# **Attendance and Behaviour Policy**

'Together we unlock potential and learn for life'





This policy was approved by the Governing Bo	ody of Moor First School at their meeting on:
Chair of Governors	
Print: S	Sign:
Co-Head Teachers:	
Print:	Sign:
Print:	Sign:
Review Frequency Every 3 years	Next review:
Revision updates (between and May 2	025)

Reviewed 17/05/2023: S Mayes/S Johnson

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. All children of compulsory school age have the right to a worthwhile, full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs they may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them and to help children achieve more.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents/ carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent or carer.

This Policy should not be seen in isolation, but is a strand that underpins all other polices related to the well-being of children including safeguarding, behaviour, bullying, and support for children with medical needs.

## Aims and School responsibilities

- Our aim is to maximise attendance by providing learning that is exciting and interactive.
- All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.
- The Biddulph Schools Partnership Trust has adopted the following attendance target 96.5% 2019-20
- The persistent absence target for the school is 4%. Persistent absence classes as anyone who is absent for 10% or more sessions.
- Promote positive behaviour and attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials and will recognise good attendance appropriately
- We will work with parents to resolve problems, which may affect a child's attendance and will involve representatives of other agencies that work with the school such as representatives of the Local Support Team. Education Welfare Workers support school to ensure all children can benefit from consistently good punctuality and attendance.
- We will be proactive in encouraging attendance for all pupils through ensuring parents and pupils receive information on the importance of good attendance and punctuality and will react swiftly to intervene to improve attendance of individual children should this become a concern.
  - Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise educational opportunities.
  - The law makes it an offence for a parent or carer to fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at school.
  - Penalty notices can be used to supplement existing sanctions currently available within Section 444A of the Education Act 1996.
  - The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

#### **Parents and Carers Responsibilities**

- Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children attend school and any problems that arise will be supported and resolved.
- Try to make medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day.

- Ensure the school is aware of any circumstances at home that may be likely to affect their attendance.
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Ensure school has all your up to date contact details.
- Provide evidence such as a GP appointment card, Dental appointment card where necessary.
- Any period of Leave of Absence must be requested by parents/carers by completing a Request of Leave form, which must then be authorised/unauthorised by the Headteacher prior to taking the leave.

#### **Practice**

- Parents must inform school by a telephone call/e mail when children are not in school (preferably before the day of the absence) but if not, the office should be contacted before 9.45a.m. and the reason for absence given.
- Parents must continue to keep the office up to date with this absence if it continues into further absence. We recommend contacting school on day 1 and every other day following. (Obviously this depends on the reason for absence.)
- If a child arrives after registration the office staff will place a 'Late arrival before the register has closed' mark against their name in the register. This will happen at 8.55a.m. If this is a regular occurrence, then the office will inform the Headteacher who will arrange for a consultation to take place. The registers officially close 20 minutes after the start of registration (9.05a.m) and if a child arrives after this time, this is recorded as Unauthorised Absence from school which could lead to a fine.
- Persistent late arrival as school (at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 weeks, excluding holidays) may result in a penalty notice being issued.
- School contacts families of absent children by 10:00am, if children are not in school. If no contact is made by the first contact number the second number will be rung. The school will follow up any absences to:
  - Ascertain the reason
  - Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
  - Identify whether the absence is authorised or not and identify the correct code to be used before it is entered on to the school's electronic register (SIMS)
- Evidence may be requested for proof of illness, dependant on attendance percentage.
- All absences will be recorded on school registers using the national codes. Any pupil
  who is on roll but not present in school must be recorded within one of these
  categories:
  - Unauthorised Absence this is for pupils where no reason has been given or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This can also occur if a child arrives after the registers are closed.
  - Authorised Absence this is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996
  - Approved Educational Activity / Approved Educational Visit this covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken offsite or an organised visit, including residential trips organised by the school.
- A register of phone calls to school by parents is kept and cause of absence or late is noted. It will also be recorded as to whether the school had to contact the parent and also as to the type of medical reason. This then can be monitored across the whole

Reviewed 17/05/2023: S Mayes/S Johnson

school in order to identify trends. This will mean that office staff are expected to challenge parents as to the reason behind the absence and also, they will be expected to ask for medical documentation.

- A text to parents is sent if contact has not been made on the first day.
- If contact is not made by the end of the first day then the matter is referred to the Headteacher who will determine the next course of action.
- It is recognised that absence after a holiday or absence by specific ethnic groups may be a trigger for FGM; the PREVENT framework and would require the implementation of the schools 'Preventing extremism and radicalisation safeguarding policy'
- Holidays during school term will be refused unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please see appendices 1-4 for information regarding request for leave.
- 100% attendance by pupils is recognised in reports and end of term certificates and a gift as well as weekly class attendance dojos.
- Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties are encouraged to contact the
  school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems.
  If difficulties are not resolved a referral to the Education Welfare Worker is made.
  The EWW visits the school to complete register checks and will also visit the school
  if they request it. They will help to resolve issues and suggest solutions; If other
  ways of trying to improve the child's attendance fail.
- These officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.
- Schools have a duty in law to refer any period of unauthorised leave to the Education Welfare Service.
- Letters agreed with all local schools are issued termly if attendance levels have dropped below 96.5% (locally agreed target). See appendix for coloured boxes.
- School keeps parents informed of the latest attendance issues by publishing items on the newsletter or web site.
- Schools take a paper-based attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent.
- If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.
- Only school can authorise the absence, not parents.

#### **Poor Attendance**

If a pupil attendance falls below 90% (persistent absence), parents may be invited into school to meet with the Headteacher to discuss any concerns and explore any areas for support. Parents will be asked to provide evidence of reason for absence, such as a GP appointment card, copy of a prescription for medicine or a dental or medical appointment card. If evidence for absence is not provided, learners will be marked as unauthorised on the register.

If a learner has 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holidays, a Penalty Notice maybe issued. These absences do not need to be consecutive.

If a child's attendance continues to cause concern then parents receive a letter highlighting the school's concerns and inviting them into school to meet with the Head Teacher and where necessary the Education Welfare Worker. Support mechanisms are then discussed such as Early Help Assessments to promote better attendance and work in partnership with the families concerned. Alternatively, parents may wish to contact

the EWW themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

It is the duty of the school to inform the Local Authority of the absence of any child for a continuous period of 10 days or more without school's permission but school should involve the Local Support Team and take due regard of safeguarding procedures where absence of a particular child is less than 10 days but presents a cause for concern.

## **Truancy:**

All school staff are responsible for promoting regular attendance and the importance of continuity in each child's learning. They also strive to ensure that every pupils safety, welfare and happiness is at the heart of all decision making. Although it is a very rare occurrence for a pupil to truant, if there is a concern that a pupil might be truanting then the following action is taken immediately:

- Notify the Headteacher.
- Headteacher then contacts the parents either by phone or by home visit if possible.
- This is then followed up by notifying the Educational Welfare Worker of the situation.
- The Headteacher, Parents and pupil concerned meet to discuss any reasons for the learner not wanting to attend school in an effort to resolve any issues and put relevant support into place.
- Actions decided are shared with all relevant personnel and put into place

#### **Excluded Learners**

A Penalty notice will be considered if the presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. The parent of the excluded pupil must ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place at any time during school hours on a day that he / she is excluded, up to and including the first 5 days or, where that exclusion is for a fixed period of 5 days or less, any of the days to which the exclusion relates.

If the excluded pupil is present in a public place at any time during school hours on a school day specified above the parent commits an offence under section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and is liable, on a summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

## Requests for 'Leave of Absence' from school

Moor First School follow Staffordshire's Local Authority Protocol and agreed Biddulph Schools Partnership Trust policy in relation to requests for 'Leave of Absence' from school during term time. Further details and a copy of the revised Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices can be obtained from the council's website <a href="https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education">www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education</a>.

Moor First School does not promote leave of absence in term time, however, if a parent feels leave of absence has a justifiable circumstance they are asked to submit a leave of absence form which can be found on the school website or via the school office. Headteachers may NOT grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which the Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. The fact that a holiday may be cheaper during term time will not be considered as exceptional circumstances.

Each request will be considered individually and on its own merits. Requests will need to be made in writing at least 14 days before the absence is to be taken if approved. In considering a request, the school will take account of the following: -

• The exceptional circumstances stated that have given rise to the request

- The stage of the child's education and progress and the effects the requested absence could have on these.
- The overall attendance pattern of the child
- The frequency of similar requests
- Whether the request was made giving the 14 days' notice in advance
- Whether the absence will be during examination or assessment times. If parents proceed to take their child out of school for a family holiday without the Headteacher's permission, all of the absences during this period will now be recorded as 'unauthorised'. This will affect your child's attendance record. A Penalty Notice can be issued if any period of absence is taken without the Headteachers authorisation.

## Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- Penalty Notice can only be issued in any cases of unauthorised absence.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in the first five days of exclusion.

# Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:

- There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence over a period of twelve school weeks, excluding holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the head teacher or in excess of the period authorised by the head teacher. (e.g. family holiday)
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used.

## Other conditions.

- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year.
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child
- Use of a Penalty Notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised persistent absence/lateness will be restricted to one notice/warning per parent of a pupil per academic year.

#### WHAT IS A PENALTY NOTICE?

A fine of £60 per parent per child. This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days from the date of issue. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to court proceedings. RESPONSIBILE CONTACTS All staff in school are responsible for promoting good attendance.

The vast majority of children and young people in Staffordshire have an excellent record of school attendance, and we recognise the efforts of so many parents to ensure their children attend school regularly.

The Local Authority will continue to take appropriate action for absences during term time when we are notified by head teachers, both to support them in their role and to ensure local children can continue to achieve the best possible outcomes from attending local schools.

#### Other conditions.

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## **Separated parents**

If one parent disagrees with a written application of leave from school by the other parent, this needs to be put in writing and sent into school even though leave will not be granted in all but the most exceptional cases.

## **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the governors 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. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that the school's attendance figures are as high as they should be. This information will be shared at autumn governors' meetings.

The school will keep accurate attendance records for the minimum of three years. This policy will be reviewed every two years with the governing body, or earlier if considered necessary.

## Appendix 2

## Dear Parent /Carer

Reviewed 17/05/2023: S Mayes/S Johnson

## Request for leave during term time (TEMPLATE LETTER)

You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore, students will only be given permission to take leave in term times if there are exceptional circumstances.

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence for school

is unauthorised. This is in line with Staffordshire County Council code of conduct.
To The head teacher of (Moor First School) Date
I / we request a leave of absence from school during term time for My child / Children (full name)
For a period from (Date) to (date)
The <b>exceptional</b> circumstances and reason for this request are: -
I have (an)other child(ren) in (an)other school(s) as follows
Child(ren) (full name(s) School(s) attended
(Signature of 1 <sup>st</sup> parent/carer(s) Print Name
(Signature of 2 <sup>nd</sup> parent/carer(s) Print Name
Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.
For Office Use Only Current Attendance%
Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time (this academic year)
Agreed/Not Agreed Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.
Rationale to decline request:
Signed  Notification of decision: Date letter sent to parent/carer

## Appendix 3

## School Letter Leave Agreed (TEMPLATE LETTER)

Control Latte Agreed (TEMP EXTERENT)
Date
Dear:
Child's name and date of birth
Thank you for your letter dated (date) requesting permission for (pupil's name) to be absent from school from to
You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore, students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.
Having looked at your application, I feel that your request can be supported in this instance. <b>Therefore, the absence to include the dates requested will be authorised.</b>
Our key priority is to ensure that your child(ren) are as successful as possible and are able to achieve (his/her) full potential. I would therefore ask that you support your child in catching up on the time they will miss in school.
Please note: If your child does not return to school on the date agreed above then you will need to provide a further reason for this absence otherwise it will be recorded as unauthorised and you may then be liable to receive a Penalty Notice.
Yours sincerely
Head teacher

## Appendix 4

Date School Letter Leave Not Agreed (IEMPLATE LETTER)
Dear
Child's name and date of birth:
Thank you for your letter dated (date) requesting permission for (pupil's name) to be absent from school from to
You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.
I have considered your application very carefully. Although I understand the reason for your request, I am unable to approve leave of absence in this instance, as I believe the circumstances are not exceptional. Therefore, if your child is away from school during this period it will be recorded as Unauthorised Absence.
As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. This is in line with Staffordshire County Councils Code of Conduct.
<ul> <li>The Penalty Notice fine would be: -</li> <li>£60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to</li> <li>£120 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.</li> <li>If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.</li> <li>I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £1,000 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.</li> </ul>
Our key priority is to ensure your child(ren) are as successful as possible, are able to reach his/her full potential and gains maximum benefits from his/her educational experience.
I would hope that upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the Local Authority and Government policy, that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.
Yours sincerely
Head teacher





e-mail:	headteacher@moor.staffs.sch.uk.
	Date:
	Dear
	Re: Stage 1.
	We regularly monitor attendance and are concerned that your child has now only % whilst the school expects 96% or more.
	While we realise that there may have been genuine reasons for the low attendance, we are now concerned that your child will be falling behind with their work. It is now important that we start to see an improvement.
	I hope you will support the school in its efforts to instil good attendance. It is not only a valuable quality for students at school but additionally for their future working life.
	If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact me.
	Yours sincerely
	Mrs S Mayes and Mrs V Atherton Co-Headteachers





School Lane Biddulph Moor Stoke on Trent. ST8 7HR Co Headteachers: Mrs Mayes & Mrs Atherton

Tel. No. 01782 512350

e-mail	: headteacher@moor.staffs.sch.uk.
	Date:
	Dear
	Re: Stage 2
	As you are aware we are concerned about your child's attendance and we have not yet seen an improvement.
	Your child is currently at %
	Our Education Welfare Worker, comes into school regularly to monitor attendance and is now monitoring your child. It is now urgent that we start to see an improvement.
	If there are any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the office.
	I hope you will support the school in its efforts to instil good attendance. It is not only a valuable quality for students at school but additionally for their future working life.
	Yours sincerely
	Mrs S Mayes and Mrs V Atherton
	Co-Headteachers





Date: Dear  Re: Stage 3  As you are aware, we have been monitoring your child's attendance. Unfortunately it has not improved. Therefore, an Attendance Clinic with Mrs Mayes has been arranged in school to discuthis further.  DATE  TIME  Please be aware that the meeting will be held without you if you fail to attend this meeting.  Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children go to school regularly. The local author can now issue PENALTY NOTICES if a parent fails to make sure that their children are in school receiving the education they deserve.  I hope you will support the school in its efforts to instil good attendance. It is not only a valuable quality for students at school but additionally for their future working life.  Yours sincerely  Mrs S Mayes and Mrs V Atherton  Co-Headteachers	e-mail:	headteacher@moor.staffs.sch.u	<u>k</u> .		
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School Lane Biddulph Moor Stoke on Trent. ST8 7HR Co Headteachers: Mrs Mayes & Mrs Atherton

Tel. No. 01782 512350

e-mail:	headteacher@moor.staffs.sch.uk.
	Date:
	Dear,
	Re: Stage 4
	As you are aware, we have serious concerns regarding
	I cannot stress how important it is that is in school every day and on time for the remainder of the school year or a referral will be made to the local authority.
	Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children go to school regularly. The local authority can now issue PENALTY NOTICES if a parent fails to make sure that their children are in school receiving the education they deserve.
	Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
	Yours sincerely,
	Mrs S Mayes and Mrs V Atherton Co-Headteachers





e-mail: headteacher@moor.staffs.sch.uk.
Date:
Dear
RE: Final letter
Dear Parent/Carer  Following a thorough assessment of
Yours sincerely
Mrs S Mayes and Mrs V Atherton Co-Headteachers





e-mail: <u>headteacher@moor.staffs.sch.uk</u> .	
Date:	
Dear	
Re: Holiday Absences	
We regular monitor attendance and are concerned that only % due to a family holiday.	school attendance is
We are now concerned that	
Any future absences, you may receive contact from our E	ducation Welfare Worker.
I hope you will support the school in its efforts to instil go pupils at school but additionally for their future working l	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contac	et me.
Yours sincerely	
Mrs S Mayes and Mrs V Atherton Co-Headteachers	





e-mail: <u>headteacher@moor.staffs.sch.uk</u> .
Date:
Dear
Re: Medical Evidence
We have recently written to you requesting that any future absences are to be accompanied by medical evidence.
Unfortunately, for the periods of absence from
currently has unauthorised absences.
If you have any medical evidence for the above periods of absence, please send it to school for the attention of the office so that changes to the unauthorised absence codes can be made.
Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children go to school regularly. The local authority can now issue PENALTY NOTICES if a parent fails to make sure that their children are in school receiving the education they deserve.
It is now urgent that we see an improvement in your child's attendance.
Yours sincerely
Mrs S Mayes and Mrs V Atherton Co-Headteacher

Exceptional Circumstances: Covid19

## **COVID-19 Additional Behaviour Policy: Sept 2020**



## **Tissues/Paper Towels**

 Children are encouraged to use tissues to catch germs with sneezing and coughing. Children dry hands with paper towels and not the hand dryer.

#### Water bottles

- Water bottles for the class are to have only water within them and to be washed at home.
- School cups provided if a child arrives with no bottle.



## **Clothing**

- Children to attend school in uniform every day.
- Children to bring a coat each day
- Children to bring in a warm PE kit on Wednesday and it will be sent home on the same day.

## **Outside play zones**

- No climbing frame to be used
- Each bubble to have their own play equipment, which is sanitised daily.

## **Learning platforms**

 Pupils, parents and staff must follow E-safety and GDPR policies.

## Handwashing is compulsory....

- On arrival
- After toileting
- After each outdoor play
- Before/After Eating
- Before leaving

Hand sanitiser is available around school.



### **Social distancing**

- Staff and parents must where possible adhere to the 2-metre rule at all times both indoors and outdoors.
- Class bubbles must not mix unless at 2m distance and with increased cleaning procedures.
- Children must use the toilets correctly in line with our risk assessments.
- Staff must not car share with other staff members.

# Limit items shared between school and home.

- One school bag allowed.
- Lunch boxes allowed but in disposable bags is better
- Reading books can still go between school and home.
   Stored for 72 hours in school.
- Pupils will receive personal stationary and it will stay in school.
- Shared resources to be sanitised in line with risk assessments.

Reviewed 17/05/2023: S Mayes/S Johnson