



MOSSCROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL



Monitoring Attendance & Punctuality

We believe that as an effective school we convey our positive regard for regular attendance to parents, pupils and teachers in the following ways:

- Registration twice a day.
- Weekly competition for class with the best attendance with own clothes day for best class attendance.
- School Attendance percentage shared in weekly Star Assembly and class with the best attendance celebrated and those with poorest reminded to improve.
- Attendance Focus weeks organized half termly and if an additional boost to attendance is required.
- End of term celebration assemblies include an attendance focus where certificates, star badges and prizes are awarded.
- Attendance bounce.
- Inclusion of data in weekly newsletter.
- Attendance feature in the newsletter, including when appropriate, input from the School Attendance Service (SAS).
- Setting of attendance targets within school development plan.
- Weekly monitoring of attendance by Learning Mentor.
- Professional dialogue between Head Teacher and Learning Mentor providing feedback on outcomes of SAS monitoring & actions.
- Open lines of communication with parents / carers / SAS to determine causes of long term / frequent absence and to support pupils in their return to school.
- Feature of Social inclusion meetings – input from class teachers as well as data analysis.
- The Head teacher and the Learning Mentor meet children on arrival and are able to monitor attendance; congratulate early arrivers and also question occasional day absence situations. This is also repeated at the end of the school day.
- Children are encouraged to arrive to school on time. The morning face to face greeting enables early arrivers to be acknowledged and welcomed.
- Attendance wall to enable the children to monitor their own attendance.
- Parents information booklet sent out termly

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for their absence. All absences due to a medical reason need to be supported with medical evidence. Medical appointments should be arranged to occur outside of school hours.

We believe that our systems ensure that children quickly pick up on the message that their presence is important, and this in turn has a dramatic effect on the self-esteem and academic progress of our pupils. Pupils who feel good and attend school, perform better in the classroom.

Registration:

Registers are taken twice a day at the start of the morning/afternoon sessions and returned to the school office. Registers are processed by the administration staff and the learning mentor and monitored on a daily basis by the learning mentor and the school attendance service.

Absence:

There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (Where the school approves the pupil absence when evidence is provided)
- Unauthorised (Where the school will not approve the absence as no evidence has been provided)

Unauthorised Absence

If your child receives 10 unauthorised absences (which equates to 5 school days) then parents will receive a 'Penalty Warning Notice'.

If a further absence occurs, within the same term, then parents automatically receive a £60 fine.

If the fine is not paid within 21 days it automatically increases to £120 if they pay within 28 days.

If the fine is still not paid this automatically leads to prosecution for non payment of the fine.

If your child arrives at school after half past nine, without medical evidence, they will receive a 'u' mark on the register which is also the same as an unauthorised absence

Parents procedure for absence

- If a child is absent, parents should call the school on the day of the absence stating a reason.
- A note should be sent on the day the child returns to school explaining the absence.
- Only if medical evidence is provided will the absence be authorized.
- Even parents of children who have known medical conditions are informed that each absence still requires a note of explanation and any absences that fall outside of this medical need would require additional evidence to authorize the absence.

School procedure for absence

- All children receive first day response phone calls from the Learning Mentor. This is a timetabled occurrence which illustrates the high priority we place on minimizing absenteeism.
- Written explanations for absence are collated.
- Patterns in poor attendance are identified, conversations are facilitated by the Learning Mentor with parents, letters are sent home identifying concerns and inviting parents in to an attendance panel to enable all concerned to support the child to improve their attendance or to clarify any difficulties. This information informs the meetings held on a fortnightly basis with the SAS.
- The Learning Mentor and the SAS officer monitor individual pupils with frequent absence weekly. These children are entered onto the school attendance service register, which has 5 stages of concern. Parents are informed of this process and invited to discuss the matter further with either the Learning Mentor, or the School Attendance Officer.

Leave of Absence requests/ Holidays:

We believe that good attendance is vital to the success of the pupil. Term time absence can and does, seriously disrupt the continuity of learning; not only do children miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, but are also consequently less prepared for the lessons on and after their return. There is a constant risk of underachievement, which we seek to avoid at all costs; therefore parents are encouraged not to take holidays during term time.

Head teachers can no longer grant leave of absence requests (including holiday requests) during term time. From September 1st 2013 all requests for leave, during term time, must follow the new regulations and:

- Must be requested because of 'exceptional circumstances', with proof provided
- must be made in writing, a full term before the absence is required in order for the request to be taken for approval and authorisation by Mosscroft's Governing Body.

In addition, parent's should note that:

- The granting of leave of absence does not set a precedent for similar future requests and the frequency/duration of such leave periods will need to be considered as factors in any decision.
- The Local Authority will use the full range of sanctions where leave of absence is taken without the permission of the school.

Punctuality:

- Historically, punctuality has been an issue for school. Many parents attach low importance to it. Many of our children live in chaotic homes, where they are responsible for getting themselves up and ready of a morning. Evidence from school data shows that the raising of the profile of punctuality has had a positive impact on punctuality rates this school year. Our Learning Mentor will continue support punctuality through positive communication with parents through face to face contact and letters home, to support our families with any issues they may be experiencing which effects their child's punctuality.

Newsletter:

The class with the best attendance is featured in the newsletter, as is the class who needs to improve the following week. Children with 100% attendance for the term are issued with a prize, star badge and certificate at our end of term celebration assemblies.

Reporting to parents:

Information relating to good attendance habits; legal requirements and good practice are reported to parents on a regular basis within the weekly newsletter.

Parents receive an attendance report 3 times a year at parental review meetings.

Letters are sent home informing parents of concerns relating to attendance and inviting parents to a supportive attendance panel. This is actioned by the Learning Mentor.

Pupils who have poor attendance are visited by the School Attendance Officer at home. During this meeting, targets are set and support is targeted.

Role of our Learning Mentor:

Our Learning Mentor has an outstanding relationship with parents and pupils, this is a powerful vehicle for addressing some of the negativity towards the importance of attendance at primary school level within our community.

Our Learning Mentor operates a first day response call for all children.

A register trawl is completed on a daily basis.

Absence notes are monitored on a weekly basis by the learning mentor.

Pupils who have poor attendance records are monitored on an individual basis. Regular verbal and written contact is made between the Learning Mentor and the parent /carer. These children are also tracked by the School Attendance Service officer, who may make a home visit.

Home visits by the Learning Mentor and Head Teacher are a powerful means of reaching hard to reach families.

We consider poor attendees within our vulnerable children provision. Pupils who are able to take responsibility for their own attendance are issued with attendance charts, incentives and rewards.

Monitoring by the Head teacher:

The Head Teacher attends a termly social inclusion meeting with the Learning Mentor and all staff. Children with attendance below 90% form part of the agenda of this meeting and necessary action is planned.

Priorities for 2013-14:

- To continue the upward trend in improvement for whole school attendance and achieve national average or above.
- Attendance bounce to be introduced.
- Own clothes day for best class to be continued
- Focus attendance weeks to be regularly introduced
- The link between poor punctuality and vulnerable pupils to be addressed
- New leave of absence procedures to be implemented
- Continue to embed current effective practice.

Capacity for Improvement:

Whole school attendance as recorded at the end of Summer Term 1, 2013 was 94.2% (this was an increase from 93.81% for the same period in 2012). This continued a four year upward trend in attendance. However, our aspirational target of 96% was not reached and neither was the national average, 95%, although attendance at the end of Autumn Term 2012 exceeded this.

We acknowledge that attendance rates are currently unsatisfactory at Mosscroft primary school. We see its improvement as a core aim of the school this academic year. We believe strongly that excellent relationships have been developed between staff and parents that will enable us to continue to drive forward our agenda for improvement and are confident that sustainable, meaningful improvement will be evident in the evaluation of outcomes and impact at the end of this school year.

Agreed by

Mrs P. France

Head teacher

Date:

Agreed by

Mr N. Bowmaker

Chair of Governors

Date:

Policy Reviewed: January 2014

Policy reviewed: