



Attendance Policy

2022-23

Review Committee

Policy and Resources

Date Adopted

23 November 2022

Date of next review

23 November 2023

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.

We aim for all our children to have outstanding attendance of at least 96% or at least in line with the National average.

At Mowbray Primary School we will:

- Achieve and maintain attendance above the expected 96%
- 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 2022 state that head teachers **should only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday.** 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 Headteacher 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 and ensure these are provided when submitting the form.

- 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.

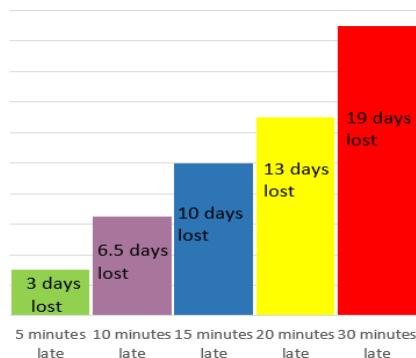
Registration

The school's registration periods are from 8.30 – 8.45 a.m. and between 12.45 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. depending on Key Stage. 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 8:45am) will need to report to the main school office and complete a late slip. If children arrive after 9.30am a formal late mark will be recorded. Monitoring by the Educational Welfare Officer will start at this time.

If children arrive late to school every day their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



Monitoring Attendance

All attendance is monitored by, in the first instance, the admin support staff. In a case where a child's attendance appears to be declining below 96%, 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 school's Pastoral Manager.

If the child's attendance does not improve and absence is unauthorised, the Head teacher 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).

We would remind parents/carers to contact school on the first day of absence.

If this does not happen then the following procedures will be followed by school.

Day 1- A text will be sent to parent/carer as to ask them to contact school to provide a reason for the absence

Day 2- A second text will be sent to parent/carer as to ask them to contact school to provide a reason for the absence

Day 3 – A phone call will be made to parent/carers regarding the continuing absence. If there is no contact at this time then the absence will be referred to the Pastoral Manager.

Day 4 – A home visit will be carried out by school staff and/or EWO

Day 5 – If the absence continues for 5 consecutive days then a child may be classed as missing in education. School have a duty to inform the local authority of this.

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.

Support Systems

School recognise that poor attendance is often a sign that there are more serious issues going on in a child's life. This may be linked to problems at home and or in school. Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Mowbray Primary School also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs and looked after children.

The school will implement strategies to support improved attendance. Some examples are:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Walking bus
- Nurture breakfast group
- Nurture provision
- Mental health/ Counselling support
- Referrals to support agencies
- PSHE
- Reward systems
- Time limited part time time-tables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support

Please contact our Pastoral Manager on 07595613847 or via email jane.baines@mowbrayprimary.northumberland.sch.uk. if you wish to talk through supporting your child to attend school.

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