



Attendance Policy

Review Committee	Policy and Resources
Date Adopted	25 June 2018
Date of next review	25 June 2021
Signed (Chair of Governors)	Sarah Allan

Introduction

The Governors at Mowbray Primary School place the highest importance on good attendance as they firmly acknowledge the strong link between attendance and academic achievement. Mowbray Primary School strives to make learning a happy and rewarding experience for the children and reward those children who have very good attendance.

The National average for satisfactory attendance is around 95.6%. We aim to encourage all our children to have outstanding attendance above this.

At Mowbray Primary School we will:

- Achieve and maintain attendance above the expected 95.6%
- Work with families and other agencies to ensure this is the case.
- Ensure that attendance and punctuality remains high profile.

We expect children to:

- Attend school each day.
- Attend promptly for registration.
- Arrive well prepared for the lesson

We expect parents/carers to:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal requirements.
- Ensure children arrive at school promptly before registration equipped to take part in their learning. Children arriving after registration will be recorded as "late". Persistent lateness will be shared with the EWO.
- Provide school with up to date contact details and contact school on the first morning a child is absent.
- Ensure that children are collected promptly at the end of the day/session.
- Make medical appointments outside of school hours, or, if this is not possible, to provide a medical letter or appointment card for those appointments in school time
- Ensure that school is contacted before 8:45am if their child is absent from school and to update the school on a daily basis.

We expect school staff to:

- Keep an accurate record of attendance. Attendance will be recorded twice daily at both the start of the morning and afternoon session.
- Monitor every child's school attendance
- Contact parents/carers as soon as possible when no message has been received to explain absence.
- Record all reasons for absence in the register.
- Identify and report early any signs of poor attendance.
- Emphasise the importance of good attendance.
- Provide support to families where there are difficulties.
- Contact parent/carer if there are any concerns about the whereabouts of a child.
- Report your child's attendance data to you via a written report at least once a year.
- Publish any whole school data as requested by the Local Authority or National Government.

There will be occasions when a child has to miss school, for example, if she or he is unwell and parents/carers are expected to exercise their judgement on whether their child is fit to attend school if there are signs and symptoms of illness. Any other absences should be kept to an absolute minimum. In particular, parents/carers do not have an automatic right to take their children out of school during term time in order to go on holiday.

What is an Authorised Absence?

An absence is classed as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from the parent/carer. For example, if your child is unwell and we have had notification via either a note, email, telephone call to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Consequently not all absences supported by a parent/carer will be classified as authorised. School may request parents to provide evidence that they have sought medical advice before absences due to illness are authorised.

What is an Unauthorised Absence?

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without good reason and the permission of both the parent and the school.
- Examples of this might include: a birthday or special occasion, recurrent sporadic illness not supported by evidence of medical advice, visits to family or days out attendance at **scheduled** dental check-ups (non-emergency).

Reasons for leave of absence in term time

Under The Education Act (1996) requires parents/carers to ensure their child attends school regularly. There is no automatic right to take your child out of school during term time. The Law does however allow head teachers to consider individual requests to authorise a Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstance(s).

Furthermore, Government regulations from September 2013 state that head teachers '**may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**'. Mowbray Primary School discourages parents/carers from arranging any events during term time and will, as a rule, state that leave of absence will not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances that might justify it.

In exceptional circumstances where leave of absence is granted, the pupil/student's attainment and ability to catch up on missed schooling will be the primary consideration.

The head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances to justify an authorised absence. It is the parents/carers' responsibility when submitting the request to provide all the information and evidence to prove exceptional circumstances.

- The request for authorised Leave of Absence must be made at least two weeks in advance and the head teacher may invite the parent/carer(s) into school to discuss the request before a decision is made.
- If the head teacher authorises the Leave of Absence it is expected that the child's attendance will be of a satisfactory level both prior to and after the date covered by the request.

- If the head teacher refuses Leave of Absence and the absence is recorded as unauthorised, the head teacher may refer the matter to the Local Authority requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.
- A Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the Local Authority will prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies.
- Where there is more than one child, each parent/carer may be issued with a Penalty Notice in respect of each child.

Medical Appointments

If the absence is due to an illness/medical issue then we will request you obtain a medical note from a GP/Hospital. All routine dental appointments must be made out of school hours.

We would remind parents/carers that in all cases where pupils/students cannot attend school it remains the responsibility of the school to authorise absence, not parents/carers.

Registration

The school's registration periods are from 8.45 - 9.00 a.m. and 1.15 - 1.20 p.m. It is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure that the registers are completed properly at these times so that an accurate record of attendance is available during each session.

Punctuality

Good timekeeping is to be encouraged; persistent lateness is a habit we discourage. Parents and children who arrive late (after 8:50am) will need to report to the main school office and complete a late slip.

Monitoring Attendance

All attendance is monitored by, in the first instance, the child's class teacher. In a case where a child's attendance appears to be declining and falls below 95%, the parent or carer will be contacted by school to discuss the concerns along with any support which can be offered. This discussion will be with the child's Key Stage Leader.

If the child's attendance does not improve and absence is unauthorised, the Headteacher will no longer authorise any further absences without medical confirmation. If after that the child's attendance does not improve, and is below 90%, the Headteacher will make a referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Attendance % is discussed each week in assembly and the class with the highest attendance each week in each Key Stage wins the attendance race for the week. The numbers of wins are added up for rewards across the year. Any class with 100% attendance for the week is rewarded with a non-uniform day the following week.

Education Welfare Officer

The school employs staff whose role is to monitor attendance closely and follow up poor attendance, offering support and guidance prior to the involvement of the EWO. The school EWO regularly visits to monitor records and work alongside staff. If your son/daughter's attendance falls below 90% it is of great concern to us and we have to discuss the issue with our Educational Welfare Officer. We will not be able to authorise absence under this level.

Governors

The Governing Body have a responsibility to monitor attendance. They may visit school to liaise with the Leadership Team, inclusion mentors or the EWO as appropriate. This policy will be reviewed by the Governing body in line with the whole school monitoring and review cycle.

Regular Attendance

At Mowbray Primary School, we define levels of attendance as follows:

<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Description</u>
98.1-100%	Excellent
95.1-98%	Good
93.1-95%	Requires Improvement
91-93%	Unsatisfactory
90%	Persistent Absence