

Meadowside CP & Nursery School



Attendance Policy

Policy Updated	July 2016
Reviewed & Agreed by Governors	September 2016
Next Review	September 2017
Headteacher	
Chair of Governors	

Related Policy | - Safeguarding Policy

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The staff and governors of Meadowside CP and Nursery School believe that all pupils benefit from, and are entitled to, regular and punctual daily attendance at school. This helps ensure that all pupils have the best chance to achieve their full potential. As part of this aspiration we will monitor and respond to any instances of poor and/or irregular attendance and/or punctuality and adopt a fair, consistent and even-handed approach. We will work closely with parents/carers, their families and all relevant support agencies to promote this.

Rationale

The policy is as result of consultation with the wider school community and an analysis of existing attendance data to establish current absence trends. These trends showed that during 2015 -16 our school attendance dipped to 94.4% which is significantly below the expected school attendance of 97%. This information is reported to the Department for Education and forms part of our Ofsted inspection. It aims to ensure the enjoyment and achievement for all pupils at Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School.

Principles

The Governors, Headteacher and staff wish to ensure every child has the opportunity to:

1. Fully participate in school life
2. Enjoy and achieve
3. Feel a valued member of the school community

Aims

- To reduce persistent absence in line with the national average
- To improve attendance to be in line with the national expectation of 97%
- To ensure there is a whole school, graduated response to improving punctuality and attendance
- To identify groups of pupils and individuals whose absence causes concern
- To identify pupils persistently absent from school
- To track pupils' attendance and monitor and evaluate progress
- To identify main causes of absence and take action to address them

Legal Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, a parent is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age aptitude and ability and any special educational needs a child might have. This Attendance Policy has

been drawn up with reference to the DfE 'Advice on School Attendance' document, October 2014.

From 1st September 2013 the new law by the DfE does not give any entitlement to allow parents to take their child on holiday during term time. A request for holidays in term time is not believed, by the current government, to be an 'exceptional circumstance'. Please refer to www.dfe.gov.uk.

Parental Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Parents must:

- Contact school on each day of absence to provide a reason for non-attendance
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance

School Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

The Welfare Co-ordinator is the school attendance leader. As the attendance leader of the school, under guidance from the School Business Manager, she will ensure:

- Registers are accurately marked and maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- A whole school approach to reinforce good attendance, teaching and learning to encourage all pupils to attend and achieve
- Individuals or group attendance targets are set and understood by staff, parents and pupils

Registration

Parents should ensure pupils are in school for 8.50am for morning registration and 12.30pm for Key Stage 1 and 1.15pm for Key Stage 2 for afternoon registration.

A pupil arriving after 8.50am and 12.30pm/1.15pm will be marked late. Parents of children persistently arriving after 8.50am will be invited in to school to discuss the lateness and seek a resolution. Where school action fails to bring about an improvement, the matter will be discussed with Education Welfare Service and consideration given to prosecution. Please see Appendix A for protocol.

Categorisation of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The parent must provide an explanation for any period of absence from school, it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised.

School will usually authorise absences where a pupil is:

- Unable to attend school due to illness. This will be coded 'I'.
- Requires emergency dental/medical appointments. Wherever possible routine dental/medical appointments should be made after school or during school holidays. This will be coded 'M'.

- Absent due to 'special' circumstances. This will be coded as a 'C' code and an example of this may be to attend a funeral of a close family member, to visit a close family member who is seriously ill or there has been a death or significant trauma in the family.
- Leave of absence for a holiday will only be authorised for children whose parents are in the Armed Forces and are either going or returning from tour including breaks of leave during tours. This will be coded 'H'.

School will not authorise absence for:

- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Days out
- Looking after brothers/sisters
- Or holidays

If the holiday in term time is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'G' (family holiday not agreed), this will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised. The Educational Welfare Officer will be notified and a fixed penalty notice may be issued.

Where a pupil is taken out of school for the purpose of a holiday in term time without the prior permission of the school, the parent/carer (you and your partner), in accordance with section 444 of the Education Act 1996, may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice, currently £60 per child where the amount is paid within 21 days or £120 where the amount is paid within 28 days. If the fixed penalty notice remains unpaid this could lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

School may request medical verification where a pupil's attendance falls below 90%. Please see Appendix A for protocol.

School Systems for Promoting Regular Attendance

School will:

- Contact parents on each day of a pupil's absence, where no notification has been received from the parent/carer by 9.30am to ensure the safety of the pupil
- Analyse individual attendance pupil data to identify patterns of absence causing concern
- Contact parents by letter when pupil's attendance falls below 97% to highlight concerns
- Invite parents in to school for a discussion when a pupil's attendance is below 90%
- Please see Appendix A for protocol and Appendices 1, 2 and 3 for examples of letters which will be sent out.

If attendance does not improve a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer. The following are examples of the support which school can offer to increase a pupil's attendance:

- Use Individual Attendance Support Plans for pupils with attendance difficulties
- Use Parenting Contracts where exclusion of behavioural issues are affecting a pupil's attendance in school
- In partnership with the Local Authority use a full range of strategies, including legal interventions, to support improvement to attendance
- Provide appropriate support to pupils to ensure successful reintegration following long term absence
- Complete a CAF where complex and significant factors requiring a multi-agency response is identified
- Work proactively to engage with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties which may be affecting school attendance, through parents evenings, pupil reviews and home-school agreements
- Make parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on attainment

Celebrating good attendance and punctuality:

We will:

- Acknowledge and celebrate the class with the highest average weekly attendance in weekly assembly.
- Reward all children who have achieved satisfactory or higher attendance and punctuality with 'In It to Win It' raffle tickets for a weekly drawer in assembly.
- Acknowledge, praise and reward, in an end of year assembly, those children who have had 100% attendance all year and name them in the school newsletter.
- Reward all children who have achieved satisfactory or higher attendance with certificates at the end of each school year.
- Encourage and praise those children who have made successful efforts to improve their attendance.

Persons responsible for attendance in Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School

- Headteacher
- Welfare Co-ordinator
- School Office Administrator

Review of Policy

- This policy will be formally reviewed every year
- The principles of this policy will be raised in the school newsletter regularly throughout the year
- Any complaints arising from the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Headteacher in the first instance

Appendix A

How attendance at Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School will be monitored

1. Attendance will be checked weekly and any unauthorised absences or any child who was late more than twice in a week will receive a 'Reason for Absence/Lateness' form. (Appendix 1)
2. Attendance will be checked on the last Friday of every month by the Welfare Co-ordinator. All children below 97% will be monitored.
 - Letter 1 (Appendix 2) will be sent out to all children showing less than 97% attendance.
 - Letter 2 (Appendix 3) will be sent out if there is a high percentage of illness which has not been explained.
3. Any child who continues to be off school without sufficient medical evidence will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer for further investigation.

Late Children

Parents of children who are persistently late will be sent a letter explaining that the Education Welfare Officer will monitor their child's attendance and punctuality. Parents will be made aware of how much learning time their children are missing.



**Meadowside Community Primary and
Nursery School**
Clough Avenue
Longford
Warrington
WA2 9PH

Tel: 01925 632705 Fax: 01925 630922
Headteacher: Mr S.G. Wright, BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH
Email: meadowside_primary@warrington.gov.uk
www.meadowsidecpschool.co.uk

Appendix 1

Date:

Name of Child:

Please give a reason for the absence listed below; if no reason is given within 5 days of the date of this letter then your child's absence will be unauthorised.

Your child has missed the equivalent of _____ minutes of learning time this week and this could impact on their progress.

If lateness continues to be an issue the Education Welfare Officer may become involved.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you wish to discuss this any further.

Dates of Absence/ Lateness		If late, time of arrival	Reason for Absence/ Lateness
From	To		

Signed (parent/carer):

Date:

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Appendix 2

Date:

Dear Parent/carer

Child's name:

I am writing concerning your child's attendance at school. As you can see from the enclosed Registration Certificate, currently their attendance stands at _____% and the government expectation is that pupils should maintain at least 97% attendance.

Good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential. If they are not in school, they are not learning.

Examples of Attendance Levels and their impact					
100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%
No days lost	10 days lost	19 days lost	29 days lost	38 days lost	47 days lost
190 school days each year	180 days at school	171 days at school	161 days at school	152 days at school	143 days at school
Best chance of success!		Makes it harder for your child to progress		Not fair on your child – possible legal action	

Whilst I appreciate that there may be genuine medical reasons for your child's absences, patterns of absence are queried by the Education Welfare Officer at our regular meetings and we may request medical evidence if your child's attendance does not improve.

I will continue to monitor your child's attendance for improvement. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.

Kind Regards

Mrs N Vernon
Welfare Co-ordinator



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Headteacher: Mr S.G. Wright, BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH

Appendix B Email: meadowside_primary@warrington.gov.uk
www.meadowsidecpschool.co.uk

Date:

Dear parent/carer

Child's name:

I am writing to you concerning your child's attendance at school. As you can see from the enclosed Registration Certificate, their attendance currently stands at _____% and the government expectation is that pupils should maintain at least 97% attendance.

I am aware that there may be medical reasons for non-attendance and I am sensitive to this, but I would like to work together with you to ensure your child's attendance increases over the remainder of the year.

Good attendance at school is vital if pupils are to achieve their full potential and make consistently good progress. Attendance has been noted by the Education Welfare Officer as part of our reviews and we now request that any future absences must be accompanied by a medical certificate (see examples below), or they will be classed as unauthorised and could result in a referral to the Education Welfare Officer or you being served with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Acceptable proof of illness:

- A note from the doctor's receptionist (a stamped, named and dated appointment card)
- Medication prescribed by the doctor (not from over the counter at a pharmacy)
- A copy of the prescription to cover the illness dates

I will continue to closely monitor your child's attendance and expect to see an immediate improvement.

Kind Regards

Mrs N Vernon
Welfare Co-ordinator