

Moor Row Primary School

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Mission Statement

Through this policy, we aim to:

- Ensure the safeguarding, child protection and welfare of all pupils.
- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve an attendance for all children, that is at least in line with National Average, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- 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 Nursery and Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Access & Inclusion Team 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 in pupils 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, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.
- Provide effective strategies for early intervention to ensure pupils are not deprived of their educational opportunities through non-attendance or lateness.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Jacqui Beavis
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen McQuirk, Lynn Grears & Anita Bone
Nominated Governors for Safeguarding/ Attendance	Russell Newlove
Attendance Officer	Kirsty Nellist - County

- Policy reviewed by Jacqui Beavis in May 2024.

1. Legal Framework

Moor Row Primary School is committed to following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that:

"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs, he/she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."[1]

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- ✓ Education Act 1996
 - ✓ Education Act 2002
 - ✓ Equality Act 2010
 - ✓ Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
 - ✓ Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
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- The Education Act 1996
 - The Education Act 2002
 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741314/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_3_September_2018_14.09.18.pdf
 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741315/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_2018_Part_One_14.09.18.pdf

This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
DfE (2018) 'School attendance'

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.

Children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Build a firm and secure knowledge and understanding across all curriculum subjects.
- Ensure they consistently meet and build upon expectations for their age group.
- Develop good habits and important life skills.
- Maintain friendships.
- Gain better qualifications.
- Have access to a wider range of opportunities when they leave school.

2. School responsibilities

- We ensure that we adhere to the Children's Services School Absence Enforcement Policy and DfE School Attendance Statutory guidance and departmental advice.
- The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of Moor row Primary School.
- The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- The Head Teacher will report attendance to the Governing Body through their Headteacher report which is written for each Governor meeting. The nominated Governor responsible for the monitoring of attendance is Hannah Thornberry & Russel Newlove as part of their safeguarding role.

- The Head Teacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.
- The school has effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Primary Attendance Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- The school makes parents aware of the school attendance policy either by making it available on request as well as on the school website.

3. Parental Responsibility

- Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly and punctually. It is the parent's responsibility to notify our school if their child is unable to attend school or is going to be late. This should be via the school office and preferably by telephone. A message can be left in the mornings and will be picked up by office staff.
- Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. This can be by regular attendance at school or by education otherwise (including the parent choosing to educate their child at home).
- Compulsory school age is defined as being the term commencing on or after a child's fifth birthday. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen. This applies to the parents of children of compulsory school age who are registered at a maintained school, a pupil referral unit, an Academy, or other state provided education.
- Section 576 of the Education Act 1996: Definition of a Parent – is as follows whether they are married or not; any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person; and any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law. Throughout this document, references to 'parent' mean each and every parent coming within the definition

(whether acting jointly or separately) and should not be taken to mean that provisions only apply to 'parent' in the singular.

4. Expectations

4.1 Moor Row Primary School expects that all our pupils will:

- Attend school every day and strive for 100% school attendance. Every day counts!
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their child's school attendance (age appropriate).

4.2 Moor Row Primary School expects that parents/carers will:

- Ensure their child attends school every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence.
- Ensure your child is not late for school.
- Contact the school office either by telephone, in person or email before 8.45am on the first day of absence and regularly thereafter.
- Provide the school with accurate and up to date contact details (minimum of 2 emergency contacts) and update the school if details change.
- Endeavour to make health appointments, doctor, dentist, hospital appointments etc. at the end of the school day, thus allowing at least half a day's education. Do not allow your child to be absent for a whole day when their medical appointment is only a short, local one.
- Inform a member of school staff of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school.
- Avoid taking your child out of school for non-urgent matters.

5. Registration

- Children are registered every morning and afternoon. Registers will be taken punctually as children enter the classroom both at the start of the day and after lunch at 1 pm.
- Register closes five minutes after children enter the classroom. Children will be marked absent or late by teachers using our attendance system. The office personnel record whether the attendance is authorised or unauthorised.

6. Procedures

Our school will undertake the following procedures to support good attendance:

- ✓ To maintain appropriate registration processes.
- ✓ To maintain, analyse and evaluate appropriate attendance data.

- ✓ To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- ✓ To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- ✓ To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- ✓ To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- ✓ To strongly discourage unnecessary absence
- ✓ To work with parents to improve individual pupils attendance and punctuality
- ✓ To refer to the Local Authority Access & Inclusion Officer, any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- ✓ To report attendance statistics to the DfE where requested.
- ✓ All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns (as per the escalation of intervention) to the Headteacher.

7. Monitoring and reporting of absence concerns

7.1 Moor Row Primary School will:

- Contact parents on the first day of absence if no reason has been received. Contact will be by telephone and / or using the Studybug APP.
- School will contact regularly (daily if necessary)
- Our First Day Response is as follows:
If, on the first day of absence, no reason has been obtained for the reason of absence by 10.30am, the Safeguarding Team will carry out a home visit and / or make contact with the Police to conduct a welfare check
- Moor Row Primary School will follow the escalation of intervention procedure (see Appendix 4) and where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging the parent/carer will be invited to school to work with the Head Teacher and attendance governor to help resolve the difficulties
- School termly attendance monitoring identifies attendance below 96% and we will send out letters for information to parents.
- School termly attendance monitoring identifies persistent absentees (below 90%) and will send out letters for information to parents informing them that attendance will be monitored during the following half term and if there is no improvement they will be invited to an Attendance Panel with Head Teacher and Attendance governor to discuss support needed. An appropriate action plan will be jointly agreed and may involve external agencies
- A review will take place after a half term, and if there has been no improvement in attendance, school will consult with LA Access and Inclusion Officer to determine the next course of action. This may be an Early Help Assessment, a referral to other agency or referral to Access & Inclusion Officer for formal involvement and consideration of legal action.
- School will keep a detailed chronology of all interventions/action taken re attendance.

8. Attendance Monitoring Procedures:

- ✓ First day phone call protocol

- ✓ Follow up phone calls
- ✓ Termly attendance reports and individual attendance reports to be analysed for patterns and trends
- ✓ Our disadvantaged children's attendance to be monitored, and compared to their non-pupil premium counterparts
- ✓ Amber & Red RAG letters at the end of every term.

9. Dealing with late arrivals/persistent lateness

Please see lateness escalation of intervention in Appendix 2

- If a child is late they must enter by the main entrance and a parent will be asked details for the reasons of their lateness to be recorded on our school's registration system.
- It is to be expected that very occasionally a child may be late for a genuine reason. The concern is in regard to any consistent late arrivals (where there is no avoidable reason). If there are children who fall into this category then the following procedure takes place:
- Parent is reminded by office staff of the importance and reasons for lateness and support strategies discussed.
- Staff responsible for attendance (Headteacher) contacts parents informally for discussion about continued lateness
- Formal written letter from Head teacher
- If the issue persists then a formal meeting will be held between the Head Teacher and the Attendance Governor to establish the reasons and plan forward.
- Regular monitoring of lateness will occur by the school and where necessary action will be taken following the escalation of intervention (Appendix 3) at the headteacher's discretion.

10. 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. Parents can inform the school in advance using the following options: telephone, email, or in person
- However, 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.

11. Children Missing in Education and School Roll Procedures

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing in education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in

education, employment or training) later in life. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.

Updating the School Roll:

- All schools must notify the local authority when they are about to remove a pupil name from the School Admission Register under any of the 15 grounds listed in the [Children Missing in Education Regulations 2016 annex A](#).
- All Schools must also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the Admissions Register.
- Schools must complete the "Pupils Gains and Losses Information Sheet" and send to the local authority at the end of each week if gains or losses occur in the school.
- If the child leaves the school and the destination is unknown then schools must complete the CME1 form and forward to the CME officer as soon as possible following the guidance below.
- Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the Local Authority at the earliest opportunity.

11.1 What happens if a school think a child is missing education?

Schools have a duty of care to ensure they have conducted 'reasonable enquires' to locate a child missing in education before this is reported to the Local Authority CME officers.

Where a pupil leaves without advance notice or their destination is unknown, the school will:

- Check possible whereabouts with staff
- Contact parents using last known number or e-mail
- Contact any emergency contacts held for the pupil
- Make a home visit to the last known address
- Check with neighbours and any known friends
- Contact any agencies known to be involved
- If the pupil is statemented or has SEN check with SEN services
- If the pupil or family is known to Social Services inform the named social worker
- Ask the pupil's friends and their parents if they are aware of the pupil's whereabouts
- Check any social media sites e.g. Facebook.

If the pupil is still not located, the school will contact the county attendance officer for the school to seek further advice. The pupil should remain on roll for **20 school days** and their absence should be recorded. Please note, the school must contact the CME officer to **agree the date** that the pupil should be removed from roll before they actually remove the pupil from their roll. On this date the CME officer will forward a CME2 form. On the date agreed with the school, the school should ensure the pupil's attendance data is up to date, and remove them from their roll with the correct leaving date.

11.2 Admission of children from overseas

These procedures will apply to all schools where Cumberland County Council is the admitting authority.

All schools must comply with the [Schools Admission Code](#) when dealing with an application for a child who is not a UK National. Schools must not refuse a school place simply because of doubts about the child's immigration status. School may seek passport identification / visa checks when parents are applying for a place within the school. Further information can be found <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children>

Most children from overseas are entitled to a state education. Children who are not entitled to a state education: -

Children from non-European Economic Area (EEA) countries who are here as short term visitors – these are children who live abroad but have been admitted to the UK for a short visit and not for study. For a child to be entitled to a place they would need to be granted a visa for more than 6 months.

Children from non-EEA countries who have permitted to study in the UK. These children are allowed to study in England on the basis that they attend an independent fee-paying school.

If children belong to either of these categories and are found to be admitted into school then schools must not deny a place. They should instead refer to the Home Office's school referral team – schoolreferrals@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Roles and responsibilities

12:1 Governors

- To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

12:2 Head teacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality patterns.
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality when it is an issue.
- To contact and work with parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- To monitor attendance data and ensure the Head teacher receives this information every half term.
- To provide attendance "watch" lists to the school office for daily monitoring.
- To coordinate daily punctuality checks with late children.
- To process all legal documentation regarding attendance monitoring including penalty notices to the LA.

12:4 Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the analysis of registers by office staff and / or the headteacher.
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.
- To record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate electronic system.

12:5 Office Staff

- To record children arriving late or leaving early on a daily basis.
- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the Attendance Manager System. (Scholar pack)
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary – monitoring coding.
- To contact any parent who has not informed the school as to why their child is absent on the first day of absence.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- To make a judgment in conjunction with the Headteacher about whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

12:6 Local Authority Access and Inclusion Officer

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- To support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.

12. Leave of Absence during term time

- Leave of absence during term time will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.
- The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The Department for Education allows a Head Teacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in "exceptional circumstances".
- The law states that the provision for Head Teachers to authorise absence purely for the purpose of a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.
- The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head Teacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for exceptional circumstances / authorised absence may include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments or where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Bereavement, unexpected personal or family problems or illness might be considered as an **exceptional circumstance**.
- To attend a wedding of a person close to the family.

The school will identify pupils and families where attendance is poor and meetings, letters, closer monitoring may be considered as detailed above.

The school will not condone holidays taken during term time, permission for absences in term time may only be granted for exceptional circumstances. When a request is not authorised, parents have the right of representation to the School governors.

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

1. The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
 2. Year six transition days (for pupils in year six)
 3. Year six SAT's week (for pupils in year six)
 4. Year 1 Phonic testing
- Parents and carers must complete a 'Leave of Absence' form outlining in writing the "exceptional circumstances". The headteacher may invite you to attend a meeting to discuss your request. This should be done at least 2 weeks prior to the leave (except for a bereavement).
 - All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the Head Teacher, are accumulated and parents who fail to ensure regular attendance of their children at school can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The amount is £60 (per parent per child) if paid within 21 days and £120 (per parent per child) if paid between 21 and 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution, except in limited circumstances.

13. Incentives and rewards

- Pupils at Moor Row Primary School will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level and we will positively encourage and celebrate good and improving school attendance:
- ✓ At the end of each term we reward all of the children who have had **Excellent** attendance for that term. We will strive for this to be 100% but it will be on a discretionary basis based on individual children's circumstances.

14. Links with other policies/Procedures:

This policy is linked to our:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

An “authorised absence” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.
- An absence due to exceptional circumstances.

Only the Head Teacher can authorise absence. If a child is ill or unable to attend school for any reason, the parents should provide an explanation for the absence. For repeated or regular periods of illness, the school will request medical evidence prior to authorising absences.

An “unauthorised absence” as:

Any absences that is deemed not to be an acceptable reason for missing school. Unauthorised absences from school carry the risk of prosecution under Section 44 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

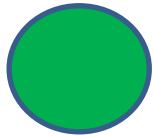
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

“Persistent absenteeism” as:

-Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason. Persistent absence equates to 38 sessions (19 days) absence across an academic year.

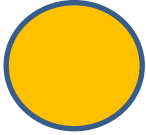
Appendix 3:

ESCALATION OF INTERVENTION Lateness

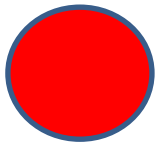


% Lateness

No lateness



**1 – 2 late arrivals
in a week**



**3-4 late arrivals
in a week**

Level of Intervention

- No lateness concerns

 - Lateness challenged on arrival by office staff
 - Speak to parent and ask why child is late
 - Offer advice or support to parents if necessary
 - Recorded in school's late system
 - Send warning lateness letter to outline concerns and consequences if this doesn't improve

 - Regularly monitoring of lateness letters. Any concerns issued with a written warning at the head teachers discretion
- At the end of monitoring :**
- **Improvement:** Continue monitoring
 - **No Improvement:** Lateness Panel Meeting – HT and a governor to be present.
 - **If this continues, this will escalate to unauthorised absence and move over to the attendance escalation.**

Responsibility

School Lead on these actions

School Lead on these actions

School Lead

School Lead/LA Officer