

Moordown St John's CE VA Primary School



Attendance Policy 2009/2010

Our Attendance Mission Statement

Moordown St John's CE VA Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximizes opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

We are proud of our attendance record which is generally very good and are grateful to our supportive parents and carers who work with us to promote and encourage good attendance by their children. School staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

To meet these objectives Moordown St John's CE VA Primary School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

The named attendance lead for our school is Nicky Armstrong.

Whole School Policy for School Attendance

Our Aims

- 1 To improve the overall percentage of pupils attending school.
- 2 To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- 3 To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- 4 To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- 5 To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- 6 To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies.
- 7 To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Aim No. 1: To improve the overall percentage of pupils at school

- 1a The attendance target for 09/10 is 96.35%, an increase on last year's target which was 95.9%. Last year we failed to reach our target attaining an attendance rate of 95.5%.
- 1b The named Governor for attendance is Justine Marley.
- 1c We apply the Whole School Attendance Policy consistently.
- 1d We establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
- 1e We relate attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
- 1f We monitor attendance in measurable outcomes and review with the Governing Body.
- 1g We refer to Education Welfare Service, in writing, pupils whose attendance is less than 80%.
- 1h Authorised leave for holidays is at the discretion of the Headteacher and is not an entitlement. Parents should make every effort to take leave during school holidays. The School cannot legally approve more than 10 days' holiday in an academic year unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers requesting holiday/leave in term time are asked to complete a Leave of Absence Request form (Appendix 1), which is available from the School Office or can be downloaded from our website. Leave can only be authorised if the request is made before the leave takes place and the pupil had an attendance level of at least 95% (KS2) / 90% (KS1) during the previous academic year unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 1i Holiday leave is not authorised at the certain times of the school year.
During the 2009/2010 school year leave will not be authorised at the following times:
Year R: during the first half of the Autumn Term 2009
Year 2: 19 April – 28 May 2010
Years 3, 4 & 5: 7 June – 18 June 2010
Year 6: 19 April – 14 May 2010
This is due to the scheduling of important school assessments.
Parental co-operation is kindly sought.
- 1j If a child is removed for an unauthorised holiday the School can ask the Education Welfare Service to issue a Penalty Notice, which carries a fine of £50 - £100 per parent, per child.
- 1k Each half-term the Office will advise class teachers of their pupils with the lowest attendance. The class teachers will endeavour to make informal contact with the parents/carers to see if there are any underlying reasons for the absences and/or if there is any support we can offer. If attendance does not improve to a satisfactory level, Letter 1 (Appendix 2) will be issued.
- 1l Addressing the issues behind non-attendance and persistent absenteeism are a priority for the school in conjunction with the school's Education Welfare Officer.

Aim No. 2: To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks

- 2a We maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration. Registers close 10 minutes after the start of registration.
- 2b If a pupil is absent without reason, we make telephone contact with the parents/carers on the first day of absence to ascertain the reason for non-attendance. We also have the facility to send text messages if required. If we are unsuccessful in making telephone contact a letter will be sent home requesting notification of the reason for the absence. If we are unable to ascertain the reason for the absence or are unsatisfied with the reason given the absence will be marked as 'unauthorised'.
- 2c We ensure clearly defined late registration procedures, writing on a half-termly basis to parents of all children who are persistently late.
- 2d We write to parents/carers of children who have not achieved 90% attendance each term using Letter 1, following up with Letter 2 if required. (Appendices 2 & 3). Records of contact will be kept for 3 years.
- 2e We respond swiftly to pupil lateness.
- 2f We define clearly the roles and responsibilities of each staff member within the school staffing structure.
- 2g We explore the range of opportunities for parental partnership
- 2h We timetable staff to meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer.
- 2i We review individual pupil and whole school attendance regularly.
- 2j We are familiar with the Education Welfare Officers' referral and recording system
- 2k We include absence data in the pupils' annual school reports.

Aim No. 3: To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils

- 3a We will highlight the importance of good attendance in:
 - Assemblies
 - Class
 - Newsletters: absence reporting, holidays in term time, attendance targets, Penalty Notices
 - Term and Holiday Dates leaflet
 - School Prospectus
 - Parent workshops
 - Parent consultation evenings
 - Staff being available to talk to pupils/parents
 - Personal, Health, Social & Citizenship Education lessons (PHSCE)If necessary, we can arrange for information to be provided in a range of languages
- 3b We seek improved communication with parents.
- 3c We will maintain accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents. Parents are encouraged to inform the school of any changes to their contact information as and when they occur by completing the update form available from the School Office. Regular reminders are also printed in the school newsletters along with an update slip to return to the School Office. Every Autumn Term we undertake a whole school data checking exercise whereby information is sent to parents/carers showing the current details held for their child(ren); parents/carers are asked to check this information and advise the School of any changes.
- 3d We involve parents in attendance issues from the earliest stage – making first day contact by telephone in the event of unknown absence.
- 3e We keep staff up to date with the attendance strategy and provide Continuing Professional Development opportunities in 'Promoting Positive Behaviour & Attendance'.

Aim No. 4: To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data

- 4a We use a computerised registration system enabling the analysis of attendance information
Data can be analysed by authorised/unauthorised, class/year group, absence code, gender etc
- 4b We use appropriate absence codes as required by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.
- 4c We will be consistent in the collection and provision of information.
- 4d We analyse the effects of persistent absence on attainment.

Aim No. 5: To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school

- 5a We will produce an annual report to governors on attendance.
- 5b We will produce regular newsletters for parents, carers and friends and will report information on attendance matters including targets and attainment.
- 5c We display materials at focal points – school foyer/noticeboards etc.
- 5d We encourage parents into the school to discuss individual cases.
- 5e When necessary, we will discuss attendance issues in inclusion meetings, pupil target meetings and/or in relevant staff meetings.
- 5f We undertake the Education Welfare Service monthly initiatives.
- 5g We will provide training for appointed/promoted staff.
- 5h If deemed appropriate in the future, we will introduce award systems, including certificates, badges, trophies, end of year prizes etc.

Aim No. 6: To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies

- 7a We have designated staff who liaise with Education Social Work Service and other agencies.
- 7b We carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
- 7c We gather and record relevant information to assist the Education Welfare Service.
- 7d We hold termly attendance review meetings with our Education Welfare Officer.
- 7e Our Education Welfare Officer will arrange multi-agency planning meetings, pursue 'Fast Track' (if appropriate) or request/issue Penalty Notices.
- 7f We will establish and maintain a list of named contacts within the local community
e.g. Community Police Officers, Education Welfare Officer/Truancy Officer, Bournemouth Pupil Transport Service, Duty Social Worker
- 7g We encourage the active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.
- 7h We undertake an annual attendance O2E if attendance targets are not met. Otherwise we will undertake one every three years.

Aim No. 7: To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

- 8a We will be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of pupils returning to school after a significant period of absence.
- 8b We will involve/inform all staff/agencies in the reintegration process.
- 8c We will provide opportunities for counseling and feedback.
- 8d We will consider peer support and mentoring.
- 8e We will involve parents as far as possible.
- 8f We will agree a timescale for the review of the written reintegration plan.
- 8g We will provide guidance for teachers, TAs etc who may be working with the child.

Governors

Attendance has always been a matter of concern to our School Governors. The Governing Body ratifies policies and is required by legislation to see that our registers are kept accurately.

The Headteacher may wish to submit reports to the Governing Body on various aspects of pupil attendance.

Governors have a valuable role to play in establishing the importance of school attendance matters and in supporting measures taken to improve attendance.

The Governing Body produces an annual School Profile which provides key information about the school eg our school's performance, how our absence rates compare with other schools along with other information input by our school.

To view the School Profile please visit: www.parentscentre.gov.uk/schoolprofile

Policy Review

This policy is based on Bournemouth Borough Council's 'Model School Attendance Policy'.

Having been carefully considered by the Governing Body's Curriculum Committee at its meeting on Tuesday 13 October, this policy has been ratified by the Full Governing Body at its meeting on 3 December 2009

Whilst this policy will be updated annually to reflect our new attendance targets and the dates on which leave will not be authorised, it is customary at this school to formally review all policies after an interval of three years. In the case of this policy a full review will take place during the school year 2011/2012. However this will be brought forward should changes in protocol be recommended by either the Department for Children, Schools and Families or the Local Authority.