

**Moorside Community Primary School**

**Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

**School:** Moorside Community Primary School

**Head teacher:** L Hall **Chair of Governors:** T. Snell

Named personnel with designated responsibility for Attendance:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Academic year** | **Head teacher** | **Parent Advisor** | **Chair of Governors** |
| 2017-2018 | L Hall | T. Knowles, | T. Snell |

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| **Review Date** | **Changes made** | **By whom** | **Date Shared** |
| 16/10/17 | Policy update | L. Hall, R. Lowery, N. Harris, S. Rowe | Nov. 2017 |

**Named personnel(s) with designated responsibility for Attendance:**

**L. Hall and T. Knowles**

**Our school target is 96%**

**Our aspirational target set with our pupils is 100%**

**Attendance Policy Moorside 2017 – 2018**

**Introduction**

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Moorside Community Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school on our school website or available from reception for those without access to the internet.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child’s good attendance, the Head teacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

**Rationale**

The governing body and senior leadership team are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment thus depends on good attendance.

**Our aim**

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors linked to Moorside Community Primary School are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

**Through this Policy we aim to:**

* Improve pupils’ achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
* Achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for all children.
* Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
* Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child’s education.
* Ensure that our policy applies to all Early Years children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
* Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Attendance Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
* Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage pupils to have a sense of their own responsibility.
* Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
* Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
* Recognise the role of all staff in identifying where attendance is having an impact on attainment.

**Registration Procedure**

* School gates open from 8.40 and teachers begin to collect children in the main school yard from 8.45 am. The whistle blows at 8.55 am and the Register is called at 9.00 am and the doors will be closed at 9.00 am (after lunch at 1.20 pm).
* Those children who are absent will be recorded on the School Information Management System (SIMs). Children arriving after 9.00 am must report to school office in order for this to be recorded and a reason given for their late arrival. The register is then marked with the ‘L’ code.
* Absences and lateness are coded according to the given codes from the Local Authority.
* All telephone messages or messages given in person regarding absence/lateness are recorded on an absence sheet.
* All absence notes / letters from parents/carers are sent to the office.
* Registers are retained for 5 years.
* Please note Registers are legal documents and may be used in evidence in cases where parents/carers are being prosecuted for attendance offences.

**Monitoring attendance**

We monitor attendance daily and use these procedures for following up absence:

* 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.
* Parents are expected to contact the school as soon as possible. If a child is absent and the parent has not contacted the school by 9.30am, the Parent Support Advisor will check with the class teachers.
* If there is not considered to be a safeguarding issue around the child, the Parent Support Advisor will ring and if appropriate her and the Headteacher will carry out a home visit.
* If there has been no response after three days, another home visit to the child’s home to find out the reason for absence and why the parent/carer has not contacted the school.
* At this point, if there is considered to be a risk, the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher may contact Children Services to seek for advice.
* Where a child returns to school with no explanation of his/her absence, families will be asked as to the reason for absence.
* Class Teachers will enquire on return as to why a child was absent and pass on this information immediately and the office and Parent Advisor will inform the class teacher if aware of information.
* If a child fails to attend school for 10 consecutive days and we are unable to contact the parents via phone, email or a home visit the Head will follow the Local Authority’s Children Missing Education procedure

**Absence**

* Every half day of absence from school has to be classified as authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the reason for any absence is required. Authorised absence is when children miss school for a good reason like illness and medical appointments which can only take place during the school day. Unauthorised absences are those where the school does not consider the absence to be reasonable and may eventually lead to legal proceedings.
* If a child has a persistent pattern of unauthorised absences, including holidays, the matter may be referred to the Local Authority’s School Attendance Team. If regular unauthorised absences continue, the Local Authority may take legal action against you.

**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.
* Once the doors from the playground are closed, children should enter via the main door. Parents/carers will be asked to sign in the late book giving a reason for being late.
* If the lateness persists, a letter is sent to the parent/carer reminding them that 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 that the school can help with.
* Persistent lateness could lead to monitoring procedures and possible legal action.

**Promoting and Celebrating Regular Attendance**

* Celebrations weekly in assembly with certificate for best attendance and most improved, Attendance Mascots all displayed within class learning areas
* Best attendance gain extra playtime on a Friday afternoon 2.15 pm
* Any class with 100% attendance gain extra playtime both Monday and Friday afternoon
* Range of other rewards such as working with independent outdoor consultant
* Other rewards include
* Newsletter celebrating attendance
* Whole school aware of attendance a key priority
* Attendance priority shared with parents in a ssembly
* Rewards, prizes and incentives from Vision for Education agency

**Requesting extended absence during term time (I would take out extended and make this apply to all absence)**

* 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 for to each parent for each child.
* Absence Request Forms must be completed by the parent/carer prior to any leave being taken. .
* The Head Teacher is only allowed by law to use discretion in very exceptional circumstances.

**Medical and Dental Appointments**

The school encourages parents/carers to make non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours. Absences for medical and dental appointments will be authorised when the parent is able to provide an appointment card.

If you do need to make an appointment during the school day, please let us know in advance.

When a child leaves school the office will note that the child is off site and the reason, for example, a hospital appointment. The parent/carer is requested to ‘sign out’ the child. Please try to ensure that the child returns to school afterwards to complete the school day. On return to school, the parent/carer and child will report to the office where the child will be ‘signed in’.

An absence will be deemed unauthorised if a parent is unwell and cannot bring the child to school.

**Exclusion**

Exclusion is very rare however, in the event that exclusion is necessary the LA guidelines will be used. If a lengthy period of exclusion is required 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 moving out of the area, parents are required to supply school with their new address and name of the new school they will apply to. 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 new school, if known on the form.

**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. Children in preschool who do not attend on regular basis could be at risk of losing their place.

Review Date:

Links

**National contacts**

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) School attendance, absence and your child

[www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport](http://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](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk) Schools – Attendance

You can phone the Attendance Service on 0191 277 4500 or

Email attendanceservice@newcastle.gov.uk

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