nature and must make the student reflect on their poor attendance. Once the Chair is satisfied that the root causes have been determined, the discussion should progress to attendance improvement strategies.

Attendance improvement strategies

The Chair must now gain a consensus between the panel, the parent and the student as to the nature of the attendance improvement strategies. They may be:

- Signing an attendance contract
- Applying a reduced timetable with home support
- Developing a support plan
- Involving external support agencies

The final steps

Once the strategy has been agreed it must be put in to place immediately and a written agreement signed by the Chair, the student and the parent before the meeting closes. The Chair should then remind the student and parent that this is a 'last chance' strategy and, if it does not work, then the school will have no alternative but to refer the student to the Local Authority who will have the final say regarding the student's continued attendance at the school. They should ensure that all parties understand this.

3.0 Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

Expectations of students

- Ensure you leave on time and arrive at Dallam School by 8.40am with correct Uniform and equipment to start the day.
- Be in your form room by 8.50am.
- Be quiet whilst the register is being taken.
- Arrive to lessons on time.
- Always attend lesson.
- Never leave the school site without permission.
- Always use the signing in/out system when late or leaving Dallam School for appointments.
- Following any absence complete any missed work that may be provided by Dallam School.

Expectations of Parent/Carer

- Ensure son/daughter leaves for school on time.
- Ensure son/daughter is properly equipped, prepare bags the night before.
- Telephone Dallam School if your son/daughter is to be late.
- Routine or non-emergency appointment such as medical and dental appointments should be made outside Dallam School hours.
- Contact Dallam School preferably by 8.40am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration of the illness.
- Dallam School can be contacted by
Phone: 015395 65165 – option 1 – option 1 (owls) or 2 (deer) or 3 (wolves)
Email: owls@dallamschool.co.uk or deer@dallamschool.co.uk or wolves@dallamschool.co.uk
- If a text message is received as a result of your son/daughter's absence it is important that you respond to this text to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the Pastoral Coordinator if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- **In case of emergency** we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers.
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Head Teacher and can only be authorised by the Head Teacher and if possible at least 4 weeks prior to any leave. Reasons such as family bereavement or taking part in a religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing Dallam School education include general holidays, shopping, concerts and birthdays. Absence Forms can be found on the school website or requested from the pastoral team or Reception.

3.1 If a student is absent we will

- Telephone and text Parent/Carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them.
- If no response is received after three days unauthorised absence, a member of Dallam School staff may conduct a home visit
- If no response is received or the school is unable to contact the parent/carer of a vulnerable student after the first day of absence either by telephone or text then a home visit may be carried out that same day
- If a student's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carer will be invited to meet the Pastoral Coordinator.
- If absences persist the Pastoral Coordinator will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer.

4.0 Understanding types of Absence

Dallam School has to record every absence that a student takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by text or phone on the first day of absence and in writing on the student's return.

4.1 Authorised Absence

These are a day or half day away from school with approved reason such as; illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in Dallam School time, or other emergencies with unavoidable cause.

4.2 Unauthorised Absence

These are those which Dallam School does not consider reasonable and for which no leave of absence has been granted. This type of absence may lead to the use of penalty notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority, these include but are not exclusive to:

- Parent/carers keeping children off unnecessarily
- Students chosen non-attendance (truancy) before or during the school day
- Absences where the parent/carers have not provided an explanation
- Students who arrive at Dallam School too late to get their mark
- Shopping, hair appointments, birthdays etc.
- Holidays and day trips in term time that have not been previously approved by the Head Teacher.

4.3 Persistent Absence

- Students are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DFE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DFE expects Schools to intervene before students reach a level of persistent absence.
- Whilst we understand that students can be absent from Dallam School because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a student is reluctant to attend, or a parent/carer has concerns, it is advised that parents/carers should not cover up their absences as illness or give in to pressure and excuse them from attending as this can make the situation worse.
- Parent/Carers are asked to contact the Pastoral Coordinators in the first instance.

5.0 Why Regular Attendance is very important:

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect students' learning. Students who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

- 90% attendance is equivalent to a student missing one half day of lessons per week or approximately 118 lessons per year

The DFE has published a strong link between poor school attendance and low levels of achievement:

Students attendance	Chance of achieving 5 good pass grades at GCSE
100% - 96%	Very Good Chance , 73% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades.
96% - 94%	Good Chance , 64% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades.
93% - 90%	Fair Chance , 55% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades
80% to 70%	Slim Chance only 20% chance of achieving 5 good pass grades
50% and below	Very Slim Chance only 6% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from Dallam School is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996 and subsequent amendments since) and may result in legal action.

6.0 The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

- The Education Welfare Officer – provides support for parents/carer and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and Dallam School.
- The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if other ways of trying to improve the student's attendance have failed and unauthorised absence persists the EWO will liaise directly with the Local Authority with regard to support options and sanctions for non-school attendance including Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

7.0 Holidays in Term Time

- The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Parents/carers can receive a penalty fine for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from Dallam School. Consent cannot be given in retrospect.
- Head teachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

8.0 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day they can miss work and late arriving students disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the student arriving late and can encourage future absence. A hierarchy of sanctions apply to students who arrive late.

8.1 How we manage lateness

Lateness to school without a valid and exceptional reason will not be tolerated. All school gates will be locked at 8.50am each morning. Students arriving late to school after 8.50am must enter school via the Haverflatts Lane entrance and sign in through the staff entrance/pastoral foyer. Student names and reasons for lateness will be taken by staff. Where necessary students will receive a 30 minute detention at lunch time. Explanations of lateness resulting in a detention will be dealt with on a case by case situation. Failure to attend the 30 minute lunchtime detention will result in an escalation through the school hierarchy of sanctions.

9.0 People Responsible for Attendance matters at Dallam School

All Dallam School staff, parents/carers and students need to work as a team to support the attendance and attainment of students. This continued support therefore is vital in making every student's journey through Dallam School a success.

Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

Whole School Practice

When	Whom	Actions Expected
DAILY	Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive on school site by 8.40am • Be in Form room in time for registration at 8.50am • Bring bag and all equipment for the day • Be on time for lessons throughout the day
	Form Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set an example by arriving on time to register students by 8.50am • Registers are completed on SIMS each day on time (within 5 minutes) • Ensure attendance has a high profile in Tutor Group • Discuss absence with students returning to school. • Welcoming long-term absentees back into the Tutor Group • Discuss any concerns relating to a student absence with the Pastoral Team initiating follow up procedures.
	Subject Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that registers are completed on SIMS each day on time (within 5 minutes of the start of the lesson) • When completing SIMS register teachers should check previous lesson /session for any potential missing students. If a student is in the previous lesson but not in the next, refer to Pastoral Coordinators via email straight away to support follow up interventions. • If a student arrives at the lesson late the mark must be amended using the L code to record the late arrival and record the number of minutes late.
	Pastoral Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring staff have completed AM/PM registers • Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks in the register via SIMS • Identify students who are absent from school without reason (before break) • Log on SIMS, parental voicemails, text messages and emails regarding student absences • Ensure all Late arriving students are spoken to and their attendance is entered on to SIMS • SIMS in touch messages sent to parent/carers who have failed to contact regarding their child's absence and also students who arrive late. • First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no text message has been returned. • SLT and Form Tutors and Teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required • Supporting staff with registration queries, support the interventions of the Form Tutors • Logging attendance of all students going out /in school for medical, dental or visits • Daily liaison with alternative curriculum providers for students off site to ensure AM and PM registers are provided within set time parameters and students who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the First Day contact systems. • Daily Late process: Review the late log and action sanctions as appropriate. Communicate any persistent lateness to the relevant pastoral coordinator to communicate concerns with parents in a timely manner to improve lateness.

	Head of House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of House to conduct informal discussions with identified students to follow up attendance issues and agree future action required. • Heads of House discuss with Form Tutors when required identified students of concern regarding specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required. • Communicate with parents of students who are experiencing attendance difficulties and conversations logged on CPOMS • Communicate with Pastoral Coordinators and EWO regarding appropriate further action with students and/or families.
	EWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding home visits as required. • Focused casework interventions with persistent absence students and families. • Text and phone call contact with students/parent/carers • Home visits • Review pre legal action plan/parent contract and arrange meetings as required • Strategic legal interventions with identified students • Tracking of actions and interventions supporting Pastoral Coordinators with follow up actions with other members of staff.
	Assistant Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with Safeguarding requirements. • Liaison with EWO, Pastoral Coordinators and Heads of House regarding support work with identified students
WEEKLY	Form Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all members of the Tutor Group know the school target and their current attendance • Monitor/follow up identified student non- attendance by making contact with parent/carers where appropriate, record of conversation sent to Pastoral coordinators • Update information on attendance boards in Form rooms.
	Subject Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of students who are regularly absent should be forward initially to the Subject Leaders. • Organise help for students to catch up on missed work due to prolonged absence
	Pastoral Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing EWO/ Heads of House of student patterns of absence and request staff follow up. • Provide weekly student attendance figures for – F o r m T u t o r s and student rewards. • Discuss punctuality issues with identified students and parent/carers

	Head of House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct weekly analysis of punctuality • Maintain a high profile of attendance as contributor to student achievement • Monitor and supervise the work of Form Tutors in promoting attendance and ensure attendance features regularly in pastoral meetings. • Monitor attendance in their year group, with a focus on students approaching PA (90%). • Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions re action plans or other students causing concern. • Ensure that attendance features in Heads of House assemblies and parents' evenings • Students with on-going attendance concerns should be discussed with the EWO to agree appropriate further action.
	SENCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the attendance of all students with SEN status and with an EHCP or statement of additional need. • Liaise with Heads of House and the Assistant Head Teacher regarding strategies for specific students. • Liaise with EWO regarding students with attendance concerns.
	EWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with Assistant Head Teacher regarding development of attendance policies and procedures and ensure that attendance is a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to Senior Leadership Team, Subject Leaders, and Heads of House for plans to raise attendance. • Communicate with Heads of House regularly regarding attendance issues. • Liaison with the Local Authority Access and Inclusion Team • Preparing court reports and legal files • Updating legal actions, data spread sheet and tracking interventions • Update Alternative Curriculum, Pupil Referral Unit and Hospital Home Tuition Service data base. • Analysis of data/statistics to ensure relevant and accurate statistics are maintained. • Prepare weekly attendance statistics for SLT, trends and patterns of attendance including year group and whole school, including vulnerable groups - SEND, Disadvantaged, Gender and Persistent Absence. • Safeguarding monitoring and track 10 and 20 sessions missed students • Review meetings with parents and carers as required.
	Assistant Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with EWO regarding development of attendance policies and procedures and future agreed actions. • Communicate at Staff briefings regarding concerns, issues and plans to raise attendance. • Communicate with Achievement Leaders at weekly meetings regarding attendance issues. • Meet with SLT ensure that attendance is a key driver of school improvement and provide information to Senior Leadership regarding future actions or issues arising.

HALF TERMLY	AO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students Rewards • Punctuality data for Assistant Head Teacher.
	Subject Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to student achievement and attainment within subject areas by the regular inclusion of attendance in department meetings • Establish departmental procedures to monitor and follow up attendance • Use attendance data and learning cycle data, to identify and take action to improve the attendance of vulnerable students • Monitor departmental staff to ensure that their roles with regard to attendance are carried out effectively and efficiently • Ensure that all teaching staff focus on attendance in planning and pedagogy • Students regularly missing from lessons are followed up.
	Heads of House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that attendance features in ALL parents evenings • Monitor and track attendance Action plans • Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions re action plans or other students causing concern.
	EWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dallam School Attendance Review alongside the Assistant Head Teacher. • Report attendance data - Key Performance Indicators. • Strategic interventions- Persistent Absence letters and Action plans throughout the academic year to ensure students with Persistent Absence are intervened with through a range of measures including Local Authority Legal actions when required.
TERMLY	Assistant Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all students both in Dallam School and those at off-site provision. • Dallam School Attendance Review alongside the EWO • Ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to Senior Leadership Team, Subject Leaders, and Heads of House for plans to raise attendance • Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across all departments and that systems are operating effectively • Report to SLT on attendance matters <p>Ensure school prospectus, parent/carers' welcome booklet and school newsletters promote Attendance</p>
	HEAD TEACHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Local Advisory Committee

9.0 Table of Escalation of Interventions

Attendance %	RAG	Intervention	Lead Responsibility
100% - 97% Attendance is Excellent	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rewards and Praise 	Pastoral Coordinator Form Tutor Attendance Officer Assistant Head Teacher
95% - 96.9% Attendance is Good	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter 1 Rewards for improvement 	Pastoral Coordinator Form Tutor Attendance Officer
93% - 94.9% Attendance is a Concern	Orange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal phone call 2 - Talk to students & contact parent/carers 5 minute meetings Alert/Advise Achievement Leaders Home Visits upon request 	Form Tutor Pastoral Coordinator Attendance Officer, Heads of House
90% - 92.9% Attendance is a Serious Concern	Pink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter 3 – formal attendance panel meetings Regular next action planning in the meeting Action Plans Early Help or Legal intervention Home visits upon request Letter 4 	Pastoral Coordinators Form Tutors (EWO/Attendance Officer as requested at meetings) Assistant Head Teacher EWO
0% - 89.9	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter 4 Local Authority referral Formal Attendance monitoring meetings Potential Local Authority prosecution for attendance order 	EWO Pastoral Coordinators Local Authority Assistant Head Teacher

Dallam School – Improving Student Attendance – flow chart

