

2020-2021

Moorside Community Primary School  
Head Teacher – S Lawler-Smith



# **MOORSIDE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

# Attendance Policy

Moorside Community Primary School

Head Teacher: S. Lawler-Smith

## **Named personnel with designated responsibility**

Designated SLT	Deputy designated SLT for EY & KS1	Deputy designated SLT for KS2	Nominated Governor	Chair of Governors
S. Lawler-Smith	S. Cooper	H. Kearsley	S. Corlett	S. Corlett

Next Review Date	October 2021
Committee Responsible	Governing Board
Document locations	Shared Drive

## Change History

Version	Date	Change Description	Stored
1	Sept 2020	Include Coronavirus related absence information	Staff Drive
2	Feb 2021	Inclusion of reporting prolonged absences to the LA	Staff Drive
3	May 2021	Deputy Head Teacher amendments	Staff Drive
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**At Moorside Community Primary School, we believe that attendance and punctuality at school is not only a legal requirement, but is fundamental to the child's development and attainment. Local Authorities, Schools, Parents and the wider community all have a role to play in improving attendance. At Moorside, we have implemented procedures designed to ensure that all our pupils attend regularly.**

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- To demonstrate a strong attendance ethos.
- To have a clear policy on absence.
- To have effective systems for monitoring attendance.
- Use attendance data to improve school and pupil performance.
- To promote the importance and legal requirements of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Early intervention when individual pupil absence gives cause for concern.
- To have support systems in place for vulnerable pupils.
- To reward and celebrate good and improved attendance and punctuality.
- To make best use of additional support for pupils and parents with greatest need.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

## **PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES**

**We demonstrate a strong attendance ethos by having:**

- A whole school approach, which reinforces good attendance, teaching and learning to encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- An attendance and behaviour policy, which is easily understood by all and is regularly updated and shared with all stakeholders.
- Appropriate attendance targets.
- Strong leadership on attendance with all staff seeing attendance as a shared responsibility.
- Allocated resources for the attendance officer.
- Half termly reporting of attendance issues to the senior management team and Governors.
- Developed a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils/families.

## **ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

Parents/carers must notify the school before 9.30am on each day to report that their child will be absent from school. It is the school's decision to classify the absence (authorised or unauthorised). The school has a first day response system in place in which the following happens:

- Day One: Text message sent to 1<sup>st</sup> contact for an absent child
- Day Two: Telephone call sent to 1<sup>st</sup> contact if no response to text message.
- Day Three: Further telephone call. If no response a letter will be sent to the child's known home address.

Following Salford City Council guidelines the school can request the issue of a penalty notice to parents in the following circumstance:

- For unauthorised holidays in term time.
- When a child has 10 sessions unauthorised, including any unauthorised sessions recorded due to arriving late for school (1 day = 2 sessions).

## **HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME**

Parents are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child aged 5-16, if registered at a school, attends that school regularly and consistently punctual.

Requests for holidays in term time must be requested by completing the Holiday in Term Time request form. This can be obtained from the school office. Once completed the parent / carer must return the form to the office.

The Headteacher will then indicate on the form whether or not the request has been authorised. This will then be returned to the parent / carer.

Under current legislation from DFE, holidays during term time are not permitted except in exceptional circumstances and under the discretion of the Headteacher. Unauthorised holidays of 5 days or more taken during term time may result in a £60 fine per pupil per parent. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, the fine will increase to £120. If a child's absence has been recorded as sickness but is later proven that an unauthorised holiday has been taken, a fine can also be issued after the child returns to school.

Should a holiday be taken when no written request has been made, a request for the implementation of a penalty notice will be made to the Local Authority.

## **MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS**

Where possible we expect children to attend medical appointments outside of school hours however should a child have a medical appointment during school hours, it is expected that they return to school to complete the school day. Appointment cards with times and dates should be shown to school when taking your child out.

## **MANAGING ABSENCES**

If there are any attendance concerns it is the responsibility of the parent / carer to inform the school.

This enables the school to work in partnership with the parent/carer by identifying what the issues are and devising a joint action plan to implement interventions that can improve the situation.

Through reviewing the plan on a regular basis and through listening to the views of all parties, it is anticipated that there will be improvements and good working relationships established based on honesty and trust.

## **PERSISTENT ABSENCE**

Pupils are categorised as being 'persistently absent' if they accumulate 10% or more absences. For children whose attendance falls in the 'persistent absence' category, school will follow Government guidance and implement the 'Fast Track' scheme to work in partnership with parents/carers to improve the child's attendance.

During this meeting:

- An action plan will be compiled with input from the parent/carer, school and pupil.
- Targets will be agreed and reviewed until that child is no longer in the persistent absence category.
- There would be a focus on links between attendance and attainment.
- A school / parent contract will be offered if it is deemed appropriate

If the parent fails to attend the meeting or there is no significant improvement in attendance, then the absence issue shall be escalated to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

**AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/Carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent has followed the procedures as set out in this policy.

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents do not have this authority and consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

If a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future absence in order for it to be recorded as authorised. This evidence could be a Doctor’s note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

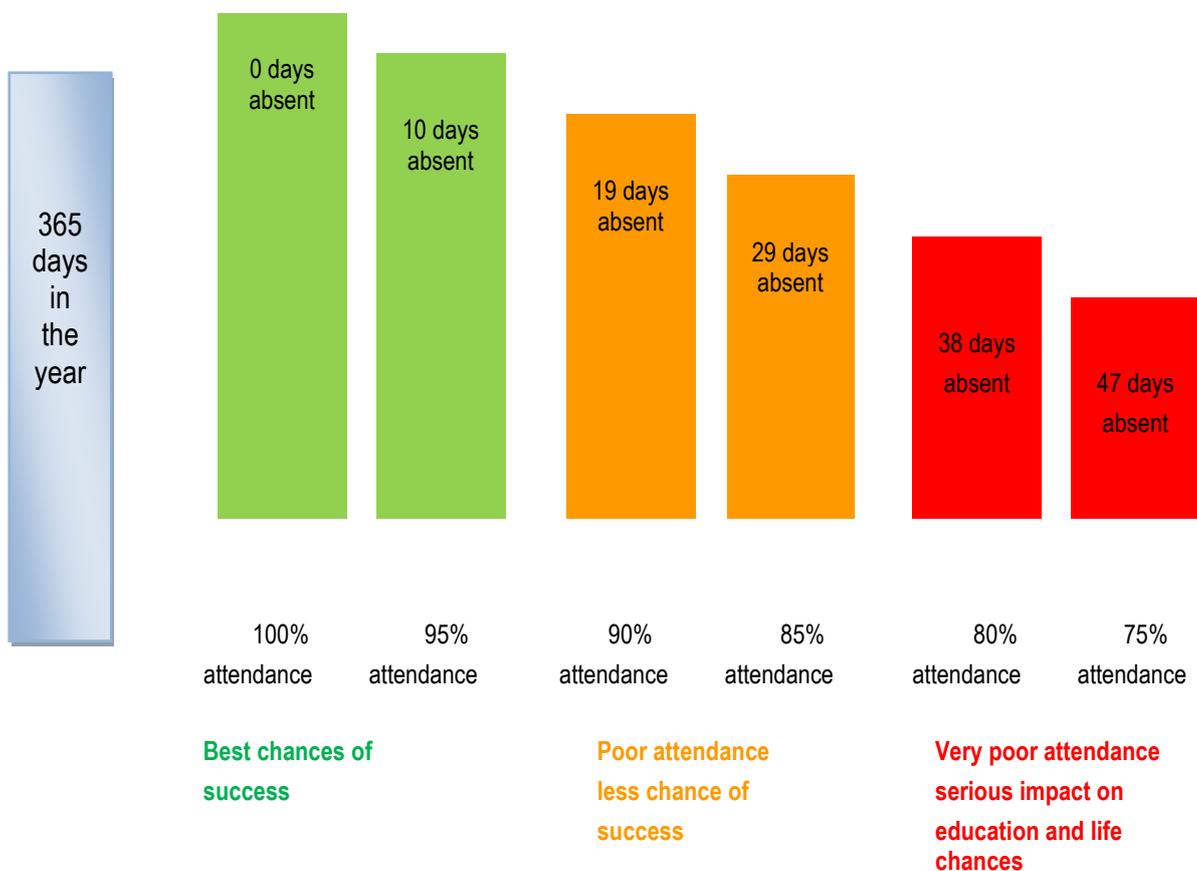
Should a child be absent from school for 5 or more days consecutively medical evidence must be provided for the absence to be recorded as authorised. Should no medical evidence be received the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a referral to the Educational Welfare service will be submitted where a penalty notice may be issued.

A School should notify the Local Authority when a pupil is absent, or going to be absent, for a period of 15 days, either consecutive or cumulative over a term.

**UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.

Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.



**ABSENCE DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES RELATED TO CORONAVIRUS**

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Moorside Primary School will talk through these anxieties and complete a risk assessment with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

### **Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' could apply**

In line with current legislation, and current guidance from PHE and DHSC, examples are as follows.

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
- Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
- Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk>
- Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

### **REMOTE EDUCATION WHEN NOT ATTENDING IN CIRCUMSTANCES RELATED TO CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), Moorside Primary will be able to offer them access to remote education once advised they will be isolating for 14 days. We will keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, but this will not be tracked in the attendance register.

### **REWARDS**

Children with attendance of 95% or more, will be recognised at the end of each half term. There will be an award at the end of the school year for any child with 100% attendance. Absences due to, or related to, COVID 19 are not included within these percentages.

### **PUNCTUALITY**

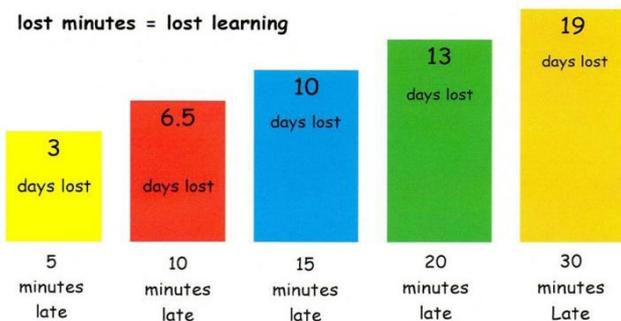
Punctuality is vital to the educational process. Pupils must arrive in school on time each day.

If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher missing vital information and news for the day. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Pupils arriving late also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. The government have introduced new powers for the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases where parents do not take responsibility for ensuring their child arrives at school on time. Parents must take responsibility for getting children to school on time.

The start of the day is at 9am. Children arriving after this time must enter school through the main entrance, where their parent/carer will have to sign at Reception. Children must be accompanied to the office by an adult if late. It is unfair to expect children to report their late arrival for themselves. An arrival after 9.30am will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Persistent latecomers will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

## Every Minute Counts



(Over one academic year)

### MONITORING

The Head Teacher in discussion with the Attendance Officer will identify progress on Attendance by including the item on staff meetings, senior management meetings, and Governing Board meetings agendas. This will enable follow-ups and show whether the policy is really effective.

The Head Teacher will ensure that the policy is high profile throughout the year and especially at the beginning of a new school year through parents meetings and assemblies.

### EVALUATION

The Head Teacher and Attendance Officer will use data from monitoring and feedback from staff, governors, parents and the Education Welfare Officer, to review and update the policy once every school year. A termly report to Governors will be made.