



**DEAN CLOSE**  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL  
CHELTENHAM

**Independent, Co-educational, Day and Boarding  
Preparatory School**

**DCPS Attendance Policy  
(P229)**

Registered Charity No: 1086829

Last Reviewed: September 2024  
Next Review Date: September 2025  
Owner: Designated Safeguarding Lead

## DEAN CLOSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. A range of documents, circulars and guidance for good practice govern attendance at Dean Close Preparatory School. Key documents, which inform this policy include:
  - a. *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)*
  - b. *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*
  - c. *The Education (ISS) Regulations (2014)*
  - d. *National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Boarding (2022)*
  - e. *School Attendance – Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (2022)*
  
2. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.
  
3. Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the "School Roll" (held on iSAMS), and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met. Every entry in the school registers must be preserved for a minimum period of six years since the date the entry was made.
  
4. The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very prescriptive reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session, and during the afternoon for all day pupils. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.
  
5. Boarding pupils are covered by the Boarding Standards: NMS Standard 20 places a legal requirement upon staff who have boarders in their charge to know their whereabouts at **all times**. The Missing Child Policy (P216) must be referred to if the whereabouts of a pupil is not known.

#### **Policy Statement**

For pupils to fully benefit from the educational opportunities provided by Dean Close Preparatory School it is vital that high levels of attendance and punctuality are sustained throughout the academic year. Dean Close Preparatory School has an expectation that all pupils will be striving for a culture of 100% attendance and 100% punctuality. Poor levels

of attendance will negatively impact the personal, social and academic development of the pupil. It may also be an indicator of abuse or neglect or in itself may indicate that a child is at immediate risk of harm. Consequently, the attendance and registration arrangements set out in the document below are hugely important. The school however appreciates that some pupils have specific needs and there may be barriers to them achieving high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Term dates are published over a year in advance on the website in order that parents can arrange holidays and/or travel arrangements to/from School without disrupting a pupil's education. Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence.

### **Responsibilities of the School**

1. The School must inform the LEA if: a pupil is absent for a prolonged period without permission or leaves the school without enrolling elsewhere; when a pupil is removed from the school's roll due to reasons like home education, moving to another school, permanent exclusion or prolonged unauthorised absence; if there are welfare or safeguarding issues connected to the absence, which may require notifying local authorities for child protection.
2. The School has a Senior Attendance Champion – Mrs E Bailey, Designated Safeguarding Lead. She can be contacted on [ecbailey@deanclose.org.uk](mailto:ecbailey@deanclose.org.uk) Pupils will be spoken with, through tutor times, about the importance of regular attendance. There will be regular reminder to parents via Hermes.
3. The school will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels and hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school believes to be vulnerable or who are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
4. Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year) the school will work together with parents to put targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the SLT and Houseparent (HsP) will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.
5. The school will identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
6. The school will support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.

7. The school will monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This analysis should be used to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or tutors. The school should also conduct half-termly, termly and full year data to identify patterns and trends.

8. If a pupil's absence remains a cause for concern, the National Framework for Penalty Notice will be followed, as set out in *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*

### **Pupils with medical conditions or special educations needs and disabilities**

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who are on the SEND register. They have the same right to education as all other pupils. Dean Close Prep School works with parents and other agencies to make reasonable adjustments to support the child. Working with the pastoral team we will establish strategies to remove any in-school barriers.

In exceptional circumstances a pupil may be given a temporary part-time timetable but always with a pathway for that to becoming full time. A part-time timetable will never be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

### **The School Day**

All pupils are expected to be in registration in their Houses by 8.20am Monday to Friday. Pupils who arrive after registration has started will be marked as late. Registration closes at 8.50am and pupils who arrive after this time will be marked as Unauthorised Absent.

Registration in the afternoon is at 1.50pm (Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri), during IST, and afternoon registration closes at 2.20pm. On Wednesdays, afternoon registration is from 12.15-12.45pm.

The normal school day ends at 4.15pm from Monday to Friday, and after IST and School Clubs for those enrolled.

There is an expectation that all day pupils will have left site by 6.00pm unless specific arrangement have been put in place with the relevant HsP.

Pupils are also registered in lessons by their classroom teachers.

### **Requesting Absence**

The school can grant leave of absence in certain circumstances:

- Attending an interview or test for entry into another educational institution
- Exceptional circumstances: this must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is

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granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

- To participate in an approved sporting activity

In these circumstances, a request for absence should be made directly to the Head, Mr. P. Moss.

Requests for appointments should be kept to a minimum. It is expected that routine appointments are made during holidays or after school hours.

A request for a holiday is not considered an exceptional circumstance

If a pupil is unwell the parent should contact the HsP and Front Office before 8.00am each and every day of absence. Contact details are:

Front office – [dcpsoffice@deanclose.org.uk](mailto:dcpsoffice@deanclose.org.uk)

Deacon – [rbeechem@deanclose.org.uk](mailto:rbeechem@deanclose.org.uk)

Oaksey – [clsalisbury@deanclose.org.uk](mailto:clsalisbury@deanclose.org.uk)

Yeaman – [cjstanding@deanclose.org.uk](mailto:cjstanding@deanclose.org.uk)

## Managing Attendance

Registers will be marked in accordance with the DfE Codes set out in Appendix 1.

An Unauthorised Absence Code (N – no reason provided for absence) will be followed up until a pupil has been accounted for, at which point the code will be changed. Sports coaches who have fixtures which overlap with Registration **must provide** a team sheet to the Front Office in advance.

Absence codes are clearly shown on iSAMS and staff can only select from the list given.

AM and PM Registration will be followed up by the Front Office where pupils are shown as unauthorised.

The process followed by the Front Office is as follows:

- Check Period 1 or Period 5 attendance
- Visit teaching areas
- Check Music / Speech and Drama lessons
- Ring Health Centre
- Ring parents (Day Pupils).

A pupil marked N is a concern; Staff and Front Office will liaise to resolve or the Missing Pupil Policy may be used.

Pupils will also be registered in each lesson. Any absences will be checked against the morning and afternoon registers on isams, to check if the pupil is present in school. If present in school but absent for a lesson, and the reason is unknown, the school office will be notified so that the pupil's whereabouts can be established.

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## APPENDIX 1

### DFE Codes

#### Present Codes

/	Present (morning)
\	Present (afternoon)
L	Late arrival after registration began but before the registration was closed.
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an Educational Visit or Trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity, run by or supervised by school staff.
B	Attending any other approved educational activity. e.g taster days

**Authorised Absence Codes** – these codes are used when the School has given approval for the absence in advance or has accepted an explanation.

I	Illness
M	Medical/Dental appointments
J1	Absence for the purpose of attending an interview for admission to another education institution
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
R	Religious Observance
E	Suspended or permanently excluded

#### Unauthorised Absence Codes

G	Family holiday (not agreed)
N	Reason for absence not yet established. To be followed up and code changed.
O	Absence in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed, with no valid reason to use other codes.