



Moat Farm Infant and Nursery School

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

Regular school attendance for all children is important to ensure continuity and progression in their education. It is a school's responsibility to monitor and actively pursue the goal of regular attendance. Parents are also responsible for ensuring that their children attend school and arrive on time. The Government's recommendation is for pupils to attend for 96% of the school year. It is important that school and home become partners to benefit the child. This policy applies to **all pupils** at Moat Farm Infant and Nursery School; however we do recognise that some pupils will be below the statutory school age of 5 years. We at Moat Farm Infant and Nursery school expect good attendance and believe it should be promoted from the very start of a child's schooling.

2. Registration

The school uses a computerised registration system. The following procedures should be followed when filling the registration in:-

- a. Staff should ensure there is a mark in of present or absent, as appropriate for each child for each session.
- b. Registers are marked at the start of the morning (8.50am) and afternoon (1.15pm) sessions and closed morning at 9:20 am and afternoon at 1.45pm (1.30pm for Reception classes)

3. Authorised Absence

It is the parent's responsibility to inform school of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible. The absence is authorised only when the school is satisfied with the explanation and it is a valid reason for absence. School may conduct a safe and well check if there are still concerns regarding the reason for the absence. If in doubt, the class teacher should consult the Head teacher, the school's Attendance and Prosecution Service or the School Attendance - Guidance for Maintained Schools' booklet, (www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance).

The parent should contact the school by:-

- a. Telephone by 9.30 am, (this is recorded and entered onto the system by Office Staff)
- b. Letter/note
- c. Or alternative mutual arrangements e.g. Neighbour, community worker, older brother or sister
- d. The teacher making contact on return to school.

Once the absence has been authorised, the appropriate coding, will be entered on the register. It is expected that all reasonable attempts will be made to discover the reason for any absence. It is important to note that any absence, whether authorised or unauthorised, will count against a pupil's overall percentage.

We also need to remind parents to make routine appointments (dentist, optician etc) outside the school day. We need to see appointment cards for school time appointments. If the child has a school time appointment we need to remind parents we would appreciate them bringing their child to school before and after the appointment time wherever possible.

4. Unauthorised Absence

Where no explanation is given to a child's absence or if the school does not accept the explanation given, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The class teacher, attendance co-ordinator and Head teacher have a duty to monitor each child's unauthorised absences.

If your child is absent and we have not had any contact from the parents, the school office will contact you on the first day of absence. If there is continuing absence without any explanation, school will conduct a safe and well check, (home visit), which will be carried out by two members of staff

5. Monitoring Attendance

It is important that the class teacher, attendance co-ordinator and the Head teacher monitor attendance and where necessary, involve the school's Attendance and Prosecution Service. The following monitoring arrangements will be used to ensure attendance is 96% or more:-

- (i) Any member of staff concerned about a pupil's attendance should report their concerns to the attendance co-ordinator, who will take the appropriate action.
- (ii) Every Friday when the registers are closed the secretary will print off an overview of every class's attendance and give to the Attendance Manager and FSW. They will monitor the percentage attendance of every child.
- (iii) Parents of children whose attendance falls below 90% will be sent a letter pointing out their child's attendance. A printout will be attached.
- (iv) Parents of children whose attendance falls below 90% or whose attendance has not improved since previous monitoring will then be either contacted by phone or invited by letter to discuss any problems and look at strategies for improvement either in school, with the school's Attendance and Prosecution Service in school or a visit made to the home. An attendance printout will be attached.
- (v) If, following monitoring procedures, attendance improves; a letter will be sent to notify parents of this.
- (vi) Each term in the school's newsletter the percentage Attendance will be recorded so parents are informed about the school's attendance record.
- (vii) Good attendance will be encouraged in school through a weekly award for the best class attendance and pupils who achieve 100% will receive certificates, on a termly basis to celebrate their achievement.

6. Lateness.

We actively discourage lateness by a pupil and the school's first step is to speak to the parent or guardian of the child bringing them to school. Any child's lateness should be recorded on the school's lateness monitoring book. A late mark will be shown in the register. If lateness persists then the school will involve the attendance co-ordinator and Attendance and Prosecution Service, where necessary, and a letter be sent to the parent pointing out their responsibility. If lateness still persists then the parents will be invited to discuss this.

If a child arrives after the close of registration then he/she will have been initially marked absent. The secretary will amend the register. This is very important especially in the case of an evacuation of the building.

7. Family Holidays/Application for Non-Attendance in School

Completed "Request for Leave of Absence for Children" forms should be received at least 10 working days before the date the leave is requested for and sent directly to the secretary's office. A Leave of Absence file is located in the school office.

We do not authorise absences in school time for holidays, visiting sick relatives, attending sporting or other events, birthdays, shopping etc.

In line with legislation we will refer unauthorised leave of absence of 5 days or more to the Attendance and Prosecution Service. Such a referral may lead to a fixed penalty notice being issued.

Please be advised that parents who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance can be fined £120 (per parent, per child).

Moat Farm Infant and Nursery School do not authorise holidays in term time. The Guidelines for the Governing Body approval/disapproval can be found in School Attendance - Guidance for Maintained Schools' booklet, (www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance).

The Headteacher has the power to authorise the absence in exceptional circumstances.

8. EWO/Other Agencies

The school's Attendance and Prosecution Service work closely with the school in monitoring attendance and lateness. Children causing concern, due to their attendance, are reported to the Attendance and Prosecution Service.

This allows any follow up needing to take place by the Attendance and Prosecution Service to be more structured. In the event of prosecution, the school's registers and documentation would be used.

The school will refer children to the school nurse, social services, or any other agency, where it is deemed appropriate, to offer support and guidance regarding attendance issues. This is done in collaboration with the Attendance and Prosecution Service.

9. Parents

Parents should feel supported and not threatened by the school's attendance policy. Parents should be aware that the attendance monitoring procedures are there to keep them informed so that appropriate action can be taken. School can provide work packs/activities for children who are absent for more than a few days. Parents are welcome to discuss attendance concerns with the class teacher; attendance co-ordinator, Family Support Worker (FSW), head teacher or the Attendance and Prosecution Service whenever they feel it is appropriate. The school's policy should be conveyed to the parents by the school prospectus, information/newsletters and by talking to them as and when appropriate.

Absence Coding

If a child is absent the following codes must be used to record the reason for the absence. These codes must be applied consistently throughout the school. If you are unsure which coding to use, please check with the attendance co-ordinator or the school secretary.

- /\ Present** - child in school
- C Other authorised circumstances** - parents to complete application form e.g. family circumstances
- I Illness** - parent informed school that child is ill (some pupils may have to provide evidence, e.g. doctor's note, attendance co-ordinator will inform you of this)
- O Unauthorised circumstances** - no information received from parents or school/governors have not authorised the absence
- S Study leave** - not applicable
- U Late after register closed** - registers close at 9.05am and 1.30pm. Any child arriving after these times should be recorded as this.
- E Excluded** - child has been excluded from school - you will be informed by attendance co-ordinator or head teacher
- L Late before register closed** - child arrives late but before 9.20am or 1.45pm
- P Approved sporting activity** - not applicable
- V Educational visit** - e.g. trips, residential (Edgmond Hall)
- B Educated off-site** - child has extended leave (holiday or otherwise) but is given a programme of work to complete
- G Unauthorised holiday** child is on a family holiday and the appropriate form has been completed but not authorised.
- M Medical/dental** - doctors/hospital/opticians/speech therapy/ear tests/etc.

R Religious observance - child is absent in order to attend a religious occasion or absent due to religious activities taking place in school (parents need to complete an application form for non-attendance)

W Work Experience - not applicable.

*Please note that **any absence (authorised or unauthorised) goes against a child's attendance percentage.** Any concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality must be reported to the attendance co-ordinator. **Individual attendance figures will be reviewed each half term.** Parents will be informed by letter if their child's attendance falls below 90% and it will then be monitored.*