

Moss Park Primary School



Achieving Excellence Together

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

July 2024

Date Updated	July 2024
Policy Written By	S Nunwick (Headteacher) and Administrative Team
Date Approved by Governors	TBC
Date of Next Review	September 2023 or subject to changes in legislation/DFE guidance
Responsible Committee	Pupil Welfare, Curriculum and Standards
Signed by Chair of Governors	

1. Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. [Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised (permission given by the Headteacher) or unauthorised (permission not given).

Aims of the policy

- To ensure that all learners attend school well
- To ensure that all learners are punctual and ready to learn
- To make parents and carers aware of their legal responsibility and ensure that their children have access to the education to which they are entitled
- To keep good records of attendance through the school registers and use a clear framework to monitor and respond to pupil absences
- To work effectively with the LA and other agencies to follow up attendance issues promptly and effectively
- To monitor closely pupils with attendance and punctuality issues and to work with parents, and where appropriate other agencies to bring about improvement
- To fulfil our school aims <https://www.mossparkprimary.co.uk/page/our-school-motto-values-and-aims/37943>

Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 guidance, and other relevant legislation.

2. Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

In line with [Working together to improve school attendance](#) the government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, particularly severe and persistent absence;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly and punctually.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A “Parent” is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

3. Safeguarding

At Moss Park Primary School, we believe every pupil should be able learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. We respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn and participate in all school activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents. Safeguarding is about offering early help and support to children and families, and difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is worrying the child or that there are difficulties in the home environment. Poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding matter if this places your child at risk of harm.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone’s responsibility and within the context of this school; safeguarding and promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses attendance, behaviour management, Health and Safety, access to the curriculum and anti- bullying, protecting children from abuse and neglect, online safety, radicalisation and extremism, FGM and CSE.

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In order to allow us to safeguard the children in our care it is important that parents provide the school with their current contact details and provide at least three other contact numbers in case of emergency.

It is also important for parents to let school know of any specific vulnerability in relation to their child or home circumstances. If you are uncertain about what would be considered a vulnerability please speak with **Sally Nunwick**

4. Roles and Responsibilities

At Moss Park Primary School we believe that improving school attendance is everyone’s business, and that it is a shared responsibility by governors, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community.

Role	Name	Contact details
Senior Attendance Lead	Sally Nunwick (Headteacher)	0161 864 1710
Attendance Officer	Sara Sherratt	0161 864 1710
Named Governor for Attendance	Allan Humphris	0161 864 1710

The Governing Body of Moss Park Primary School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school’s ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils
- Ensuring the school engages and works effectively with the local authority Pupil Absence Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children, pupils with a social worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy

The Headteacher at Moss Park Primary School will:

- Ensure this policy is implemented consistently and reviewed for efficacy periodically
- Monitor school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Request the issuing of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

School will have a designated senior attendance lead with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and who will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents through regular communication (eg website, newsletters etc)
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with, that staff understand the attendance register is a legal document and that attendance and absence are coded correctly in accordance with DfE guidance [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors
- Meet regularly with the Attendance Officer to ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented

- Ensure robust school systems are in place which provide useful data at cohort, group and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
 - children who have a social worker including looked-after children
 - young carers
 - children who are eligible for free school meals
 - children who speak English as a second language
 - children who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated
- Set out how Pupil Premium will be used to support pupils with irregular attendance

All staff at Moss Park Primary School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation
- Implement systems to ensure a consistent approach to reporting, recording and monitoring the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner
- Raise concerns and queries with the Attendance Officer around individual pupils
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

The Attendance Officer will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. The member of staff responsible for attendance will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Rigorously monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data with the Headteacher
- Undertaking attendance meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENDCO, and other relevant staff members.
- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole school attendance.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Managing individual pupil casework files.
- Coordinating individual attendance action plans for pupils causing concern including using the Trafford toolkit to identify issues early on, the instigation of a Trafford Team Together referral and plan and/ or the implementation of a parenting contract
- Support school leaders in delivering whole school initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies

School Admin staff will:

- Make calls to parents when first day of absence contact has not been made by parents
- Accurately record attendance data daily using agreed codes
- Record late arrival, time and reason
- Consult with the Headteacher if there is a query around the circumstances of a pupil's absence
- Ensure reasons for absences are accurately recorded and details of illness are given

- Collect absence notes and record reasons for absence.
- Compile and update standard texts and letters re: % attendance, notification of reasons for absence and lateness and send to parents when necessary

Parents are expected to:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Ensure their child is in school on time every day.
- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note of explanation.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours and not taking term time holidays.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, school website, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class (as they move up through school and become independent learners).
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late by signing in the inventory system (with parent or on their own when they walk to school in Y5/6). This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

5. Definitions

- Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either a period of **authorised** or **unauthorised** leave. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.
- 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 or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- **Unauthorised** absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and/or for which no reason for the period of leave has been given.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. The Headteacher may not, in some circumstances, accept the reason given for the absence and will record it as unauthorised. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.
- Absences that will not be authorised include those that have not been explained within 7 days
- Persistent Absenteeism: this is recorded when a child's attendance falls below 90%

- At Moss Park Primary School, a child is **late** if they enter school after the gates are shut at 8:55am when the rest of the school has gone in to start learning

6. Positive measures to encourage good attendance

- We support pupils with medical conditions and we have a number of trained staff to administer some prescription and non-prescription medicines in school to all pupils
- Regular reminders by staff of the benefits of good attendance and punctuality
- Engaging pre-learning activities provided by teachers (8.45 – 8.55 am)
- Free Breakfast Club for pupils eligible for PPG and other special circumstances
- Regular Communication with parents and pupils about the educational benefits of good attendance and punctuality
- Late Gate staffed by SLT each half term to raise the profile of punctuality
- Bronze, silver and gold badges for annual 100% attendance
- Texts home and certificates for significant improvement in a pupil's attendance
- Weekly Class Attendance Champions Trophy
- Each time a class wins the weekly trophy, they will receive a nominal £10 token to go towards a special activity, chosen by them, at the end of the year

7. Arrival at school and morning registration procedures at Moss Park Primary School

We place a great deal of importance on the need to be punctual and to arrive in school on time. Not only does this make for a good start to the day but also it shows consideration for everyone else in the class and avoids repetition of instructions and teaching. It save pupils from embarrassment of walking into their classroom late when everyone else is working.

At Moss Park Primary School all pupils are expected to arrive on time and complete a full day for every day of the school year. The school gate opens at 8.40 am and pupils begin pre-learning activities with their teacher from 8.45 am. The school day officially begins at 8.55 am and finishes at 3.25 pm. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this. The school register will be taken at 8.55 am. All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office with their parents, who will be expected to sign Inentry and provide a reason for their absence. If their arrival is before 9.25 am it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

Pupils who arrive late (but before register closes) will complete the learning activities missed at the start of morning break or at another suitable time of the day wherever possible. This is so that they are not disadvantaged against their peers. This is a supportive measure, and is not linked to our behaviour policy. Teachers treat pupils who are late sensitively and non-judgmentally as it is rarely their responsibility that they are late.

The school register will officially close at 9.25 am. The DfE advises that schools should close the register to pupils no more than **30 minutes** after the register was taken. All pupils arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a warning letter leading to a penalty notice being issued or prosecution (after 10 sessions of recorded unauthorised lateness) as a last resort.

Please note: L or U codes will be used if a pupil arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.

School action on persistent lateness

Late Texts go out daily (data taken from Inventry) with reminders of start times and an offer of support
Inventory is monitored every 4 weeks on a Friday by the Head teacher and Attendance Officer
Punctuality Letter 1 – initial letter with offer of support and informal meeting and notice of further monitoring.
Punctuality Letter 2 – no improvement by the next 4 week check, formal request to attend meeting with Head teacher and further support and intervention discussed
Punctuality Letter 3 – no improvement in punctuality despite Letter 1 and Letter 2. We will meet with parents and carers to secure engagement with Trafford Team Together so that other agencies can support the family

8. Late Collection of pupils

School finishes at 3.25 pm and it is expected that parents will be on the school premises to pick up their child/children on time. Whilst we recognise that there may be one off emergencies, it is not the responsibility of school staff to supervise pupils because parents are late. This interrupts the work of staff and is also upsetting for pupils. Pupils who have not been picked up by 3.35 pm become the responsibility of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.

In the situation where the parents/carers or authorised person is late in collecting their child/ren and has not notified the school that they will be late, a member of staff is responsible for contacting parents/carers. If they are not available, they will contact the next person authorised to collect the child/ren requesting that they collect the child as soon as possible and so on down the contacts list.

Parents will sign Inventry in the office when collecting their child. If parents are regularly late collecting their child/ren from school, the Headteacher will contact them to discuss the matter further. If there is no improvement, Safeguarding Lead may seek advice from children's services.

If a pupil attends one of our after school clubs, the same protocols apply. Parents should arrive promptly at the club finishing time and notify the school as soon as possible if they are going to be late. In the event of children being collected late from an after school club on a regular basis then the adult running the club reserves the right to ask that the child not attend in the future. We operate a '3 strikes' policy and a pupil who is collected late will not be able to attend after the 3rd late pick up.

9. Categorising Absence and Attendance

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department for Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance in [Working together to improve attendance \(May 2022\)](#).

10. Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

Medical appointments go on the register as half a day's **authorised** absence. Parents should let us know in advance of medical appointments. Pupils should come into school before attending morning appointments and always return to school directly after an appointment, even if this for part of the day. This minimises lost learning time. Evidence of an appointment such as a letter or text reminder should be shown. Where a child does not return to school, following an early medical appointment, the following school session may be recorded as unauthorised.

In the majority of cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other

appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent. We will invite parents to attend school-led Attendance Support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) and local authority policy [illness-and-your-child.pdf \(trafford.gov.uk\)](#). We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

11. Leave of absence in term time

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as **Rare, Unavoidable, Significant and Short (RUSS)**. **By avoidable where an event could not reasonably be scheduled during the 13 weeks school holiday.**

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, a leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. The cost of a holiday is not a factor accepted as 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website: <https://www.mossparkprimary.co.uk/page/school-forms/36294> or from the school office.

Leave of absence requests cannot be backdated.

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for exceptional leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. Authorisation is only for one day.
- Absence for a bereavement of a close family member - is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave.
- Absence to visit family members - not granted during term time if they could be scheduled for holiday periods or outside school hours. Children may need time to visit a seriously ill relative, but it must meet the 'RUSS' criteria
- The needs of families of Service personnel should be taken into account when returning from long, operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled school holiday time
- Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with special educational needs or disabilities (with EHCPs)
- Parent(s) 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
 - Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
 - Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
 - Attending provision arranged by the local authority
 - Attending work experience
 - If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

12. Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Non-medical appointments
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation

- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is considered well enough to attend
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school

13. Sanctions

Moss Park Primary School will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process. In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

14. Register Keeping and Recording

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

“Regular” attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils

An “authorised absence” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has accepted the reasons given.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Recognised days of religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause

An “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents 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

15. Absence reporting procedure for parents at Moss Park Primary School

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the morning of the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated. If a child is absent, the following actions will be initiated by the school:

- The first day message procedures will be activated for all pupils who are not in school after close of register at 9.30 am and where no reason for absence is known
- If there is no contact made from the pupil's parents, a telephone call home will be made again later that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact/s will be telephoned as detailed in section 3 policy
- If school cannot contact a parent or other emergency contact and are concerned about a pupil, a home visit may be carried out.
- This visit may take place on first day of absence or during the absence if school become concerned over the period of absence
- School will telephone home if a pupil leaves the school without permission.

In cases of ongoing attendance concerns, school may also:

- Visit the home of the pupil for a welfare check
- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Refer to an external agency/ support service to offer support, guidance, and advice.
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures [Education of Vulnerable Children Handbook March 2023.pdf](#)
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken.
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing an Early Help Assessment **or consulting with the Children's First Response team or the police, where there are safeguarding concerns.**

16. School Intervention and support for attendance concerns (short and long term)

At Moss Park Primary, we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of other difficulties at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. Parents should contact **Sally Nunwick/Sara Sherratt** to share concerns or information in the first instance.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services (for example Trafford Team Together) to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 13 above)

17. Deletions from the Register

At Moss Park Primary we will add and will only delete pupils from our school roll in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations. In most circumstances, we will know in advance about pupils leaving our school; this will be planned and discussed with the parent in advance of the pupil leaving. At Moss Park Primary we will always work with families to gain information about the pupil's next school and/or address before the pupil leaves to reduce the risk of pupils becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

We follow Trafford Council's Child Missing Education procedures and will ensure the Children Missing Education Team are informed of all removals from our school roll no later than the date the child is removed in line with statutory responsibilities. Where the location of a pupil is unknown we will liaise with Trafford Pupil Absence Team so that joint reasonable enquiries can be made to ascertain the child's whereabouts and the pupil will remain on roll until those enquiries are exhausted.

If a child is removed from roll to home educate, we can only de-register the child if we receive, in writing, the parent's intention to educate their child other than at school. The pupil will be de-registered on receipt of such a letter and Trafford Council will be informed of the removal from roll as outlined above. We will also inform Trafford Council's EHE team.

Moss Park Primary will follow Trafford Council's [Children Missing Education procedures](#) when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown, and the school will carry out joint enquiries with Trafford Council to establish the whereabouts of the child.

18. Related Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- safeguarding including child protection
- medical needs
- admissions
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- SEND
- teaching and learning
- behaviour and rewards

19. Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. Governors will, therefore, examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they possibly can be. The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

Signed: (Headteacher)

Date: July 2024

Policy to be Reviewed: July 2025 or pending new legislation

Appendix 1 - MPPS approach to term time absence

Appendix 2 - Moss Park Primary School Leave of Absence form

Appendix 3 - Levels of Intervention and Support identified in the Trafford Model Attendance policy

Appendix 4i - Letter - School Attendance Concerns Stage 1

Appendix 4ii - Letter - School Attendance Concerns Stage 2

Appendix 4iii - Letter - School Attendance Concerns Stage 3

Appendix 5 - NHS Traffic Light Guide

Appendix 1 MPPS approach to term time absence

In line with the August 2024 DFE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' framework https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf our policy is that term time absence requests will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Children have 175 days off school for holidays and family events.

Key Principles at Moss Park Primary School

Any absence, even if it falls into the category of exceptional circumstances as detailed below, will not be authorised if it leaves pupils, following further absences or unforeseen illnesses, vulnerable to low attendance that could put them into the category of 'persistent absenteeism' (currently any attendance below 90%).

It is important to note that the Headteacher can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether the absence is authorised at all. The Headteacher's decision is final.

The principles for defining 'exceptional' are **Rare, Significant, Unavoidable and Short ('RUSS')**. By 'Unavoidable', we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Applying for a leave of absence

Parents should always read the school's policy before making the written request for a leave of absence so that they may make a considered view on whether the absence is likely to be accepted or denied. Should they feel their requests meets the criteria of 'exceptional circumstances' then further evidence may be requested.

Parents and carers must use the school's leave of application form, which is available from the Office or to download on the school website. This must be submitted 'for the attention of the Headteacher' two weeks in advance. No retrospective requests will be authorised.

The Headteacher does not meet with parents to discuss individual cases without a completed form, as virtually all circumstances are covered in this appendix. If the Headteacher feels there may be exceptional circumstances that need exploring, she will reach out to the parents for further information.

Exceptional circumstances that may be authorised include:

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. Authorisation is only for one day.
- Absence for a bereavement of a close family member - is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave.
- Absence to visit family members - not granted during term time if they could be scheduled for holiday periods or outside school hours. Children may need time to visit a seriously ill relative, but it must meet the '**RUSS**' criteria
- The needs of families of Service personnel should be taken into account when returning from long, operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled school holiday time
- Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with special educational needs or disabilities (with EHCPs)

- Parent(s) 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
 - Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
 - Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
 - Attending provision arranged by the local authority
 - Attending work experience
 - If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for exceptional leave of absence. The evidence parents and carers will need to provide depends entirely on what type of leave from school they are applying for, for example:

- Flight tickets to confirm the length of stay
- Proof of an exceptional event taking place
- An official letter from an employer stating that you have been allocated a holiday and that this date is non-negotiable
- Proof of service for military personnel

If parents are unable to provide the evidence requested then the leave of absence will not be granted

Where parents take a leave of absence without the Headteacher's authorisation, a fixed penalty fine will be applied by **Trafford Council**. Trafford protocol states:

Any leave during the term time taken without the approval of the Headteacher will trigger a Penalty Notice after 8 missed sessions (4 days). Penalty Notices provide an alternative to prosecution and will offer parents and opportunity to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying £80 (per parent per child) if paid within 21 days and £160 if paid within 28 days.

If the penalty is not paid by the end of 28 days, the local authority must withdraw the notice, or commence proceedings for the offence to which the notice relates. The prosecution is not for the non-payment of the notice but is for failure to ensure regular attendance at school.

If we have reason to believe that parents have taken a leave of absence without authorisation, we will actively contact the parents and do a home welfare visit. This is for safeguarding purposes. A failure to respond to the calling card will lead us to believe that a term time absence has been taken and a fixed penalty fine may be applied.

S Nunwick: Headteacher
 A Humphris: Chair of Governors
 July 2024

Appendix 2 Moss Park Primary School Leave of Absence form

APPLICATION FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Schools are only able to authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances. Please refer to the 'holidays in term time' section of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy when considering an application for authorised absence during term time. In making a request for an authorised absence from school you will need to explain why the circumstances are exceptional. **Please Note:** There is no general right to authorise absence for a family holiday and if you take your child out of school without permission the absence will be unauthorised and we may refer the matter for consideration of legal action/penalty notice.

You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered.

Child's name:	Class:
Start of absence:	Return to school date:
Number of days absence requested (school days):	
Destination:	
Does your child have a sibling in the rest of the School? If so, which class?	

<p>Please explain why you are applying for an authorise absence and the circumstances which make your application exceptional; and why the leave cannot be taken within the normal 13 weeks annual holiday your child already has from school. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event, for example a funeral, please confirm the date of the event and explain your travel arrangements. If you require additional space, please continue on the other side of the page.</p>
<p>Evidence provided (see policy for examples):</p>

<p>APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE as detailed above. Signed (Headteacher) Date</p>

<p>DECLINE OF REQUEST FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE as detailed above. Signed (Headteacher) Date</p>
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Did you know..?

Days taken off school	In % terms	Your child's maximum attendance for the year – without ANY illnesses or medical appointments will only be...	
5 days	2.6%	97.3%	Any illness that year /medical issues will drop you down to 'below average' attendance
10 days	5.3%	94.7%	Your child is now well <u>below</u> the national average (96%) attendance
15 days	7.9%	92.1%	Your child is now at risk of being classed as a 'persistent absentee' (truant)
20 days	10.5%	89.5%	Your child is now officially classed as a 'persistent absentee (truant). This could lead to involvement from other services and/or penalty fines

Appendix 3

Levels of Intervention and Support identified in the Trafford Model Attendance policy

LEVEL ONE	FAILURE TO SEND CHILD TO SCHOOL AFTER SCHOOL REFUSES LEAVE OF ABSENCE.
Criterion	Failure to send child to school after request for leave of absence refused
Vulnerability	Any
Service Provider	School/LA
Intervention	Head Teacher to consider issue of a penalty notice and send request to Pupil Absence Team via the school portal
	Prosecution in the absence of the penalty being discharged within 28 days

LEVEL TWO	LOW LEVEL LATE / IRREGULAR / NON-ATTENDANCE
Criterion	Attendance between 90%-100% over four weeks
Need/Vulnerability	Child/ family may be vulnerable
Service Provider	School
Intervention	School to contact parent to determine reason for pupil's absence on first day of absence and expected date of return.
	Attendance and monitoring process to identify when absence or punctuality becomes a concern
	Support from the school's attendance officer through telephone calls, letters, emails and home visits
	Parents to be offered access to sources of support via attendance plans or an individual health care plan.
	Praise and reward scheme for children entering level two from any higher level

LEVEL THREE	MEDIUM LEVEL LATE / IRREGULAR / NON-ATTENDANCE
Criterion	Attendance between 80% - 90% over four weeks
Vulnerability	Child/Family may be vulnerable or have a low level need requiring single or multi agency support
Service Provider	School/ LA
Intervention	Identifying pattern of absence
Welfare Support	Attendance concern letter
	School meeting with parents – Individual Attendance Plan EBSNA toolkit
	Family help assessment / involvement of Trafford Team Together
	In school pastoral and mentoring support and counselling
	Home visits
	Individual health care plan
	Referral to external support services / alternative provision
	Referral for specialist assessment (e.g. SEND/CAMHS)
Intervention	
Enforcement	Non-attendance warning letters
	Parenting contract
	Home visits

LEVEL FOUR	HIGH LEVEL LATE / IRREGULAR / NON-ATTENDANCE
Criterion	Attendance below 80% over four weeks
Vulnerability	Child/Family may have a complex level of need requiring higher level intervention, including referral to specialist assessments & services.
Service Provider	School/LA /Legal Services

Intervention Welfare Support	As at Level 3
Intervention Enforcement	When all attempts to engage with the family at levels three and four have failed referral to pupil absence team to consider the issue of a penalty notice/prosecution/ Education Supervision Order

LEVEL FIVE	SAFEGUARDING NEEDS
Criterion	Any level of attendance
Need/Vulnerability	Child/Young person has acute needs that require statutory intervention to promote and protect the welfare of children/young people.
Service Provider	All Agencies
Intervention	Immediate referral by school, attendance officer or other concerned agency to Children's Services.
	Children's services to conduct an immediate assessment of need or a multi-agency assessment under Children's Act 1989, s17 as appropriate.

Appendix 4i

DATE

Stage 1 Attendance Concern

Dear PARENT NAME

School Attendance Concerns Stage 1 (PUPIL NAME DOB)

Following our end of term check of our registers, we have noted that XX has an attendance figure which is below our expected level. XX has an attendance figure of XX% compared with an expected figure of 96% (the national average for primary school children in the UK).

A copy of your child's registration certificate has been enclosed for your information.

If there is an ongoing persistent health need, which as a school we are unaware of, please do provide further information about this.

We have enclosed a handy NHS 'traffic light' poster for you to explain when pupils should attend school (e.g. for minor illnesses). Please also note that we are authorized to give calpol/paracetamol products in school, just complete a form at the office to give consent.

It is important that all our pupils attend school as much as possible to ensure that they are able to fully succeed with their learning and the opportunities presented to them.

It is hoped by that by highlighting this matter to you, immediate steps are taken to improve your child's attendance at school.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this letter with me further, or if you would like to arrange a meeting in school next term, please contact me on 0161 864 1710. I will help as much as possible so that we can work together for a positive outcome. We will continue to monitor XX's attendance and hope to see an improvement at our next check in around 6 weeks time.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nunwick
Headteacher

Appendix 4ii

DATE

Stage 2 Attendance Concern

Dear PARENT NAME

School Attendance Concerns Stage 2 (PUPIL NAME DOB)

I am writing to you in relation to significant concerns about PUPIL NAME's attendance which is currently %.

Each absence is recorded on your child's attendance register, which currently shows they have NUMBER authorised and NUMBER unauthorised absences.

Poor school attendance is often a sign that additional support is needed and we would like to ensure that this is put in place to support PUPIL NAME's improved attendance.

I would like to invite you to meet with me on DATE at TIME to discuss this matter and identify any support that may be required. This meeting may result in a referral to Trafford Team Together to outline any support needed and how that will be put in place.

You are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting so we can work together to ensure PUPIL NAME's attendance improves.

I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nunwick
Headteacher

Appendix 4iii

DATE

Dear PARENT NAME

School Attendance Concerns Stage 3 (PUPIL NAME DOB)

PUPIL NAME has been absent from school for X school sessions during the academic year without authorised permission and without justifiable reason being given to school. The absence has therefore been recorded as unauthorised.

PUPIL NAME's attendance is currently X% which falls well below the national average of 95%.

All young people deserve the very best start in life and regular school attendance supports this by assisting them to reach their academic potential. You will be aware that it is a parent/carers responsibility to ensure regular attendance at school.

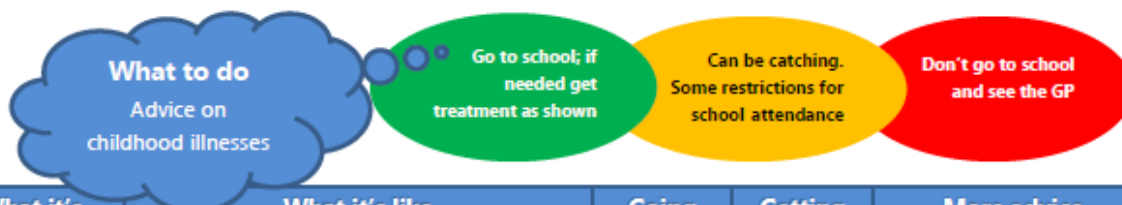
PUPIL NAME's school attendance will now be monitored continually until it has reached a satisfactory level. If the attendance does not improve to an acceptable level, you may be issued a Penalty Notice under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, or you may be prosecuted for failing to ensure your child's regular attendance according to Section 444 Education Act 1996.

If you feel that there are genuine reasons for the absence, or should you have any concerns about PUPIL NAME's attendance please contact us as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nunwick
Headteacher

Appendix 5



What it's called	What it's like	Going to school	Getting treatment	More advice
Chicken Pox	Rash begins as small, red, flat spots that develop into itchy fluid-filled blisters	●	Pharmacy	Back to school 5 days after on-set of the rash
Common Cold	Runny nose, sneezing, sore throat	●	Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene
Conjunctivitis	Teary, red, itchy, painful eye(s)	●	Pharmacy	Try not to touch eye to avoid spreading
Flu	Fever, cough, sneezing, runny nose, headache, body aches and pain, exhaustion, sore throat	●	Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene
German measles	Fever, tiredness. Raised, red, rash that starts on the face and spreads downwards.	●	G.P.	Back to school 6 days from on-set of rash
Glandular fever	high temperature, sore throat; usually more painful than any before and swollen glands	●	G.P.	Child needs to be physically able to concentrate
Hand, foot & mouth disease	Fever, sore throat, headache, small painful blisters inside the mouth on tongue and gums (may appear on hands and feet)	●	G.P.	Only need to stay off ill feeling too ill for school
Head lice	Itchy scalp (may be worse at night)	●	Pharmacy	
Impetigo	Clusters of red bumps or blisters surrounded by area of redness	●	G.P.	Back to school when lesions crust or 48 hours after start of antibiotics
Measles	Fever, cough, runny nose, and watery inflamed eyes. Small red spots with white or bluish white centres in the mouth, red, blotchy rash	●	G.P.	Back to school 4 days from on-set of rash
Ringworm	Red ring shaped rash, may be itchy rash may be dry and scaly or wet and crusty	●	G.P.	
Scabies	Intense itching, pimple – like rash Itching and rash may be all over the body but commonly between the fingers, wrists, elbows, arm	●	G.P.	Back to school after first treatment
Shingles	Pain, itching, or tingling along the affected nerve pathway. Blister-type rash	●	G.P.	Only stay off school if rash is weeping and cannot be covered
Sickness bug/diarrhoea	Stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea	●	Pharmacy	See GP if symptoms persist after 48 hours
Threadworms	Intense itchiness around anus	●	Pharmacy	Ensure good hand hygiene
Tonsilitis	Intense Sore throat	●	Pharmacy	See GP if temperature lasts more than 48 hours or cannot swallow
Whooping cough	Violent coughing, over and over, until child inhales with "whooping" sound to get air into lungs	●	G.P.	Back to school after 5 days of antibiotics or 21 days from onset of illness

See www.patient.co.uk for further information on each of these conditions

This leaflet has been produced in partnership between



This information is a guide and has been checked by health professionals however, if you are unsure about your child's wellbeing we recommend you contact your pharmacy or GP to check.