



Moulton
Primary School

ATTENDANCE

POLICY

Person Responsible

Miss L Wallis (Inclusion Manager)

Date Adopted:

October 2019

Chair of Governors Signature:

Next Review Date:

October 2020

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Rationale

At Moulton Primary, we are committed to ensuring that pupils take full advantage of all the opportunities on offer; it is therefore essential that they attend school as regularly as possible. This policy sets out expectations and procedures so that this may be achieved through close links between home and school.

Governors, teachers and parents need to be aware of their legal responsibilities in ensuring that pupils' attendance is regular, punctual and properly recorded.

1. Aims

1. To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
2. To ensure that every child on our school role has access to full-time education.
3. To act early to address patterns of absence.

Term Dates

Term dates are published on the school website.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

School Procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day (am) and once during the second session (pm.) It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9.00 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00 and will be kept open until 9.30 The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00 and will be kept open until 1.30.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health –as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

This can be done in person, via telephone to the school office or by using Parent Mail.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a concern about the authenticity of the illness or the family is being supported formally via an attendance plan. The decision is at the discretion of the headteacher.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

This can be done in person, via telephone to the school office or by using Parent Mail or in writing via the home school communication book.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

See Appendix 1 for procedures

3.6 Reporting to parents

You will receive a copy of your child's attendance record in the summer term with their annual report.

You may receive a letter or telephone call from the Inclusion Manager if your child's attendance drops below 92% attendance and the explanations for absence are inappropriate or if this is part of a continuing trend of ongoing poor attendance.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

4.2 Legal sanctions

It is a legal requirement that registered pupils of compulsory school age (5+) attend school regularly and punctually and parents or guardians risk prosecution if they fail in this duty. Amendments to the

2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#) came into force on 1 September 2013.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued when a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised in a 6 school week period; (a school day is two sessions - morning and afternoon) or when a pupil has a series of unauthorised absences leading to irregular attendance

They set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their child regularly attends school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

The Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 is issued to each parent for each child, so for a 2 parent family with 2 children the fine would be £240. If parents have a Shared Residency Order it is important that both parties are aware of any holidays and have agreed to them.

The Education Entitlement Service investigates cases of irregular attendance and instigates statutory intervention where appropriate.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Ongoing analysis is made each week on % attendance figures and this is published in the school newsletter to make all parents aware of our drive and focus on attendance.

Each week – the class with the highest attendance has a 'treat' time within class to encourage good attendance.

We try to communicate early with parents and carers where attendance is becoming a concern in order to support and make positive improvements in partnership with families.

6. Attendance monitoring

The Inclusion Manager monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a child is absent from school due to illness, it is expected that the parent telephone on a daily basis to update us on the wellbeing of a child and plans for returning to school.

If a pupil's absence goes below 92% we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If, after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will offer a meeting to set up an attendance plan of support, to improve attendance and may consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

We consider reasons for absence and also check on historical attendance difficulties.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

A report is produced by the Inclusion Manager termly (12 weekly) and shared with the Governing Body and SLT.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer (Inclusion Manager:)

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Administration staff

Administration staff are expected to take calls and emails from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Inclusion Manager, or earlier if there are key changes at a local or national level. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Disability and illness

This is totally independent of the new legislation on holiday absences. The school is there to support parents when a child has a long term health issue. The school will provide suitable work for pupils who are absent for a long period of time. The Hospital Outreach team will work with any child who has to be off school for longer than 2 weeks. For this to be arranged please contact the School Inclusion Manager.

The Education Entitlement Team

The school works very closely with the Education Entitlement Team regarding pupils who are giving cause for concern. They are available to assist parents where difficulties arise and can be contacted via the school or at the NNC Customer Service Centre.

Website: www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/ees Telephone: 0300 126 1000

Make every day count.

Appendix 1
Safeguarding and School Procedures

There are strict guidelines regarding safeguarding processes for attendance issues.

Child missing from education procedures to be followed in line with NCC guidelines:

Day 1 – Phone call

An admin team member telephones the child’s home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent or carer that the child is safe at home.

Response from parent	Next step from school
There is no answer at the home or on mobile numbers	Call back. Risk assess after 2 hours
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is safe with them	Ask for reason for absence and record on your school's attendance management system
The person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe	The school’s designated lead for child protection should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child (see App 1)
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned	School to advise the parent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing • Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child’s whereabouts or actively searing for the child • Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centres near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment • Report back to school if the child is found or remains missing

Day 2 – Follow up phone call

A subsequent telephone call must be made in an attempt to contact parents/ carers.

Day 3- Write/ email parents

Write or email to the parent in plain English, asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. Please give the parents/carers 3 working days to make contact and if you are aware that English may not be the parent's first language, copy the letter into a language that may be more accessible.

Day 5/6 – Home visit

Arrange a visit to the home address following home visit policy guidelines

Once you have completed these checks (or within 10 days, whichever is earlier)

If the child has not been seen and the parents or carers or and school have not been able to make contact with them, the Inclusion Manager must report the child as missing from education using the form located here: <https://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/information-for-school-staff/pupil-support-and-inclusion/attendance-and-behaviour/Pages/children.aspx>

If parents have a Shared Residency Order it is important that both parties are aware of any absence.

Appendix 2

Criteria	Risk	Action
Is there good reason to believe that the child may be the victim of crime?	Red	Inform Police and/or children's social
Does the child have a formal child protection plan?		
Is the child in care i.e. looked after by the local authority?		
Is the planned or current LA children's social care or LA adults' social care services involved? e.g. section 47 enquiry about to start		
Is there a person present in or visiting the family who poses an on-going risk to children, or who is suspected of previously harming a child?		
Is the child at risk of sexual exploitation?		
Is the child at risk of radicalisation?		
Has there been LA children's social care or LA adults/ social care or Criminal Justice System involvement in the past?	Yellow	<p>Give consideration to the vulnerability of the child and one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police • Safer School Officer • Children's Social Care • Local Authority Designated Officer • Education Inclusion Team • School Nurse
Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. FMG or forced marriage.		
Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?		
Is there any known history of domestic violence?		
Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?		
Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?		
Has the child been a victim of bullying?		
Does the child need essential medical or health care?		
Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?		
Has the child gone missing with their family?		
Have the parents been subject to proceedings in relation to attendance?		
Is there a history or poor attendance?		
Has there been any change in the child/family's financial circumstances?		
Age of the child		
		Use other services to help with your attendance? risk assessment, including the above.

Appendix 3 SIMS Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody

Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 4 – Absence Request form

ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please complete a form for each child you are requesting absence for. You will receive a copy of this form once your request has been considered for authorisation and a copy will be placed in the pupil file.

NAME OF CHILD: **CLASS:**

DATES - FROM: **TO:**

REASON FOR ABSENCE

.....

.....

Parent/Guardian Names:

Parent/Guardian Signatures:

Both Parents/Guardians need to print and sign this form.

Please be informed that the school is **not permitted** to authorise any absence during term time for a holiday.

I understand the difficulties that families face with regards to the issue of absence, and accept that parents may still choose for children to be absent without due authorisation.

It is a legal requirement that registered pupils of compulsory school age (5+) attend school regularly and punctually and parents or guardians risk prosecution if they fail in this duty. Amendments to the 2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#) came into force on 1 September 2013.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued when a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised in a 6 school week period; (a school day is two sessions - morning and afternoon) or when a pupil has a series of unauthorised absences leading to irregular attendance.

A copy of the school's attendance policy is available on request if you require further information.

School Use Only	Unauthorised	Authorised	Part Authorised	Attendance %
Number of Sessions:				

Signature:

Date:


Name:

School Stamp:



Appendix 5

Attendance and Monitoring Plan

Name:	Class and Teacher:	Date Action Plan Started: Date action plan Finished:		 Moulton Primary School
Current % Attendance	Number of Lates:	Attendance Target:	Possible Attendance:	
			Sessions missed:	
			Present:	
Reasons for absence				
Reasons for Lateness				
Consequences of low Attendance				
Parent/Pupil needs				
Action to help attendance				
Checked				
Checked				
Meeting called				
Next steps? EIPT?				
Improvement checked				