

Daffodil Grammar School for Girls

Punctuality Procedure

School address: 163 Commercial Road, London, E1 2DA

Proprietor: ASM Anisuzzaman

Headteacher: Mr Stephen Montford

Attendance Lead: Eman Ahamed

Behaviour Lead: Eman Ahamed

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Eman Ahamed

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mr Stephen Montford

Applies to: All pupils on roll

Review cycle: Annual, and sooner if required by legal, safeguarding or operational change

1. Status, purpose and importance of this procedure

This procedure sets out how Daffodil Grammar School for Girls defines punctuality, records lateness, responds to late arrival, identifies patterns of concern, and intervenes where lateness becomes repeated, persistent or potentially linked to wider welfare or safeguarding concerns.

The school does not treat punctuality as a minor administrative expectation. Punctuality is a core element of attendance, readiness to learn, school discipline and safeguarding. A pupil who arrives late misses important routines, loses learning time, disrupts the settled start of lessons, and may begin the day already anxious, unsettled or disengaged. Repeated lateness can damage academic progress, weaken behaviour culture and sometimes indicate deeper concerns in a pupil's home life, emotional wellbeing or relationship with school. The DfE's attendance guidance continues to stress that schools should maintain high expectations for attendance and identify pupils at risk of poor attendance early, and KCSIE 2025 reinforces that absence from education, especially when repeated or prolonged, can require a safeguarding response.

At Daffodil Grammar School for Girls, punctuality is therefore understood in three ways at once. It is an expectation of personal responsibility. It is a behaviour expectation that affects the learning of others. And it is a safeguarding indicator that may sometimes reveal a pupil in difficulty. This means that staff must neither overreact to occasional isolated lateness nor minimise repeated lateness when a pattern is emerging. The school expects staff to respond with consistency, fairness and professional curiosity.

This procedure should be read alongside the Attendance Policy, Attendance Register Process, Children Missing Education procedure, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Handbook.

2. Legal and regulatory framework

This procedure is written having regard to the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, which are the current regulations governing attendance registers in England. These regulations require schools to keep an attendance register and record attendance at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. They also provide the current legal framework for registration, attendance recording and the revised attendance codes introduced from August 2024.

The school also has regard to the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance guidance, last updated on 19 August 2024, which sets out the expectations on schools for maintaining high levels of attendance, identifying attendance concerns early, and working with pupils, parents and local authorities where concerns arise. That guidance applies to schools in England and remains the key attendance guidance schools are expected to follow.

In addition, the school recognises the safeguarding context of punctuality and attendance under Keeping children safe in education 2025, which highlights the need for a safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and or for prolonged periods. While lateness is not identical to absence, the school recognises that persistent lateness may form part of a wider picture of absence, avoidance, vulnerability or risk.

Because this is an independent school, the school also recognises that punctuality and attendance systems contribute directly to compliance with the Independent School Standards in relation to welfare, leadership, behaviour and safeguarding implementation in practice. This means punctuality must be managed as part of the school's overall safeguarding and behaviour culture, not only as an attendance metric.

3. The school's definition of punctuality

Daffodil Grammar School for Girls defines punctuality as arriving in school and at lessons in sufficient time to be present, properly prepared and ready to begin learning at the required start time. Punctuality is therefore not satisfied merely by entering the school site or appearing somewhere in the building. A pupil is punctual only when she is in the correct place, at the correct time, with the correct equipment and in a state of readiness to participate appropriately.

The school makes this distinction because some pupils may technically arrive on site before the register closes but still lose significant learning time through slow arrival to the correct room, avoidant behaviour, lingering in circulation areas, or failure to present themselves properly for registration. The school expects staff to understand the difference between physical arrival and true readiness.

The school also distinguishes between punctuality to the school day and punctuality to individual lessons. While the attendance register is taken at required statutory points, lesson punctuality still matters greatly because repeated late arrival to lessons disrupts teaching, weakens routines and may indicate avoidance of particular subjects, staff or peer groups. For that reason, punctuality will be considered both at whole-school registration points and through internal lesson and pastoral monitoring.

4. Expectations placed on pupils

All pupils are expected to arrive at school on time each day and to move promptly and sensibly to registration and lessons. Pupils are expected to take responsibility, in an age-appropriate way, for their own organisation, punctual movement and readiness to learn.

This means pupils are expected to prepare the night before where appropriate, leave home in good time, enter school promptly, attend registration without delay, and arrive at lessons with the correct equipment. Pupils must not loiter, delay, stop to socialise, or create unnecessary lateness through poor organisation once on site.

The school's expectation is not framed as a mere preference. It is a normal and non-negotiable part of being a pupil in the school. The school will explain this expectation clearly to pupils and reinforce it through daily routines, assemblies, pastoral messaging, behaviour systems and communication with parents.

At the same time, the school recognises that some pupils may struggle with punctuality for reasons beyond simple carelessness. Where this appears to be the case, staff are expected to distinguish between ordinary poor habit and signs of wider difficulty.

5. Expectations placed on parents

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time. The DfE's attendance guidance continues to reflect that attendance is a shared responsibility between schools, parents, pupils and local authorities, and that schools should work with families to secure high attendance and punctuality.

The school therefore expects parents to establish morning routines that support punctual arrival, to ensure that transport arrangements are reliable, to communicate promptly where there is difficulty, and to take school concerns about lateness seriously. Parents should not assume that repeated lateness is insignificant simply because the pupil eventually arrives.

Where punctuality concerns arise, the school will usually seek to work constructively with parents in the first instance. However, where lateness becomes persistent or where parental cooperation is weak, the school will act more formally through attendance and behaviour systems.

6. Morning arrival and registration expectations

The school day begins with a formal morning registration session. Pupils are expected to be present and ready at the start of that session. Staff responsible for registration must complete the register promptly and accurately.

The current regulations require the school to record attendance at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon session. The school's registration practice must therefore comply with that framework and use the appropriate current codes.

If a pupil arrives after the register has opened but before it closes, the pupil will be marked late in accordance with the relevant code and school system. If a pupil arrives after the close of the register, the pupil will be recorded in accordance with the current legal framework for late arrival after the register has closed. The school will ensure that internal practice remains aligned with the current regulations and DfE guidance on attendance coding.

The school is careful here because accurate coding is not optional. The way lateness is coded affects the legal accuracy of the attendance record and the school's ability to identify patterns and respond appropriately.

7. Late arrival procedure on entering school after registration has begun

Where a pupil arrives late to school, she must report to the designated sign-in point, normally reception or the school office, before going to class. The purpose of this is to ensure that the pupil's presence on site is known, that the time of arrival is recorded accurately, and that the pupil is not wrongly recorded as absent.

The late arrival process must include recording the pupil's name, time of arrival and, where appropriate, the stated reason for lateness. Staff responsible for this process must update the attendance record promptly so that the school's live register reflects the true position.

Pupils must not go straight to class without being signed in through the school's process. If they do so, the school may incorrectly continue to regard them as absent, which creates an immediate safeguarding

problem. Staff must therefore reinforce the expectation that late arrival must always be recorded properly.

Where a pupil arrives significantly late, the school may also decide that a pastoral or behaviour follow-up is required on the same day.

8. Punctuality to lessons and internal movement around the school

Although the statutory attendance register is completed at set morning and afternoon points, the school also recognises that punctuality within the school day is important. A pupil who is repeatedly late to lessons may miss learning, destabilise classroom routines and avoid particular curriculum or pastoral experiences without triggering a whole-school attendance concern unless staff are observant.

Teachers are therefore expected to notice and respond to lateness to lessons. Repeated lateness to a particular subject or period must not be dismissed as ordinary pupil behaviour. It may indicate disorganisation, disengagement, peer conflict, anxiety, bullying, avoidance of challenge, or another issue that requires attention.

The school expects teachers to challenge lesson lateness calmly and consistently, to record repeated patterns where required by school systems, and to share concerns with pastoral and attendance staff where lateness becomes a pattern. In this way, the school's punctuality systems extend beyond the legal register and support deeper pastoral oversight.

9. Immediate response to occasional lateness

The school recognises that occasional lateness may arise for an understandable reason, such as genuine transport difficulty or an isolated family circumstance. In such cases, a calm and proportionate response is appropriate.

However, even occasional lateness should not simply pass without acknowledgement. Staff should ensure that the lateness is recorded accurately, that the pupil understands the expectation for future punctuality, and that no pattern is beginning to form. A school culture of punctuality is not built by ignoring low-level lateness because it appears minor at the time.

The school therefore expects staff to respond to occasional lateness with clarity rather than overreaction. The message should be that punctuality matters every day, even if isolated lateness is not treated as a major disciplinary event.

10. Persistent lateness and emerging patterns

Persistent lateness is treated more seriously. The school regards lateness as persistent where a pattern is visible over time, even if each individual late arrival appears relatively minor. DfE attendance guidance stresses the importance of early identification of attendance concerns and not waiting until attendance has deteriorated severely before acting.

Where a pupil becomes persistently late, the school will normally move beyond simple reminders and begin structured intervention. This may include monitoring, communication with parents, pastoral discussion with the pupil, formal attendance review, behaviour consequences, support planning, or a combination of these.

The school also expects staff to look at the pattern, not just the total number of incidents. For example, punctuality concerns may include a pupil who is often late on one day of the week, who is frequently late after lunch, who is repeatedly late after a specific lesson, or who is consistently only just on time and

slipping. Each of these patterns may tell the school something important.

11. Investigating reasons for lateness

When lateness becomes repeated or concerning, the school will seek to understand the cause. The purpose is not to excuse poor punctuality automatically, but to respond intelligently. Some lateness arises from weak routines or poor choices. Some arises from family pressure, transport problems, emotional difficulty, conflict at home, unmet additional needs, bullying, avoidance of school, or other concerns.

The school therefore expects attendance and pastoral staff to approach repeated lateness with professional curiosity. This may involve speaking to the pupil, contacting parents, reviewing wider attendance patterns, considering behaviour records, consulting safeguarding information where appropriate, and identifying whether further support or escalation is necessary.

The DfE's attendance guidance emphasises support-first approaches and early identification of barriers to attendance. The school's punctuality process therefore includes both accountability and inquiry.

12. Punctuality as a behaviour matter

Punctuality is a behaviour expectation as well as an attendance issue. A late pupil can disrupt the start of a lesson, interrupt routines, unsettle peers and place additional pressure on staff. For that reason, repeated lateness may be addressed through the Behaviour Policy as well as through attendance systems.

The school's behaviour response to lateness will be proportionate and consistent. It may include reminders, restorative discussion, behaviour sanctions, monitoring reports, parental contact or more formal intervention. However, the school will not use behaviour sanctions in a way that ignores legitimate safeguarding or welfare factors where they exist.

The school's aim is not to punish lateness reflexively, but to uphold a culture in which time matters, learning starts promptly, and pupils understand that repeated lateness is neither harmless nor acceptable.

13. Punctuality as a safeguarding matter

The school is clear that repeated lateness can be a safeguarding issue. KCSIE 2025 requires a safeguarding response for children who are absent from education particularly on repeat occasions and or for prolonged periods. Although repeated lateness is not identical to absence, the school recognises that persistent lateness may form part of a wider attendance and welfare picture and may sometimes be an early warning sign of vulnerability.

Repeated lateness may indicate neglect, inadequate supervision, coercive control at home, poor sleep, anxiety, bullying, avoidance of particular staff or peers, mental health concerns, or risk outside school. Staff must therefore avoid a simplistic assumption that repeated lateness is always just poor time management.

Where lateness raises safeguarding concern, the Attendance Lead must involve the DSL. The school may then decide that the matter should be reviewed through safeguarding systems rather than only through attendance and behaviour routes.

14. Recording, monitoring and data review

All lateness must be recorded accurately. This includes lateness to statutory registration and, where school systems require it, repeated lateness to lessons. The school will review punctuality data regularly to identify concerns early.

Monitoring may include daily scrutiny of late arrivals, weekly pattern review, half-termly attendance analysis, comparison across forms or year groups, and case-by-case review of pupils with repeated punctuality concerns. The DfE also provides a school attendance monitoring tool to help schools identify trends and pupils needing support, reflecting the expectation that attendance data should be used actively rather than passively stored.

The school's approach to monitoring is therefore active. Data should lead to action. It should not sit unused until the pattern has become entrenched.

15. Communication with parents

When a punctuality concern is identified, communication with parents should be timely, clear and professional. The DfE has also published a school toolkit for communicating with families to support attendance, reflecting the importance of constructive, clear communication.

The school will normally explain the nature of the concern, the pattern observed, the impact on learning and school routines, and the expectation for improvement. Depending on severity, this may take the form of an informal call, written communication, meeting or attendance review process.

The school's aim is to secure improvement and partnership. However, where lateness continues despite communication and support, the school will act more formally.

16. Staff responsibilities

All staff have a role in upholding punctuality. Teaching staff must complete registers accurately, challenge lateness calmly, and communicate repeated concerns. Form tutors or equivalent pastoral staff must monitor patterns and reinforce expectations. Administrative staff must ensure that late arrivals are recorded correctly. The Attendance Lead must oversee patterns, intervention and escalation. The DSL must be involved where lateness suggests vulnerability or risk.

No member of staff should assume that punctuality is solely an office matter or solely a classroom matter. It is a whole-school responsibility.

17. Final principle

At Daffodil Grammar School for Girls, punctuality is treated as an important expression of discipline, respect, readiness to learn and safeguarding awareness. The school will therefore maintain high expectations, record lateness accurately, respond consistently and investigate patterns with seriousness and professional curiosity.