



Moorlands Primary School



“Anything is Possible!” Attendance Policy

Introduction:

This is a successful school and your child plays their 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 Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Aims:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with additional support.
- Attendance team: Mrs Roberts, Miss Smith, Miss Edwards and Miss Agu.

Promoting regular attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody’s responsibility – parents/carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

All partners should work together to:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. This includes Attendance Support plans and Attendance contracts completed with school, parents and pupil voice.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Head Teacher: Senior Attendance Champion

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To meet with parents/ carers to discuss attendance.
- To review Leave of Absence forms.
- To complete Attendance and Prosecution referral forms.
- To oversee the analysis of/analyse weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used and reviewed for impact.
- To inform parents through newsletters about attendance and punctuality at least half termly.
- Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- To liaise with and report to with outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service/ Children Missing in Education.
- To revise and amend the policy, as required.

Staff:

- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality
- Attendance team will monitor weekly attendance data for year groups from Reception to Year 6.
- To promptly inform the Head Teacher, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- Attendance team will produce weekly/termly/yearly data for SLT to analyse and reports to governors.
- To contact parents/carers by letter: Informing parents of how many sessions/ hours their child/ren has missed.
- To contact parents/ carers to highlight attendance improvement.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.
- To maintain clear communication with the SLT regarding attendance and punctuality for individual pupils and year groups from Reception to Year 6.
- To support the Head Teacher with the promotion good attendance and punctuality, through finding/organising incentives.
- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, when a child doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been received.
- To check the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To record reasons for absence and updating class registers.
- To oversee the admission and induction of new pupils.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.

- Take a formal register of all pupils in the morning and afternoon.
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection
- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Evenings.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day when the school is open.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time.
- Telephone to inform the school to on the first day of absence for their child.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.
- Be aware that it is an offence for their child to be absent from school without a valid reason.
- Be aware that only the school can determine whether an absence is authorised.
- Understand that school is not in a position to authorise a holiday in term time.
- All requests for Leave of Absence are submitted using the Leave of Absence form or retrospectively using the Leave Already Taken form.
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contacts and keep the school up-to-date with any changes.

Pupils:

- Strive for excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Be proud of achieving excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Speak with the appropriate adults any concerns/ worries that could impact on attendance and punctuality.
- Understand the correlation between attendance and high levels of academic achievement.

Parents:

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury.

If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing **0121 556 0352 or by email**

admin@moorlandsprimaryschool.org

If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach aches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect them. Medical and dental appointments should be booked before or after the end of the school day. **Pupils should miss as little time as possible.**

Day to day process, registration and absence

- Attendance register is completed at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Registers will be completed by using the DFE's Attendance and Absence codes (See Appendix 1)
- Every half-day absence from school will be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

- **Authorised** absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, emergencies or any other unavoidable cause.
- **Unauthorised** absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable or are unable to establish a reason.
- There must be established a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code. If school is unable to establish a reason for absence after 2 days then the absence is recorded as 'O' (unauthorised).
- Under the National Framework for Penalty Notices (in force from 19 August 2024), where a pupil records 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period, the school must consider issuing a Penalty Notice. These sessions need not be consecutive and can span different terms or school years. Children reaching this threshold may also be referred to the Attendance and Prosecution Officer.

Start of the day:

The school doors open at **8.40 am**.

Registers are marked by **9.00 am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time (code L – late but arrived after 9.00 am). The registers will be closed at 9.30 am. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be in school, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean that this will count as an unauthorised absence (code U). This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists. U marks contribute to your child's unauthorised absence total and, if they accumulate, may result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

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. Pupils arriving late also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

At the school office, you will be required to explain the reason your child is late. The amount of minutes late is documented on Arbor. Lateness is monitored by the Attendance Team..

Absence procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

Contact us before 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence 0121 556 0352, admin@moorlandsprimaryschool.org
For any prolonged absence, school and home should be in regular contact.

If your child is absent and the school is not informed by 9.00 am we will:

- Text you, on the first day of absence.
- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you following our text message.
- Attendance officer to complete a home visit if early contact has not been established.
- Speak to the parents face-to-face or by phone the next day and establish reasons for absence and update contact numbers. The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school.
- Pupils who have been identified as PA in previous years will also receive a visit from the Attendance Officer even if contact has been made.

Leave of Absence:

- In line with Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council guidelines, all annual leave requests will **not** be authorised. Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents/carers to help us by not taking children away in school 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 for time off in school time to go on holiday.**
- All applications for leave must be made at least two weeks in advance, on an official request form that is available from the school office. Please be aware that any period of leave taken will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

Strategies for promoting/rewarding excellent attendance:

- Take opportunities to celebrate good and improved attendance eg, verbal, communicating with parents, letters etc.
- Praise Assemblies are held every week on a Friday.
- An assembly 100% pencil is awarded to an individual for 100% weekly attendance.
- Each week, the overall attendance is updated and displayed in the school hall.
- Weekly attendance is announced for each class in assemblies and the class with the highest attendance receives a class reward which builds up to a summer prize of class choice.
- Mondays – if all pupils in the class are in school, the children have an additional session of outdoor learning.
- Fridays – golden ticket is placed under a pupil's chair. The winning pupil receives a prize from the attendance prize box.
- Monthly pupils whose attendance is 97% and above are put into a prize draw. This is drawn in a praise assembly which parents attend.

Tracking and monitoring Attendance:

We routinely monitor key cohorts and pupil groups based on our school context. Possible groups include:

- Whole school
- Individual year groups
- Boys / girls
- Those eligible for Free School Meals
- Those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Those whom English is an additional language
- Children who are Looked After or Looked After Previously
- Those who have a social worker
- Those who are persistently or severely absent
- Any other groups of pupils who have historically had low attendance or where they are an emerging concern.

All school attendance data is benchmarked against the available local, regional and national data, using the DFE's View your Education Data (VYED) portal to access the Monitor your School Attendance tool.

Relevant data is routinely shared with parents, staff and governors with the intention continuing to improve attendance levels.

Weekly:

- Display attendance and punctuality data in prominent locations.
- Classes attendance shared in assembly.
- Intervene with pupils who are regularly late.

- Contact parents where attendance for the year to date falls below expectations.
- Attendance officer completes home visits.
- Strategic leaders maintain an attendance overview.

Fortnightly:

- Review Attendance contracts and any interventions strategies.
- Punctuality – letter to attend a meeting with the attendance team, if late 6 times.

Half termly:

- Produce Attendance and punctuality data.
- Analyse areas for concern and successes for groups of pupils.
- Monitor your Attendance report from the DFE data is analysed.
- Provides school governors with data on attendance and punctuality included pupils who are PA and SA, Leave of absence requests and their outcomes.
- Monitor attendance thresholds across the school, resulting communicating with parents through letters and holding attendance meetings:
 - Below 96% - letter, attendance is being monitored.
 - Below 95% - letter, attendance meeting.
 - Below 93% - letter, attendance meeting and attendance support plan.
 - Below 90% - letter, attendance meeting and attendance contract.

Termly:

- Analysing data including the DFE summarising report.
- Sharing Attendance data and information with parents.

Children Missing Education: Sandwell Guidance

Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (inserted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006), requires "all local education authorities to make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are not receiving a suitable education".

Sandwell local authority "monitors the numbers of children/young people in the authority who are not receiving an education, including those new to the area or the country" (Revised Statutory guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education, July 2008).

Children Missing from Education (CME) in this document refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home by parents or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time.

Sandwell Council acknowledges that one of the key responsibilities of the LA and its schools is to safeguard all the children resident in Sandwell or attending its schools. The best way for the LA and its schools to ensure the welfare of all children is to ensure that they are all on a school roll and that children do not disappear from school rolls and become 'missing'.

Sandwell local authority will embrace its statutory responsibilities by ensuring:

- That all pupils who go missing or are lost from schools in Sandwell and move to other areas are speedily located and children are adequately safeguarded in the process.
- All departments and agencies will work together and share information regarding children who may be missing education.

The local authority encourages all schools including Academies, independent and non-maintained schools to notify them when children of compulsory school age leave their roll, and of their destination wherever possible by using an off roll form.

Contact us 0121 569 8147

Schools Attendance Support Service, Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE

Re-integration and temporary timetables

- The DfE statutory guidance (DfE School Attendance July 2019) on the use of part time timetables is very clear and states that 'all pupils are entitled to a full-time education and in very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.
- A part time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time or be provided with alternative provision.
- In agreeing to a part-time table, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.' The Local Authority (LA) has a duty to identify who these children and young people are and what education they receive each week.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to secure education for children of compulsory school age either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. 'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient education suitable –
 - a) To his age, ability, and aptitude,
 - and b) To any special educational needs, he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- ' Criteria for Placing a Pupil on a Part-time Timetable. There are a very limited number of reasons why a school might consider the use of a part-time timetable. For the majority it will be related to health issues and will therefore be supported by medical evidence. The pupils will:
 - a) Have medical needs other than mental health needs, (including pregnancy where any absence would be like that of an employee on maternity leave)
 - b) Have mental health needs and access CAMHS either as an in-patient or through services provided in the community.
- There is a much smaller group of other children and young people who might require the support of a part-time timetable for a very short period and where there is a clear plan to ensure the pupil is receiving full time education in a planned timescale. These are most likely to be pupils who:
 - c) Have particular social and behavioural difficulties and have personalised learning plans: this means that, by arrangement, they do not attend their usual school full time.

Escalation of procedures and legal intervention

Parents/Carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may refer the child to Attendance and Prosecution. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Local Authority.

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/177/school-absence-prosecutions-policy>

Alternatively, parents/carers may wish to contact the Attendance and Prosecution themselves to ask for help or

information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office.

Elective Home Education

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/schools-education/elective-home-education-welcome-pack-parents/2>

Struggling to Attend School:

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents/carers and the pupil. 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. We strongly advise you to make an appointment to see your child's teacher to discuss the matter. The school also have trusted adults in each class who will be able to help children recognise, understand and manage emotions to increase their success and plan and deliver individual (and small group) support programmes. They will also be able to support parents and carers in ensuring that children are in school.

Persistent and Severe Absenteeism (PA/SA):

DFE defines persistent absence as a pupil who falls below 90% attendance.

DFE defines severe absence as a pupil who falls below 50%.

Absence at this level will considerably damage 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 PA/SA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA/SA pupils and their parents/carers are required to a parental meeting where individual needs are discussed, this includes parents, pupils and school voice. The aim is to work with families to successfully secure improved attendance through in school interventions, parental meetings and target setting. This may also lead to an Attendance contract (See Appendix 2).

Attendance contracts do not have a minimum or maximum duration. Each individual attendance contract should set out the duration it will be in place, and most are for between 3 and 12 months but can be longer if needed.

Once the requirements and support elements of the attendance contract have been agreed, the school and the parent will sign it. All parties, including other partners working with the family, should be given a copy.

Absence procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

Contact us before 9.00 am. on the first day of absence

For any prolonged absence, please keep school informed. If your child is absent and the school is not informed by 9.30 am we will:

- Text you, on the first day of absence.
- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you following our text message.
- Speak to the parents face-to-face or by phone the next day and establish reasons for absence and update contact numbers. The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded next to the child's name on the first day absence sheet and this is filed in the absence folder. There must be established a reason for every absence. **No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code.** If the School Officer has not been able to contact parents after 2

days or medical evidence has not been produced those pupils whose attendance is below 93% then the **absence is recorded as 'O' (unauthorised)**.

- Pupils who have been identified as PA in previous years will also receive a visit from the Attendance Officer.

To offer support for failing attendance :

- **Attendance Officer visits** so that we can work and support your child in attending school
- **Initially letter:** Send you a notice to improve letter if your child's attendance falls below 95%
- Send you a warning letter after four weeks if your child's attendance has not improved. This letter will request an appointment for you to come into school to discuss the decline in attendance and to offer support in its improvement. At this meeting you will be asked to complete a Parent/Carer Attendance Contract. This will also serve as a second warning that attendance is close to becoming in the persistent absence criteria
- **The school will also send out recognition letters where attendance has increased. As attendance and punctuality is a partnership between school and parents.**

The school sends out letters, to communicate with parents about attendance and punctuality. (Copies of all standard letter formats are included at the end of this document.)

Link with other documents:

Child Protection policy

Behaviour policy

Equal opportunity policy

SEND policy

Teaching and Learning policy

Appendix

Appendix 1 – DFE Attendance and Absence codes

Code	Reason
/	Present (morning session)
\	Present (afternoon session)
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered at another school
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
G	Holiday not granted by the school
I	Illness
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for the admission to another educational institution
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
L	Late arrival after register is closed
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	Reason of absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
P	Participating in a sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements

R	Religious Observance
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
U	Arriving in school after registration closed
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as the pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend due in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend due because of any other unavoidable cause

Appendix 2

Attendance contract

- Requires the parent to attend meetings with the school.
- Have to access or partake in the support or programmes offered.
- Attendance contracts do not have a minimum or maximum duration. Each individual attendance contract should set out the duration it will be in place, and most are for between 3 and 12 months but can be longer if needed.

Once the requirements and support elements of the attendance contract have been agreed, the school and the parent will sign a copy. All parties, including other partners working with the family, will be given a copy.

Attendance Contract

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision.

Section A: Pupil's Details – does the information match the Data Collection Sheet	
Full Legal Name of Pupil	Date of Birth:
Pupil's Address:	
School:	
Year Group:	
Name of Parent/Carer(s) (1):	
Parent/Carer(s) Address (1):	
Name of Parent/Carer(s) (2):	
Parent/Carer(s) Address (2):	
Date of Meeting:	
Attendees:	Relationship to Pupil/Role

Section B: Attendance Analysis & Patterns – number of hours/sessions			
Attendance %	%	Days missed	
Lates (L)		Lates after reg closes (U)	
Minutes lost (lateness)		Hours missed	
Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence (O)	
Exclusions		Leave of Absence (Sessions missed) (G)	

Section C: What are the positive parts of school? What does the pupil enjoy?

Pupils Voice

Parents Voice

What are the barriers to the pupil attending school?

Pupils Voice

Parents Voice

Section D: Who/What support can be offered?

e.g. SENCO, in school counselling/mentoring, nurture groups, alternative provision, individualised start and end times, rewards and incentives, key staff, family hubs, Barnardo's, Young Carers, Sandwell Advocacy, PAGE, PEGS, school nurse, Strengthening Families

If support declined – reasons given

Section E: Agreed actions

Referrals to be made, adjustments to the curriculum or classes, phased return plan or temporary part-time attendance, identification of a key adult or mentor, nurture friendships, supporting participation in extra-curricular groups, careers advice, implementation of rewards etc.

School

Signed

Date

Parent/Carer

Signed

Date

Pupil

Signed

Date

Other agencies

Signed

Date

Section F: Targets

What is the target for the end of term / next half term to be achieved? What do we want the plan to achieve?

Implementation and Review

Start date:

Review date: