

PARTNERSHIP

BETWEEN HOME & SCHOOL

2022-23



**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. 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 - Personal Development
Miss R Bridges	Assistant Principal - Behaviour & Attitudes
Miss D Hayes	Assistant Principal - English
Miss L Price	Assistant Principal - Maths
Mrs S Marsland	Assistant Principal - Science
Mrs S Pollitt	SENCO/Associate Assistant Principal

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

Academic Organisation

Mr C Bebro	Head of Performing Arts
Miss M Jones	Head of Modern Foreign Languages
Mr F Redfern	Head of Humanities
Miss J Mitchell	Head of ICT and Business Studies
Miss K Ramsey	Head of Art and Design Technology
Mr P Baines	Head of PE
Mr S Broderick	Assistant SENCO
Mrs L Belham	LAC Co-ordinator

Pastoral Organisation

Year 7	Head of Year Pastoral Mentor	Miss K Lamster Miss I Adcroft
Year 8	Head of Year Pastoral Mentor	Miss C Hamill Mr J Ainsworth
Year 9	Head of Year Pastoral Mentor	Miss T Scott Mr A Smith
Year 10	Head of Year	Mr D Adcroft
Year 11	Head of Year	Mrs C McKenna

School Day

Time	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
8:45am - 9:15am	Tutor Time				
9:15am - 10:15am	Period 1				
10:15am - 11:15am	Period 2				
11:15am - 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				

Uniform & Equipment

We are proud of our young people and encourage them to be proud of their school and their community. One key aspect of this is that all of our pupils will wear a smart uniform. This promotes safety, a sense of community and demonstrates that pupils are ready to work.

Pupils must be impeccably dressed in the correct school uniform at all times. The uniform requirements are quite clear and any pupils not adhering to these requirements will be asked to borrow the required item of uniform, and parents informed to rectify for the next day. Pupils who need to borrow an item of uniform will also receive a 30-minute same-day detention after school. For any extreme circumstance whereby, a pupil may not be able to have correct uniform a signed and dated note from home to explain the circumstance will be accepted.

If there is a persistent issue with uniform parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting to discuss any support required.

We provide support for all pupils in receipt of Free School Meals to cover up to £50 of the cost towards Uniform. Full uniform and equipment bursaries are also available. Please contact your child's Head of Year for further information.

Our official uniform suppliers are listed below:

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 items of equipment 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.

Equipment essential items:

Pupils should bring the following items with them on their first day at school and maintain throughout the academic year.

Clear pencil case	2x black writing pens
1 mini whiteboard	1 mini whiteboard pen
1 pencil, sharpened	1 rubber
1 green writing pen	2 highlighter pens
Ruler (15cm or 30cm)	1 glue stick
1 Maths set (inc compass and protractor)	1 Casio FX-85 ES or Casio FX-85 GT calculator

Desirable items:

Plain water bottle
Sharpener
Mini dictionary (English) and/or for the language they study

Uniform essential items:

Items marked with an * must be purchased through the uniform suppliers noted on page 10.

*Official Darwen Vale embroidered badge black blazer.

*Official Darwen Vale school tie blue at KS3 and red at KS4.

*Official Darwen Vale embroidered lettering black V-Neck pull over.

*Official Darwen Vale black stitch down embroidered badge pleat skirt.

Waistband must be flat at all times.

Black conventional style trousers, not cords or denim, and not bootleg or skinny fit.

Pupils can choose to wear trousers or a skirt.

Plain light blue shirt, long sleeve or short sleeve.

Pupils must ensure that their shirt is always tucked in, with the top button done up.

Black socks, no patterns or bows and knee length if wearing a skirt.

Black tights if wearing a skirt, no patterns.

Black leather or simulated leather shoes, no branding and no trainers.

Black or navy outer coat, no leather or denim jackets or hooded sweatshirts.

Pupils must not wear coats inside the building.

PE kit essential items:

PE kit is only to be worn during PE lessons.

*Official Darwen Vale t-shirt – navy blue.

*Official Darwen Vale shorts/skort – navy blue.

*Official Darwen Vale leggings – navy blue.

*Official Darwen Vale hoody – navy blue.

Navy blue football socks.

Trainers – indoor use.

Football boots, no metal studs – outdoor use (3G and field).

Appearance:

Permitted

- One wrist watch.
- Small metal stud in each ear lobe.

Permitted

- All hair styles must be neat and tidy.
- Pupils with long hair are encouraged to tie their hair back and will be required to do so for Health and Safety purposes in subjects such as PE and Food Technology.

Jewellery

Not permitted

- Facial, mouth and navel piercings including those that are transparent.
- Hooped earrings/earrings that are not studs including those that are transparent.
- Necklaces.

Hair

Not permitted

- Unusual or bizarre styles, excessive braiding and ornamentation.
- Colours away from the natural hair colour.

Religious garments

Permitted

- If for a religious reason, a pupil requires a head covering such as a hijab or a turban, then this must be plain black.

Prohibited items/appearance:

Mobile Phones and Smart Watches

- Mobile phones are not to be seen or heard within the Academy and as soon as our pupils step foot through the main gate.
- If a mobile is seen or heard they will be confiscated, placed in the pastoral office and pupils will be asked to collect at the end of the day after sitting their 30-minute same-day detention for being on their mobile phone. If this happens more than 3 times in one half term, parents/carers will be asked to collect the mobile phone.
- If you need to contact your child throughout the day you may do so via school reception or your child's Head of Year.
- Smart watches capable of communication through connectivity with phones are not permitted.

Make up, eyelash extensions and nail varnish/false nails

- Make up, eyelash extensions, nail polish, and false nails are not permitted. Any visible make-up or nail varnish that is worn will be required to be removed immediately.

Cigarettes & E-cigarettes

- Any pupils found to be smoking or in possession of cigarettes will be sanctioned in line with the Academy's behaviour policy.
- Any pupils found to be smoking or in possession of e-cigarettes will be sanctioned in line with the Academy's behaviour policy.

Aerosols

Due to health and safety aerosols are not permitted at the Academy. Pupils are permitted to bring roll on deodorant if required.

Chewing gum

Any pupils found chewing gum will be sanctioned in line with the Academy's behaviour policy.

Tippex & Permanent markers

Energy drinks

Pupils with inappropriate uniform will be sanctioned in line with the Behaviour Policy. Judgement about acceptability can only be made by Darwen Vale High School staff.

Term and Holiday Dates 2022-23

Autumn Term 2022

Thursday 1 September - Wednesday 7 September - School closed for Staff Training

Thursday 8 September School opens for pupils

Friday 30 September School closed for Staff Training

Friday 21 October School closes

Half term - Monday 24 October – Friday 28 October 2022

Monday 31 October School re-opens

Friday 16 December School closes

Christmas Holiday - Monday 19 December – Monday 2 January 2023

Spring Term 2023

Tuesday 3 January School re-opens

Friday 10 February School closes

Half term - Monday 13 February - Friday 17 February 2023

Monday 20 February School re-opens

Friday 31 March School closes

Easter Holiday - Monday 3 April – Friday 14 April 2023

Easter Holiday - Monday 3 April – Friday 14 April 2023

Summer Term 2023

Monday 17 April School closed for Staff Training

Tuesday 18 April School re-opens

Monday 1 May Bank Holiday

Friday 26 May School closes

Half term - Monday 29 May - Friday 2 June 2023

Monday 5 June School re-opens

Friday 21 July School closes for the summer

School Comms

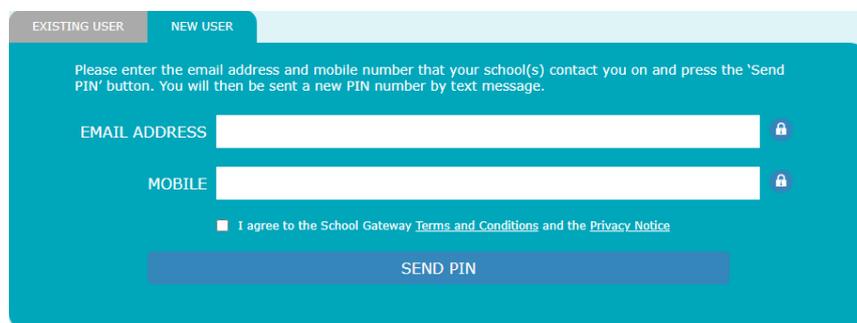
September 2022

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.' There are two input fields: 'EMAIL ADDRESS' and 'MOBILE', each with a lock icon to its right. Below the fields is a checkbox labeled 'I agree to the School Gateway Terms and Conditions and the Privacy Notice'. At the bottom of the teal box is a blue 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.



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