



Achieve Believe Succeed
'They shall have life, life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Helen Harrison	Date: September 2023
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Last reviewed on:	September 2023
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Next review due by:	September 2026
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INTRODUCTION

Mossley Primary School recognises the importance of good attendance and the significance of attendance on achievement and attainment.

We aim to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which pupils, staff, parents, the local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance. Good attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Attendance Co-ordinator: Mrs H Harrison supported by Mrs B Hawtin (Clerical Officer for attendance).

Education Welfare Support Cheshire East Local Authority.

RATIONALE

- Regular attendance at school or alternative provision is a legal requirement and “The Education Act” 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent/carer to fail to secure their Child’s regular attendance at school.
- Parent/carers/guardians have a legal duty as well as a moral obligation to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on time, on a regular and full-time basis.
- Good attendance and punctuality is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of School and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life.
- Safeguarding each child is everyone’s responsibility and a child may be at risk if they do not attend school regularly. Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is ‘normality’
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s), carer(s), guardian(s) and staff that the school values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself
- To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions

Objectives

To involve the children or young people more in their school attendance

All school staff to continue to take responsibility for children or young people’s attendance and for the school to recognise the importance of this role, especially with identifying first day absence of pupils.

- Effective working relationship with the Education Welfare Service
- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring information
- To discuss the settings of targets for the school with the EWO and the Governing Body as appropriate

- To ensure that such data collated by SIMS is used effectively by all staff in conjunction with the Head Teacher to address individual children's needs where they fall below 90%
- To keep parent(s), carer(s), guardian(s) and governors informed of policy and practice e.g. school website, school newsletter

To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set.

Procedure:

Children or young people are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)

Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)

- It is expected that parent(s)/carer(s),guardian(s) will provide an explanation if the child or young person is absent **on the first day** the absence occurs. This can be by telephone, email or personally at the office.
- If contact, explaining the child or young person's absence, fails to be made by parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian (s), then the school will contact the home by telephone on the initial day and on each day thereafter until the unexplained absence is clarified. **This contact will be recorded in the electronic records provided by SIMS.**
- The attendance coordinator will regularly remind parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- If your child is absent from school please contact the school **before 9:30am** (prior to the close of morning registration) on the day of absence so that we know your child is safe. If your child is likely to be absent for any length of time, (e.g. due to illness) please keep us informed, a **medical note may be required if the absence is over a week.** The register will be marked using the symbols advised by DfE and CEC.

Lateness

School begins at 8:45 for all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time.

Classroom doors are open from 8.40 a.m. onwards.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

Leave of Absence during term time

Parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) do not have the right to take their child or young person out of school for a holiday. A request for a leave of absence **must** be made by the parent who the pupil normally resides with. A child or young person who is absent longer than 10 days after an agreed return date can legally be removed from the school roll and the parents/carers/guardian(s) may be liable to prosecution.

A child cannot have more than five days (10 Sessions) of unauthorised absence over the course of the academic year. Fines may be issued by the Local Authority in these cases. In considering whether or not to authorise leave for a leave of absence, the Governing body will consider each case individually, taking into account a child or young person's overall attendance and the reason for the absence. The Head teacher has been delegated this responsibility by the governing body.

A "LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM" is available from the School Office. It must be completed in advance of the absence and returned to the school.

- It must clearly state on the form why it is necessary that this absence must be taken in term time.
- Lower cost/Holiday is not a reason.

- On receipt of the “Leave of Absence Request Form”, you will be sent a response indicating whether the governing body is able to authorise your request or not.

*Reasons for not authorising it **might** include:-*

Unsatisfactory attendance

- Time of year, e.g. if pupils are sitting Public Examinations
- If leave of absence has already been authorised during the current academic year
- It is a holiday request in school term time
- There does not appear to be an exceptional circumstance surrounding the request
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Examples of exceptional circumstances are seen to be:

- being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time,
- service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark on a tour of duty abroad.
- when a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child’s rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue (evidence required).
- the wedding/funeral of an immediate family member or the birth of a sibling.
- when a family celebrates their cultural heritage and identity and falls during term time.
- the holiday being a unique/one off experience never to be repeated which can only happen during term time. (evidence required).

While decisions are to be made on a case by case basis, requests will **normally be refused**.

If parents, contrary to what the governors have said, still decide to take their child out of school, then the absence will be coded as “**unauthorised**”. This may lead to the school referring the matter to the Local Authority requesting a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

- The school aims to have ALL children or young people attending regularly and punctually and parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) need to know that should their child fail to attend in this way then the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service – Cheshire East.
- Parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) need to be aware that Cheshire East Schools work in cooperation with the Education Welfare Service
- Parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) need to be aware that Cheshire East Council in conjunction with Schools are operating Fixed Penalty Notices for non-attendance.

In developing this Attendance Policy we have taken into account the fact that Cheshire East is an ethnically diverse community. The school has incorporated practices, which guards against disadvantaging any sections of the community. Improving the performance of underachieving pupils is a key priority. This aims to improve the attainment of minority pupils across Cheshire East. Schools are aware and take into account the need for all public authorities to re-examine and make changes to their practice in promoting genuine multi-racial partnership.

The school understands the need for on-going communication with parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) and pupils regarding this policy, particularly those new to the school.