

Moor Green Primary Academy
Attendance & Punctuality Policy



Policy Statement

It is vital that all pupils have a good level of attendance. There is an indisputable link between good attendance and good progress – children who do not attend school as often as they should do not fulfil their potential. This principle is critical to our approach in monitoring and managing pupil attendance at Moor Green Primary Academy. We consider a good level of attendance to be 96% or above and our aim is for all pupils' attendance to be at this level.

Getting your child to school really matters. Did you know ...

If your child's attendance during the school year is ...	Your child would have lost approximately ...	Or they would have missed approximately ...
95%	9 days	50 lessons
90%	19 days	100 lessons
85%	29 days	150 lessons
80%	38 days	200 lessons
75%	48 days	250 lessons
70%	57 days	290 lessons
65%	67 days	340 lessons

Aims

- To raise pupil achievement.
- To ensure every child has an acceptable level of attendance.
- To work alongside parents and children to improve attendance and resolve any issues which may be impacting upon children's attendance.
- To reduce the level of absence within the whole school.
- To reduce lateness.

Legal Framework

The Education Act 1996 states that:

- The parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable
 - a) to their age, ability and aptitude, and
 - b) to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- A person begins to be of compulsory school age
 - a) when they attain the age of five, if they attain that age on a prescribed day, and
 - b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following their attaining that age.

Moor Green Primary Academy is dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this attendance and punctuality policy accordingly.



Responsibilities of the parent

- To fulfil their legal responsibility in ensuring children attend school every day and arrive on time.
- To follow the schools procedures for reporting absences:
 1. Ring on the morning of the absence by 9.30am and each day the child is too unwell to attend.
 2. It is expected that if a child has been too unwell to attend school for 3 or more days that medical attention will have been sought, medical proof is then to be provided to school.
- To discuss and work with school regarding issues that may impact upon attendance so that these can be resolved and a child's education is not affected.
- To take all holidays and trips abroad during the allocated holiday periods.
- To provide medical letters or appointment cards for appointments being taken within school hours. This should only happen when it is unavoidable for them to be taken outside of school hours.

Responsibilities of the pupil

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher in the first instance.

Responsibilities of the school

- To contact parents on the first morning of absence if notification has not been received.
- To monitor patterns of absence for individual pupils, groups of pupils and the school as a whole and to report on these to the relevant bodies (e.g. governors; academy trust; DfE)
- To notify parents where there is concern over a child's level of attendance.
- To support parents where there are barriers impacting upon attendance.
- To follow appropriate legal procedures where there are continuing concerns with attendance and no improvement being made.
- To access other services such as an Education Social Worker and take advice from Birmingham's legal intervention team when a child's level of attendance is of concern. This school may refer cases to social care services if absence is judged as a potential safeguarding concern.
- The school is committed to safeguarding pupils and will carry out safe and well checks to the family home, where a child is absent and there has been no reason provided.

Child Missing in Education

Where a pupil is absent from school without authorisation and whose whereabouts is unknown, the school having carried out its procedures has still not been able to make contact with a parent, the school will then refer to the local authority Child Missing in Education Team. This will happen no later than five days from the first day of absence. The local authority will then work with the school to carry out further enquiries.



For further information please follow the link:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20014/schools_and_learning/1325/children_missing_education

Understanding Types of Absence

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to authorise any child's absence from school. Therefore, absences will be treated as unauthorised until the school is satisfied that it should be authorised.

Parents/carers cannot authorise absences and should be aware that while calling the school or providing a note for an absence complies with safeguarding procedures, it does not automatically mean an absence will be authorised.

Authorised absence

This is defined as absence which is unavoidable and will be considered once a reason has been provided. Reasons that may be authorised include: illness and injury (including hospitalisation); trauma (e.g. family bereavement); appointments that cannot be altered (e.g. with medical or dental services); religious observance (see below).

Illness Absence

Specific reasons for illnesses are recorded on the register once provided by parents. If a child has missed 20 sessions (10 full days) due to illness, we reserve the right to not authorise any further absences without medical proof. We will make referrals to our school health nurse when deemed appropriate.

Medical or dental appointments

Parents/carers should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside of school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of the appointment day as possible. Medical evidence may also be required in the form of a copy of a prescription, appointment card, etc.

Religious observance

Moor Green Primary Academy recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends, and will allow authorised absence for these times. Parent/carers will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

Unauthorised absence

This is defined as absence which is avoidable and where the child would be able to attend school if the parent(s)/carer(s) had not deemed otherwise. Reasons include: family holiday, religious observance which exceeds the entitlement as specified by the Department for Education, weather conditions and appointments which are not essential to the health and well-being of the child, children being kept away from school to look after parents/family members, child care arrangements.



Persistent Absence

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the persistent absence mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately.

Term time leave of absence

- Taking leave during term time **is not acceptable** and will only be authorised by the Head of school in exceptional circumstance. In these rare cases, the Head of school will specify the amount of leave that can be granted.
- Any requests for leave in term time must be put in writing to the Head of School before the intended leave begins.
- Patterns of unauthorised leave during term time are monitored by the school and cases causing concern could result in legal proceedings being brought against the family.

Monitoring of attendance

- Children's (unauthorised) attendance is monitored when it falls below 96% to ensure they do not become pupils that the government class as, 'persistently absent'.
- Where concerns with attendance persist, parents will be invited into school for an informal meeting with the Pastoral Manager to discuss whether any support is required to improve attendance.
- Where parents do not engage with the school to improve their child's attendance, school will seek support from the Education Legal Intervention Team where individual cases will be considered for prosecution.
- Attendance data by class and for whole school is analysed weekly and every term.
- The school has a designated Behaviour and Safety governor who takes part in the process of analysing attendance trends and formulating strategies to improve attendance in the school.
- Parents of children whose attendance causes concern are issued with attendance reports at parents' evenings.

Punctuality

- It is expected that pupils arrive on time each day. Lateness is very disruptive for the child, their class and the adults who work with them.
- The school doors open at 8.50am and **school starts at 9:00am**. Any child who arrives to school after 9.05am is marked as late and will have an (L) mark on the register.
- If a child is late, parents are expected to sign their child into school and provide a reason for lateness. This will be recorded onto the electronic system.
- Parents of children whose punctuality is causing concern are notified at parents' evenings and parents will be invited into school to discuss this.
- Cases where there are continuing concerns may be referred to Birmingham City Council's Fast Track.
- As a school, punctuality is monitored in school and forms part of the weekly attendance analysis.
- The school provide a walking bus to encourage pupils to arrive in school on time, parents can enquire at the main office regarding this if it something they are interested in.



Early Years Expectations

- As attendance for children under 5 years of age is not statutory, there is not the same recourse to legal sanctions. However, the early years are a critical time to establish the good habits and routines needed throughout life and to get the key messages about the importance of attendance and punctuality at nursery and school across to parents and carers.
- Regular attendance has a positive impact on all aspects of a young child's learning and development. A regular routine supports the young child to feel settled and secure. Unsettled children have higher stress levels which, in turn, prevent them from being able to benefit fully from the learning opportunities available.
- Families should know that good attendance and being punctual are expected when their child takes up a place. As attendance is an issue that affects all age groups, there needs to be as much consistency as possible between early years and school settings. This includes expectations around holidays, which for school-aged children are not permissible in term time.
- If a child has more than 20 sessions (10 days) unauthorised absences over one school year while in nursery or reception, they may be at risk of losing their place at the school.

Rewards for attendance and punctuality

- These form a key part of the school's strategy to improve both attendance and punctuality in the school.
- An attendance certificate is given to the class with the best attendance for that week during the weekly celebration assembly.
- Every week, every child with 100% attendance and punctuality is entered into a prize draw. This is drawn at the end of each term.
- For those children who achieve 100% attendance over the year, there is an additional prize draw at the end of the summer term.

Monitoring of the policy

The effectiveness of this policy is evaluated annually by the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school.

Reviewed: September 2019

Date of review: September 2020