

Moorside Primary School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our Purpose

Moorside Primary is a school at the heart of our diverse community in the West End of Newcastle.
We pride ourselves in being a caring school community where everyone is welcome.
We strive to deliver an outstanding education for all our education for all our children.
We help everyone to become caring and active citizens.
We encourage everyone to thrive and achieve their full potential.

Our Vision

We want everyone in our school to work together to make us as good as any school can be.
We want to create new opportunities for everyone to succeed.
We want to create a culture which broadens all of our horizons.
We want everyone to be able to tackle the challenges we will face in an ever changing world.
We want all of our children to effectively engage with each other and with our community.

Our values

We all believe that

Our local community deserves a school they can be proud of
We are a caring community where everyone is welcome
We all value, respect and support each other
Our community has the right to be safe and healthy.
Our children should have the chance to enjoy and be enthused by their time in our school

We all work together to make sure that

Everyone will always try their best and take pride in all that they do
Everyone will demonstrate good manners at all times
Everyone will respect each other and show consideration
Everyone will respect and care for our environment and resources
Everyone will celebrate each other's successes and achievements

Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- Keep all pupils safe at all times

Legislation and guidance

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 \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

At Moorside:

Our school target is 97%

Our aspirational target set with our pupils is 100%

Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Reason behind the absence

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for three years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55 am on each school day. For Playgroup this will be 8.45 am.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00 am and will be kept open until 9.05am.

The register for the second session will be taken at differing times dependent on the age group.

Unplanned absence

- Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health as soon as practically possible.
- Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Medical or dental appointments

- Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.
- We encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Lateness and punctuality

- Children are expected to arrive at school on time by 8.55 am. Arriving late can be embarrassing for a child and affect their learning and that of others in their class.
- The school gates will close at 9.00 am and then late pupils will have to report to the school office, reasons for the lateness will be recorded.
- If the lateness persists, a letter is sent to the parent/carers reminding them that a punctual arrival is in the best interests of everyone.
- Continuous lateness can be disruptive to both the child and class. General reminders of the importance of ensuring a punctual arrival will be continually reinforced. If lateness continues arrival time will be monitored and meetings with the Head teacher will take place initially to see if there is a problem the school can help with.
- Persistent lateness could lead to monitoring procedures and possible legal action.

Following up absence

- The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Requesting extended absence during term time

- Absence during term time has the potential to disrupt the progress of individual children and there is no entitlement in law to time off during school terms to go on holiday.
- Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school will be classed as an unauthorised absence and may result in a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. Penalty notices may be issued to each parent for each child.
- Absence request forms must be completed by the parent/carers prior to any leave being taken, this does not mean that this will be approved, we will take this information as part of our safeguarding process.

Granting approval for term time absence

- Head teachers will not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.
- The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Legal sanctions

- Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.
- If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within twenty-one days or £120 within twenty-eight days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:
 - A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
 - One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
 - Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

Strategies for promoting attendance

- Celebrations weekly in assembly with certificate for best attendance and most improved, attendance mascots are displayed within class learning areas.
- Best attendance gain extra playtime on a Friday afternoon
- Any class with 100% attendance gain extra playtime both Monday and Friday afternoon
- Newsletter celebrating attendance
- Whole school attendance is a key priority that staff and pupils are aware of
- Attendance priority shared with parents through website and letters
- Rewards, prizes and incentives from external agencies.

Attendance monitoring

- When a child is absent the school should be informed by the parent/carer on the morning of the first day of absence
- The detail of the absence is recorded with the relevant code on the SIMS system
- If a child is absent and the parent has not contacted the school by 9.30 am the attendance team will check with the class teachers.
- If there is not considered to be a safeguarding issue around the child, the attendance team will ring and if appropriate carry out a home visit alongside the head teacher.
- If there has been no response after three days, another home to the child's home will be carried out to find the reason for absence and lack of contact.
- At this point, if there is considered to be a risk, the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher (DSLs) may contact Children Services to seek advice.
- Where a child returns to school with no explanation for their absence, information regarding this absence will be sought and shared with the appropriate people in school.
- The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
- Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Exclusion

- Exclusion is very rare however, in the event that exclusion is necessary the Local Authority guidelines will be used. On return from exclusion, the pupil's reintegration will be planned and monitored.

Transferring school or moving out of the area

- If a child moves to another school, parents should notify school with the name of the new school, contact is awaited from the new school and then the head teacher will confirm that the child will be taken off our school register and the child's records are sent on to the new school.
- If a child leaves the school without informing us, after two week's absence, if we are still unable to contact the parent/carer, the school will follow the Local Authority Children Missing Education procedures.
- A parent moving their child to another school or leaving to go to another country will be requested to complete a school exit form which will ask for the forwarding address and the address of the new school if known.

Early Years

- It is important that good practices are developed at an early stage and as a school we would encourage families where their child has been offered a preschool place to ensure their children attend on a regular basis.
- Those who do not attend on a regular basis could be at risk of losing their place.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

- The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

- The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The attendance team

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Discusses with the Headteacher the need to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Works to support and challenge families to ensure raised attendance levels

Class teachers and other staff

- Class teachers and other staff are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and submitting this information to the school office and passing any messages onto the senior leadership and attendance team.

Office/admin staff

- Office/admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it before passing to the attendance team.

Monitoring arrangements

- This policy will be reviewed at least annually by all staff and will be shared with the governing board.

Links with other policies

- This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

National contacts

www.direct.gov.uk School attendance, absence and your child

www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport Behaviour and attendance-Parental responsibility

Familylives.org.uk Truancy helpline: 0808 800 2222

Local contacts

www.newcastle.gov.uk Schools- Attendance

You can phone the Attendance Service on 0191 277 4500 or Email attendanceservices@newcastle.gov.uk

If you require this information in audio, Braille or large print, please contact to arrange.

Date to be implemented	March 2020
Date to be reviewed	March 2021

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious

		observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day