


# PARTNERSHIP

BETWEEN **HOME & SCHOOL**

2021-2022



**DARWEN  
VALE**

An Aldridge Community Academy 

**WE AIM HIGH | WE WORK HARD | WE CARE | WE ARE VALE**

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# Welcome

Dear Parent/Carer,

## Partnership between Home and School

Positive partnerships between Home and School are crucial in ensuring that every child achieves to the best of their ability. At Darwen Vale, we invite everyone to become part of our school community in order that we can unlock the Potential for Extraordinary Achievement.

We will provide every pupil with the means to make at least expected progress that they should achieve. As part of our partnership we ask that you support us in a number of ways:

Homework – Ensuring that your child is able to complete their homework on time.

Attendance & Punctuality – Making sure that your child is at school every day and on time.

Appearance – Helping us to create the right environment in school by sending your child to school each day looking ready to learn.

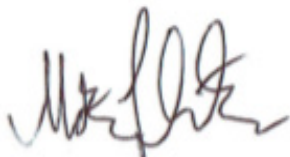
Communication – Staying in touch with us to keep us informed of your child's needs.

Enclosed with this booklet are a number of documents that we would like you to read.

Please remember that, in response to requests, we are now using social media to convey our news and messages. You can follow us on twitter at [www.twitter.com/darwenvale](http://www.twitter.com/darwenvale). We are very pleased to note that our number of followers is growing all the time!

Please return the necessary documents to school as soon as possible and do not hesitate to get in touch if you are unsure about anything.

Yours sincerely



Mr M J Little  
Principal

# Attendance Protocol

This is a successful school and your child plays an important part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Protocol sets out how together we will achieve this.

## Why regular attendance is so important:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines, so may also affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and can result in prosecution.

## Promoting regular attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

## To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and events;
- Run promotional events when pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

## Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parents/carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Where ever possible ensure, routine medical or dental appointments, should be arranged for after school or during school holidays.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Examples:

- Keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they may be reluctant to attend school. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse; any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child.

### **Persistent Absence (PA):**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' having missed 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents/carers fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the 10% absence mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring because absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents/carers are involved in producing an Action Plan to look at strategies that could be put in place to support their child's attendance.

All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority.

If your child's level of unauthorised absences exceeds the agreed Penalty Notice absence threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions per term, or 14 unauthorised sessions over two consecutive terms, you will become liable for a Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the fine within the agreed time limit will result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Separate notices will be issued to each person, per individual child, where there is more than one parent/carer liable for this offence and each penalty you and, where applicable, your spouse/partner receive must be paid.

### **Absence Procedures:**

#### **If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send in a note on the first day of return, with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us.

#### **If your child is absent we will:**

- Text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you. So it is essential that we have an up to date contact number;
- Invite you to discuss the situation with your child's Form Tutor or Head of Year.

### **Telephone numbers:**

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year and yellow datasheets will be sent home at the start of each new school year. It is essential that you return them to school, amended if necessary.

## The Attendance Officer:

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to our Attendance Officer. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve your child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the school can use sanctions such as requests for Penalty Notices.

Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school, are available from the Local Authority or by contacting Mr Smalley, Attendance Leader on the school number 01254 223000.

## Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child and also encourage absence.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Form Tutor, Head of Year or our Attendance Leader to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. Any pupil arriving more than 30 minutes after the start of the school day will be classed as an unauthorised attendance. This could lead to persistent absence and result in a fine. If your child's punctuality still does not improve he/she will be referred to the Welfare Panel of Governors.

## Holidays in term time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling more than any other absence and we expect parents/carers not to take children away in term time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go away. The Government's advice to parents is that holidays should be taken when the school is closed.

Changes in Government regulations will mean that from 1st September 2013 Headteachers will no longer be able to grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are specific exceptional circumstances.

These could include:

- Members of the armed forces who are returning home from active duties
- Emergency services personnel (Police, Ambulance, Fire and Rescue) and other employees who are prevented from taking family holidays outside term-time e.g a parent working abroad on a fixed time-period contract
- The death of an immediate family member e.g parent, sibling or grandparent

In addition, any parental application for leave in exceptional circumstances must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the individual circumstances warrant them granting leave. Retrospective approval can no longer be given.

Taking a child on holiday without permission will be regarded as an unauthorised absence. Parents who do so may be issued with a Penalty Notice by the local authority. The fine is £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the Notice. Where a Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the local authority will normally start legal proceedings in the Magistrates court.

## School targets, projects and special initiatives:

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

Targets for the school and for classes are displayed in school and your child should take time to study them.

Our aim is for every pupil to attend 100% of the time. The absolute minimum level of attendance for this school is **95%**, and we will keep you updated regularly about your child's attendance.

Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the Local Authority.

Throughout the school year we will monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided on our school website and we ask for your full support.

### Summary:

All our school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents, and to promote attendance, equally parents have a legal duty to make sure that children attend.

## Lunchtime Arrangements

### Arrangements for lunch:

- Have a lunch provided in school
- Bring a packed lunch to eat

Under no circumstances are pupils allowed to leave the school grounds at lunchtime except to go home. In this case parental consent must have been provided for a dinner pass to be issued.

### School Meals

A cafeteria system is operated with a wide range of hot and cold food being available. The school operates a cashless catering system linked to an Biometric finger print system – pupils can access their catering account using the finger print readers on our account loaders, which can then be credited both from home and within the school in the canteen.

### Lunch Bags

Pupils can purchase their lunch bags before the start of the school day and collect at lunchtime in the Restaurant. This allows pupils to avoid queuing and provides a fast, efficient service – a good idea for taking to lunch time clubs.

### Packed Lunches

Packed lunches can be eaten in the Restaurant.

# Bullying Charter

## Bullying: A Charter of Pupil Rights

As a member of Darwen Vale High School, you have the right:

- To feel safe and comfortable
- To be an individual and proud of it
- Not to be bullied
- To say 'no' firmly to anything you think is wrong
- To protect yourself by ignoring others or walking away
- To tell a member of staff if someone is making you unhappy

## Bullying: A Charter of Pupil Responsibilities

As a member of Darwen Vale High School, the school expects you:

- Not to put up with any form of bullying
- To work with others to stop bullying
- To inform a member of staff of any form of bullying
- Not to be afraid of reporting incidents

If you do nothing it might suggest you support bullying.



# Key Members of Staff

## Senior Leadership Team

Mr M J Little	Principal
Mrs R Cull	Vice Principal
Mr A Venables	Vice Principal
Mr A Bradley	Assistant Principal
Mr D Smalley	Assistant Principal
Miss D Hayes	Assistant Principal - English
Miss L Price	Assistant Principal - Maths

These senior members of staff have responsibility for the line management of all aspects of school policy and life.

## Academic Organisation

Mrs S Penney	Head of Science
Miss M Jones	Head of Modern Foreign Languages
Miss T Korth	Associate Assistant Principal - Humanities
Miss E Jones	Head of Performing Arts
Miss J Mitchell	Head of ICT and Business Studies
Miss K Ramsey	Head of Art and Design Technology
Mr S Pilkington	Head of PE
Mrs S Pollitt	SENCO / Associate Assistant Principal
Msr S Marsland	Associate Assistant Principal

## Pastoral Organisation

	Mr S Broderick	Director of KS3
	Mrs L Belham	Director of KS4
<b>Year 7</b>	Head of Year	Miss T Scott
<b>Year 8</b>	Head of Year	Mr C Goulding
<b>Year 9</b>	Head of Year	Miss K Lamster
<b>Year 10</b>	Head of Year	Mrs C McKenna
<b>Year 11</b>	Head of Year	Mr D Adcroft

# School Day

Time	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
8:45am - 9:10am	Tutor Time				
9:10am - 10:10am	Period 1				
10:10am - 11:10am	Period 2				
11:10am - 11:30am	Break				
11:30am - 12:30pm	Period 3				
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Period 4				
1:30pm - 2:00pm	Lunch				
2:00pm - 3:00pm	Period 5				
3:00pm - 3:45pm	Period 6				
	Monday, Wednesday & Thursday for Years 10 & 11				

## Appearance and School Dress 2021

The appearance of the pupils reflects very much on the School and all pupils are expected to wear school uniform to and from school and to maintain a smart and clean appearance. The uniform requirements are quite clear and girls must wear only the specified tailored trousers or skirt.

**Garments in the distinctive school colours with logo can be obtained from:**

Gray's, Northgate, Blackburn Tel: 01254 514257  
Derek Whittaker & Co, Church Street, Blackburn BB1 5AL Tel: 01254 676047  
Snazzy's. 22- 24 Bridge Street. Darwen Tel: 07980353104

School ties and badges are also available at the school from Pupil Services.

**It is vital that all property, including items of clothing, is plainly marked with the pupil's name.**

**Jeans, training pants, boot leg, ski pants, sweatshirts and denim or leather jackets should not be worn. Training shoes of any colour and boots are not allowed in school.**

**PUPILS RISK BEING SENT HOME TO GET CHANGED IF WEARING INCORRECT UNIFORM WITHOUT A NOTE**

In extreme circumstances if there has to be a variation from the required standard, pupils should be provided with a note explaining the situation and giving a date when the uniform will be complete. The full uniform must be reinstated in as short a time as possible.

## Protective Clothing

It is expected that aprons will be worn whilst carrying out certain activities within Design Technology. Aprons will be provided by school.

**Sweatshirts** (Year 11 only) Forms for sweatshirts are available from Pupil Services.

## Jewellery

The only items of jewellery allowed are a wrist watch and for pupils with pierced ears, one small plain metal stud in each ear. Facial, mouth and navel piercings are not allowed. (This includes clear plastic replacements). All jewellery may have to be removed for safety reasons, on request from a member of staff. Make-up, false eye lashes and nail varnish may not be worn.

## Hair

All styles must be neat and tidy. Unusual or bizarre styles, colours and excessive braiding and ornamentation are not allowed.

## Please note the following items are not permitted in School:

- Cigarettes and smoking materials
- Aerosols
- Tippex
- Permanent markers
- Any other materials damaging to health

## Boys

**Tie** - Official School

**Blazer** - Black

**Badge** - School Badge

**Pullover** - V-necked in black with red stripe and embroidery

**Trousers** - Black – conventional style – not cords or denim

**Shirt** - Plain light blue – not denim

**Socks** - Plain black

**Shoes** - Plain black

**Outer coat** - Plain black or navy (NOT denim, leather jackets or hooded sweatshirts) Outer coats should not be worn inside the school building

## Boys PE Kit

**Darwen Vale Badged Hoody** - Navy Blue

**Darwen Vale Polo Shirt** - Navy Blue

**Darwen Vale Shorts** - Navy Blue

**Darwen Vale Badged Leggings** - Navy Blue

**Socks** - Navy Blue (Optional)

**Trainers** - for indoor use and 3G astro

**Football Boots** - for outdoor use (3G astro & field)

## Girls Uniform

**Tie** - Official School

**Blazer** - Black

**Badge** - School Badge

**Pullover** - V-necked in black with red stripe and embroidery

**Skirt** - Plain black, stitch down pleat (please ask at uniform supplier for the official Darwen Vale skirt)

**Trousers** - Black – conventional style – Tailored – Please note that tight and boot legged styles are not allowed

**Blouse** - Plain light blue, shirt style with collar – not denim

**Tights/ Socks** - Black tights only in the first 2 terms. Black tights or unpatterned knee length black socks in the summer term. Knee length socks need to be worn just below the knee.

**Shoes** - Plain black with a low heel

**Outer coat** - Plain black or navy (NOT denim, leather jackets or hooded sweatshirts) Outer coats should not be worn inside the school building

## Girls PE kit

**Darwen Vale Badged Hoody** - Navy Blue

**Darwen Vale Polo Shirt** - Navy Blue

**Darwen Vale Shorts or Skort** - Navy Blue

**Darwen Vale Badged Leggings** - Navy Blue

**Socks** - Navy Blue (Optional)

**Trainers** - for indoor use and 3G astro

**Football Boots** - for outdoor use (3G astro & field)

# Term and Holiday Dates 2021 - 22

## **Autumn Term 2021**

Wednesday 1st September School closed for Staff Training

Thursday 2nd September School closed for Staff Training

Friday 3rd September School closed for Staff Training

Monday 6th September School opens for all pupils

Friday 22nd October School closes

Half term Monday 25th October - Friday 29th October 2021

Monday 1st November School re-opens

Friday 17th December School closes

Christmas Holiday Monday 20th December 2021 – Monday 3rd January 2022

## **Spring Term 2022**

Tuesday 4th January School re-opens

Friday 11th February School closes

Half term Monday 14th February - Friday 18th February 2022

Monday 21st February School re-opens

Friday 1st April School closes

Easter Holiday Monday 4th April – Monday 18th April 2021

## **Summer Term 2022**

Tuesday 19th April School re-opens

Monday 2nd May Bank Holiday

Friday 27th May School closes

Half term Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June 2022

Monday 6th June School re-opens

Thursday 21st July School closes for the summer

*Further Staff Training Days for later in the academic year are to be confirmed*

# School Comms

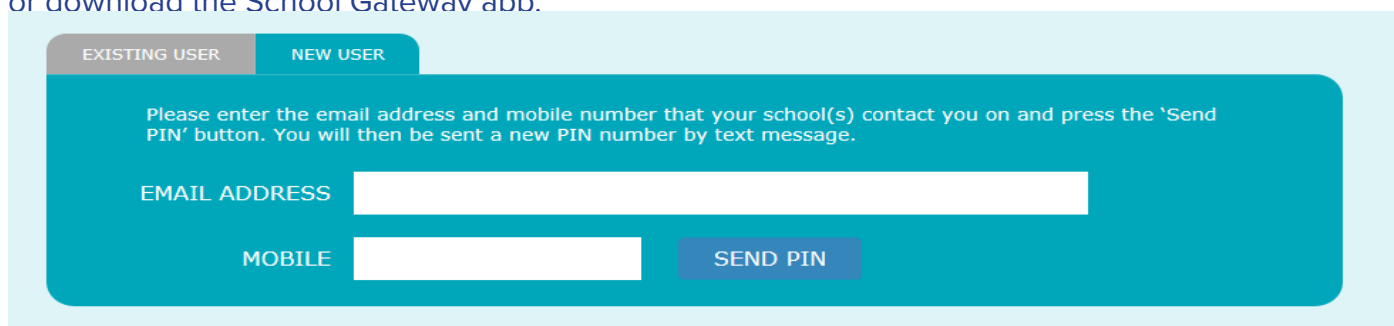
September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Finding the right change or writing a cheque for the school trip or other items for school can be tiresome and time consuming. You or your child takes the payment/s to school and the school office counts and records it. At school we use Schoolcomms to offer you an online payment method which puts you in control. You can access it at any time, track how much you have paid, what is outstanding and make payments directly to us by setting up a direct bank payment or using your debit or credit card.

## Getting started

Please set up on the school gateway via the link; <https://login.schoolgateway.com> or download the School Gateway app.



The screenshot shows a login interface with two tabs: 'EXISTING USER' and 'NEW USER'. The 'NEW USER' tab is selected. Below the tabs, there is a teal box containing the following text: 'Please enter the email address and mobile number that your school(s) contact you on and press the 'Send PIN' button. You will then be sent a new PIN number by text message.' Below this text are two input fields: 'EMAIL ADDRESS' and 'MOBILE'. To the right of the 'MOBILE' field is a button labeled 'SEND PIN'.

Simply enter the email address that you have given us for your contact details and your mobile phone number click the send pin icon and a PIN number will be sent to your mobile phone. You will then be able to access your gateway account and use this to manage dinner monies, keep a check on the items that you child has bought at breakfast, break and dinner times and also manage your payments for school trips.

## Payment requests

When there is money owing to school by you, we can set up payment requests and you will be notified by text or email that there is a payment request available. Simply log in using your email address and your PIN number, select the payment request(s) you wish to fulfil and follow the Wizard through to pay.

If you have more than one child at this school or another school that also use the Schoolcomms payment module you can merge the accounts so one log in gives you access to all your children's payment requests and history.

The new system removes the need to send money into school with your child, removing the chance of money going astray, making it convenient for you to pay when it suits you, from anywhere at any time of day or night and saving the school office time. Of course you can continue to pay by cash or cheque should you find this easier.

## Secure

Your card details are not visible or stored in the Schoolcomms or school system.

All card information is processed by Barclaycard.

You log in using the email address registered with the school and with your PIN number.



**WE AIM HIGH**  
**WE WORK HARD**  
**WE CARE**  
**WE ARE VALE**



**Darwen Vale High School**  
**Blackburn Rd**  
**Darwen**  
**BB3 0AL**

**Telephone** - 01254 223000

**Website** - [www.darwenvale.com](http://www.darwenvale.com)

**Twitter** - @DarwenVale