DANE ROYD J&I SCHOOL

Attendance Strategy

Review frequency: Annually

Approval by: Roger Burton

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Lead personnel: J.Davison

Aims which guide our policies and practice at Dane Royd School



PERSEVERANCE

As a school, we aim to nurture an environment where children and staff achieve and thrive. We want to build strong foundations and a love of learning where every member of our school community feels they belong, can be, and become the very best version of themselves. We want our children to understand the rich heritage of the world; to be a positive member of their community and to become skilled citizens who have self-belief, passion and empathy for the world in which they live.

Our Agreed Strong Foundations are:



RESPECTFUL

- To create a school environment which nurtures and encourages a life-long love of learning.
- All members of the school community will live the school values. Through these values, we will equip our young people with the skills for life, to make them reflective, empathetic and open-minded members of the community.
- To provide vital enrichment activities to provide opportunities for our children to experience and thrive in.



OPEN-MINDED

- To teach the knowledge and skills to enable our young people to make informed decisions about their well-being, health and relationships to build their self-efficacy.
- To celebrate differences and diversity, and promote equity of opportunity so all can thrive together.
- To have high aspirations for all our young people. We want every child to succeed in their own way. Successful learning means enabling every individual – regardless of background, race, gender, disability, sexuality or socioeconomic status – to flourish in our school.



UNDERSTANDING

- To support pupils to become responsible, active citizens who can play their part in public life as young people and adults in modern Britain.
- We want our children and staff to be proud of their school. By following our school values, we will build a respectful, dynamic and inclusive school community where everyone's achievements are celebrated.

We ensure that all of our policies and practices are guided by these aims and we seek to ensure that they are at the forefront of all that we do.



DETERMINED

ATTENDANCE STRATEGY 2026-2029

Every Child. Every Day. Every Lesson.

Our Vision

At Dane Royd J & I School, we believe that education is a fundamental right. Every child has the right to attend school, to belong, to achieve and to thrive. Attendance is therefore not simply an administrative measure; it is the foundation of safeguarding, learning, wellbeing, inclusion and future opportunity.

We believe that attendance is everyone's responsibility. Children, families, staff, governors and partner agencies all play a vital role in ensuring every child can access their entitlement to a full-time education. Our approach is built upon relationships, belonging, support and shared accountability.

In line with the Department for Education's expectations, we will continue to develop a whole-school culture that promotes excellent attendance through strong relationships, early intervention and the removal of barriers to learning.

Attendance is a key safeguarding responsibility. Children who do not attend school regularly are at greater risk of educational disadvantage, social isolation, exploitation, unmet needs and poor outcomes. Attendance monitoring therefore forms an integral part of the school's safeguarding systems and early identification processes.

The school will apply the principles contained within the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* guidance. Support for children and families will always be our first response. Where support has not secured sufficient improvement and attendance remains a significant concern, the school will work with the Local Authority to consider appropriate statutory interventions.

Our strategy is underpinned by four simple beliefs:

Every Child Belongs

Children attend regularly when they feel safe, valued and connected.

Every Minute Matters

Attendance maximises learning opportunities, achievement and personal development.

Everyone Shares Responsibility

Attendance is not the responsibility of one individual or team. It is embedded within every interaction, every relationship and every decision we make.

Attendance is Safeguarding

Regular attendance is one of the strongest indicators that a child is safe, included and able to access learning. Attendance concerns are treated as safeguarding concerns when patterns of absence indicate potential unmet need, vulnerability or risk.

Our Starting Position

Dane Royd enters this strategy from a position of significant strength. Attendance has improved consistently over the last three academic years and remains well above national averages.

Academic Year	Dane Royd	National
2023-24	95.7%	94.5%
2024-25	96.2%	94.8%
2025-26	96.7%	94.8%

The gap between Dane Royd and national attendance averages has widened year on year. In 2025-26 the school exceeded its improvement target, achieving 96.7% attendance.

Attendance is recognised as a significant strength of the school. Dane Royd was identified as the highest-performing school for both overall attendance and persistent absence amongst its statistically similar schools.

Persistent absence also remains significantly below national figures.

Academic Year	School PA	National PA
2023-24	6.3%	14.6%
2024-25	5.6%	13.0%
2025-26	3.6%	14.4%

Attendance for disadvantaged and SEND pupils also remains significantly above national averages.

Group	School	National
FSM	95.8%	92.3%
SEND	96.1%	92.4%

Current in-year data suggests these improvements are continuing, with attendance tracking ahead of the same point last year and persistent absence reducing from 10.1% to 5.6%.

Strategic Aims

Through this strategy we will:

- Maintain attendance significantly above national averages.
- Sustain persistent absence rates significantly below national averages.
- Continue to improve attendance for vulnerable groups.
- Embed a culture where attendance is everyone's responsibility.
- Strengthen staff expertise in relational attendance practice.
- Build family partnerships that remove barriers to attendance.
- Ensure every child experiences a strong sense of belonging.
- Ensure attendance systems contribute effectively to safeguarding and early help processes.
- Use attendance patterns as an early indicator of additional need and barriers to learning.

Strategic Pillars

1. Culture Before Compliance

We recognise that excellent attendance is the outcome of an outstanding school culture. Children attend schools where they feel welcomed, safe, successful and valued. The strongest attendance strategy therefore creates a school where children genuinely want to attend.

We will:

- Promote belonging through every aspect of school life.
- Celebrate attendance improvement, commitment and resilience.
- Use pupil voice to shape provision.
- Ensure every child has a trusted adult.
- Embed attendance within assemblies and school values.
- Continue to prioritise inclusion and wellbeing.
- Establish attendance ambassadors and pupil leadership opportunities.
- Enable pupils to evaluate and shape attendance initiatives.

Evidence from school reviews highlights the strength of Dane Royd's values-led culture and the positive impact this has on attendance and engagement.

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2. Staff Training at the Core

The quality of relationships between pupils and staff is one of the most important factors in improving attendance.

Attendance is therefore a professional responsibility for every member of staff.

Annual professional development will include:

- Relational practice.
- Trauma-informed approaches.
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).
- Attendance and SEND.
- Anxiety and school belonging.
- Effective parental engagement.
- Attendance legislation and statutory expectations.
- Attendance as safeguarding.
- Children Missing Education procedures.
- Child Protection and attendance.
- Effective attendance support planning.
- Early identification of attendance concerns.

Attendance will feature routinely within staff development, safeguarding updates and leadership monitoring.

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3. Relationships Drive Attendance

We recognise that families are our most important partners.

Attendance meetings and interventions will focus on understanding barriers and finding solutions rather than assigning blame.

We will:

- Build relationships before concerns arise.
- Use a strengths-based approach.

- Listen before acting.
- Create attendance support plans collaboratively.
- Work with external agencies where required.
- Maintain high expectations alongside high support.

4. Inclusion is Attendance

Attendance and inclusion are inseparable.

Attendance data is one of the most important indicators of whether a child feels included, successful and able to access learning.

Our inclusive culture recognises that attendance barriers can be linked to SEND, SEMH needs, anxiety, family circumstances, medical needs and wider vulnerabilities.

Attendance data will be used as an early indicator of unmet need. Where attendance begins to decline, consideration will be given to whether SEND, SEMH, safeguarding concerns, family circumstances, curriculum engagement, anxiety or wider inclusion factors may be contributing.

Attendance interventions will align closely with the school's wider inclusion strategy and graduated response systems to ensure barriers are quickly identified and addressed.

The school recognises that attendance difficulties may arise from a child's SEND. Whilst attendance expectations remain high for all pupils, responses and support will always be personalised, proportionate and aligned to individual need.

5. Data Informs Action

We will use attendance data proactively rather than reactively.
Leaders will:

- Monitor attendance weekly.
- Analyse trends by class, year group and vulnerable group.
- Identify pupils before persistent absence develops.
- Monitor impact of interventions.
- Report regularly to governors.
- Benchmark performance against national and statistically similar schools.

6. Attendance as Safeguarding

Attendance is one of the most significant safeguarding indicators available to schools. Attendance concerns are often the earliest indication that a child or family may require additional support.
We will:

- Use attendance data to identify vulnerable pupils early.
- Share attendance concerns through safeguarding systems where appropriate.
- Ensure attendance concerns feature within safeguarding and inclusion discussions.
- Align attendance processes with early help systems.

- Maintain robust Children Missing Education procedures.
- Escalate concerns appropriately where risks are identified.

Children Missing Education

The school will maintain robust procedures for identifying, monitoring and responding to Children Missing Education.

Any child whose whereabouts become unknown will be referred promptly through safeguarding and local authority procedures. Attendance concerns which indicate increased risk will be escalated through safeguarding processes.

Attendance Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Monitor attendance as a strategic priority.
- Challenge and support attendance improvement work.
- Evaluate attendance outcomes.

Headteacher

- Maintain strategic oversight.
- Ensure statutory compliance.
- Report attendance outcomes to governors.

Attendance Lead

- Coordinate attendance systems.
- Monitor attendance interventions.
- Evaluate impact.

Class Teachers

- Build positive relationships.
- Promote attendance expectations.
- Identify concerns early.

Families

- Ensure regular attendance.
- Engage with support.
- Communicate barriers.

Pupils

- Attend regularly.
- Engage positively with school.
- Access support when required.

Graduated Attendance Support Model

Tier 1: Universal Provision

All Pupils (0-9 Days Absence)

Focus: Belonging, Engagement and Prevention

Maintain existing provision from the current strategy.

Tier 2: At Risk of Persistent Absence

10-18.5 Days Absence

Focus: Early Identification and Early Help

Interventions include:

- Attendance conversation with family.
- Exploration of barriers.
- Attendance support plan.
- Short-term attendance targets.
- Increased pastoral support.
- SENDCo involvement.
- Early Help consideration.
- Trusted adult allocation.
- Individual pupil voice meeting.
- Curriculum and classroom barrier review.
- Flexible transition support.
- EBSA screening and assessment where appropriate.
- Attendance review every four weeks.

Tier 3: Persistent Absence

19+ Days Absence

Focus: Intensive Support and Multi-Agency Intervention

Interventions include:

- Senior Leader oversight.
- Individual Attendance Action Plan.
- Daily attendance monitoring.
- Multi-agency support.
- Early Help assessment.
- Family support referrals.
- Home visits where appropriate.
- ELSA and SEMH support.
- Individual EBSA pathway.
- Personalised reintegration plans.
- Attendance considered alongside SEND and safeguarding reviews.
- Team Around the Family meetings.
- Reduced-demand approaches where appropriate.
- Phased return arrangements where appropriate.
- Attendance Improvement Team involvement.
- Statutory processes only when support has not secured improvement.

Attendance Dashboard

Measure	Baseline 2025-26	2029 Target
Whole School Attendance	96.7%	97.2%
Persistent Absence	3.6%	Below 3.0%
SEND Attendance	96.1%	Above 96.5%
Disadvantaged Attendance	95.3%	Above 96.0%
Attendance Support Plans Reviewed	New Measure	100%
EBSA Plans Implemented	New Measure	100% where required

Three-Year Targets

Year	Attendance Target
2025-26 Actual	96.7%
2026-27	97.0%
2027-28	97.1%
2028-29	97.2%

Alongside these targets, Dane Royd will continue to:

- Maintain persistent absence significantly below national averages.
- Maintain attendance for SEND pupils above national averages.
- Maintain attendance for disadvantaged pupils above national averages.
- Remain among the highest-performing attendance schools within its comparison group.

Success Measures by 2029

By July 2029:

- Whole-school attendance is at or above 97.2%.
- Persistent absence remains significantly below national figures.
- Attendance for SEND and disadvantaged pupils remains above national averages.
- Staff demonstrate confidence in relational attendance practice.
- Families report positive experiences of attendance support.
- Pupils report strong feelings of belonging.
- Attendance continues to be recognised as a key strength of the school.

How We Will Know This Strategy Is Working

Success will be evidenced through:

- Sustained attendance above national averages.
- Continued reductions in persistent absence.
- Reduced attendance gaps between groups.
- Improved wellbeing outcomes.
- Positive parental feedback.
- Improved attendance for vulnerable learners.
- Strong safeguarding outcomes.
- Positive external review outcomes.
- Successful reintegration of pupils requiring enhanced support.

Strategic Commitment

At Dane Royd J & I School, attendance is not achieved through pressure, compliance or punishment. Attendance is achieved through belonging, relationships, inclusion and shared responsibility. By investing in our staff, strengthening our culture and working in partnership with families, we will ensure every child can access their right to education, every day, in every lesson.