

Attendance & Punctuality Policy 2023/2024

'Working together to achieve success'

Mossgate Primary School is a successful school and every child plays their part in making it so. We recognise that attending school regularly, and on time, has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for our children.

Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and government research shows that those with poor attendance and punctuality tend to achieve less academically. Good attenders also make better progress socially, learn to work with others, and are better prepared for the transition to secondary school and, eventually, higher education, training and employment. Absence or late arrival also disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

At Mossgate Primary School, we will:

- Promote a culture which enables and encourages all pupils to achieve their potential and aspire to excellence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school; including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Act early to address concerning patterns of absence and lateness.
- Set targets and implement strategies to improve individual, vulnerable group and whole school attendance and punctuality levels.
- Reduce absence robustly, including persistent absence.

Rights, roles and responsibilities

Mossgate Primary School believes that it is important that parents, pupils, school staff and governors all work in partnership to encourage good attendance and punctuality for all pupils: 'Working together to achieve success'. The following is a summary of the rights, roles and responsibilities for individual groups of stakeholders.

Parents and carers

Ensuring your child's regular and punctual attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without good reason creates an offence in law and may result in legal sanctions such as penalty notices or prosecution.

- Ensure the child(ren) in their care attend school daily and punctually – aim for all 190 school days.
- Ensure children go to bed at an appropriate time and have breakfast before school so they are ready to learn. (Breakfast Club opens from 7:30am with no need to book in advance.)
- Inform the school office of absences with reason and likely duration – provide daily updates as required.
- Book medical appointments outside of the school day.
- Provide medical evidence of illness or appointments when required.



Our mission:

'Working together to achieve success'

- As active and healthy **individuals** who are inquisitive, have the belief to try new things and manage risks safely.
- As resilient, confident and independent **learners** who strive to achieve their best.
- As **honest, courteous** and **kind friends** who **respect** and value difference and have the **courage** to challenge discrimination.
- As active and **responsible** and **respectful citizens** who have a positive impact within their school, community and wider world.

- Ensure that school has up to date contact details and at least two emergency contacts who can be contacted in the event that parents are unavailable.
- Adhere to systems for late registration and signing in / out.
- Book holidays outside of term time. Just 190 days are school days with 175 days a year not spent in school! All holidays are unauthorised.
- Advise the school, by contacting the school office, if they become aware of problems with attendance and punctuality and request support early. We will always work with parents and provide support.
- Co-operate with the school in promoting and improving attendance e.g. attending meetings, participation in attendance & punctuality contracts and in agreed intervention / action plans.

Pupils

- Support parents with good routines at home, for example: appropriate bedtimes, no devices before bed, getting uniforms ready the night before, organising your book bag and other belongings etc.
- Attend school regularly and punctually – aim for all 190 school days.
- Follow school systems for late registration and signing in and out – you must never open external doors.

Headteacher

- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to statutory requirements regarding attendance.
- Lead on giving attendance a high profile with parents, staff, children and governors.
- Ensure that there are appropriate and efficient systems in place to promote and support the school attendance & punctuality policy and that these are adhered to.
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance and lateness matters and protected time allocated to discharge those responsibilities.
- Provides appropriate training to those concerned where appropriate.
- Consider each request for leave against the school's criteria, decide whether some, all, or none of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision.
- Where there is uncertainty regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence, or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process.
- Liaise with appropriate agencies, for example: Early Help, Lancashire County Council Attendance Team etc, to ensure appropriate support is available to families where attendance concerns are identified.
- Provide regular reports to the governing body on school attendance and punctuality, including persistent absences and vulnerable groups.

School staff

We believe that all staff have responsibilities and a role to play in promoting good attendance by:

- Providing a welcoming atmosphere and safe learning environment for children.
- Ensuring an appropriate and responsive curriculum.
- Providing a sympathetic response to any concerns concerning pupils and families.
- Being aware of factors that can contribute to poor attendance and lateness.
- Adherence to the systems and procedures in place within school to promote good attendance and punctuality and highlighting any concerns to the headteacher.
- Discuss attendance and punctuality concerns with children and parents at an early stage.
- Participation in training regarding attendance and punctuality, for examples school systems, school avoidance, attachment issues etc.
- Completion of the attendance registers promptly in accordance with the legislation and under the direction of the headteacher.
- Promote the link between attendance and punctuality and educational attainment to children and parents.

- Ensure that any notes or messages received regarding absences or lateness are shared and logged on CPOMs.
- Provide termly attendance and punctuality updates to parents through parents' evening and end of year reports – see opposite.

	Attendance & punctuality
Outstanding	Attendance is 99% or higher. Always in school on time.
Expected	Attendance is 96% or higher and very rarely late to school.
Must try harder	Attendance is below 96% (government's minimum target) and/or occasionally late to school.
Cause for concern	Attendance is below 90% (classed as a persistent absentee) and/or frequently late to school.

The headteacher is responsible for deciding whether an absence is authorised or not and agree which absence code will be used. The school office staff are responsible for inputting the appropriate absence code, reason and length on the electronic register (SIMs) on a daily basis. Office staff will also use the comments facility within SIMS to log the number of minutes late and specific reasons for absence. When a child does not return on the date specified on a leave of absence form, the office staff will notify the headteacher who may conduct a home visit.

Governors

- Ensure compliance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended.
- Agree an attendance & punctuality policy and review it annually.
- Agree targets for attendance and punctuality.
- Review attendance, persistent absence and punctuality termly.
- Where the school is not meeting its attendance targets, or when the governors believe there is cause for concern, to require a review of the systems and procedures in place to promote good attendance and punctuality.
- Promote the strong link between attendance and educational attainment to parents and pupils where appropriate and ensure that the school attendance & punctuality policy and procedures are communicated effectively.
- Work with the headteacher in establishing equitable and consistent criteria against which leave requests will be considered.
- Authorise the headteacher (or other designated person) to consider and make decisions regarding leave of absence requests.

Morning registration and lateness

Times	Information	Code(s)
8:20am	The school bells ring and children enter (Reception – classroom door, KS1 – infant corridor and KS2 – junior corridor) and begin learning activities. Families are encouraged to be on the school grounds before 8:20am so that children are ready to enter the building promptly. Parents are responsible for children arriving before 8:20am.	
8:25am	The school bells rings at 8:25am and school staff lock the school gates and then the corridor doors and the Reception classroom door.	
8:25am to 8:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The registration period starts at 8:25am and ends at 8:30am. Teachers must complete registers, total the number of children present at the bottom of the register and then send the register folder to the office. • Classroom staff record on their whiteboard the number of children present and note the names of children absent or working in a different area of the building. This must be updated throughout the day in case of evacuation. • Children arriving after 8:25 will have to go through the school office. Staff need to notify the office if any children arrive after the register has been sent. • The office staff will enter the appropriate code for any absences in the registers and on SIMs once approved by the headteacher. 	/ indicating the child is present ○ used if a child is not present

8:30am to 8:55am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The registers will be returned to classrooms once the codes have been entered into the registers and SIMs by the office staff. Any children arriving after the registration period will be classed as late and their code amended in SIMs. A member of the office will take the child to class and amend the register and total number present. Late pupils must be brought to the office by an adult who will provide a reason for the lateness. 	L indicating the child is late but present for the session
8:55am onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registers are closed. Pupils must arrive at the school office with a parent. Pupils will be marked as U, very late, which is classed as an unauthorised absence but indicates that the pupil was physically present for part of the session, unless they have a valid reason which has been approved by the headteacher. 	U indicating unauthorised absence (very late)

Afternoon registration and lateness

- Due to staggered lunch times, afternoon registration varies between the infants and juniors.
- Teachers take the register at the start of the afternoon registration period, note the total number of children present and then send the register to the office. Classroom staff record on their whiteboard the number of children present and note the names of children absent or working in a different area of the building. This must be updated throughout the day in case of evacuation.
- The registers will be returned to classrooms once the codes have been entered into the registers and SIMs by the office staff.
- Any children arriving after the registration period, will be taken by a member of the office team to class and amend the register code and total number present.
- The headteacher is responsible for authorising the register code.

	EYFS, Y1 & Y2	Y3, Y4, Y5 & Y6*	Code(s)
Registration period	12:45pm to 12:50pm	1:00pm to 1:05pm	\ indicating present
Register remains open	12:50pm to 1:15pm	1:05pm to 1:30pm	Late – recorded as L
Register closed	After 1:15pm	After 1:30pm	Unauthorised absence – recorded as U (very late)

*Y6 registration may begin at a later time due to delayed lunch breaks on some days.

In the afternoon, a child arriving after the five-minute registration period is classed as late (L). If they arrive twenty-five minutes after the five-minute registration period, they will be marked as U (unauthorised absence) which is 'very late' unless they have a valid reason. The school day ends at 3:00pm.

In addition to using the L and U codes, office staff also record the number of minutes late for each pupil, on each occasion. This facility will allow school staff to monitor and manage developing patterns of lateness more effectively and make a clear link between lateness and missed learning; and share such information with parents and external agencies as appropriate.

The fact that the U code is classed as an unauthorised absence means that when it is used, pupils are likely to be missing significant amounts of learning, putting their educational progress at risk. For this reason, the use of this code will be considered as serious as any other unauthorised absence and will attract the interest of external agencies, including referral to the local authority attendance team and consideration of the use of legal measures, in just the same way.

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school due to illness. In most cases, children are well enough to attend school and when they are busy with their friends, will often forget they are feeling ill. We can administer medicines like Calpol, if you complete the relevant form at the school office. If your

child is well enough to go to school, but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let the school office know so that this information can be shared with the class teacher.

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about [managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK](#). These state when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

For other common illness, recent NHS advice states:

- **Coughs and colds:** It's fine to send your child to school with a minor [cough](#) or [common cold](#), but if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.
- **High temperature:** If your child has a [high temperature](#), keep them off school until it goes away.
- **Chickenpox:** If your child has [chickenpox](#), keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.
- **Cold sores:** There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a [cold sore](#). Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.
- **Conjunctivitis:** You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have [conjunctivitis](#). Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.
- **COVID-19:** If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school. Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have [symptoms of COVID-19](#) and they either: have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities. Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.
- **Ear infection:** If your child has an [ear infection](#) and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.
- **Hand, foot and mouth disease:** If your child has [hand, foot and mouth disease](#) but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.
- **Head lice and nits:** There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat [head lice and nits](#) without seeing a GP.
- **Impetigo:** If your child has [impetigo](#), they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.
- **Ringworm:** If your child has [ringworm](#), see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.
- **Scarlet fever:** If your child has [scarlet fever](#), they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise, they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.
- **Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease):** You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [slapped cheek syndrome](#) because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.
- **Sore throat:** You can still send your child to school if they have a [sore throat](#). But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away. A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of [tonsillitis](#).
- **Threadworms:** You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [threadworms](#). Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.
- **Vomiting and diarrhoea:** Children with [diarrhoea or vomiting](#) should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

Other reasons causing absences

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for other reasons like friendship difficulties or when struggling with learning. If your child is reluctant to attend school, please bring them to school and speak to a member of staff so we can resolve the issue(s), rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. As a school, we will always work with parents, and external agencies as appropriate, to understand and address the reasons behind absence.

Attendance Concerns

Our minimum attendance for all children is at least 97% across the academic school year. When a child's attendance is a concern, we always aim to work with families to provide support and ensure that any improvements are sustained. If families have any concerns about their child's attendance and lateness, they should speak to their class teacher or myself as soon as possible before issues escalate.

When **attendance falls below 96%**, additional strategies are used which may include:

- Illness only being authorised once I have received sufficient medical evidence – if not provided then the absence is recorded as unauthorised.
- Daily home visits by the headteacher or other member of staff when a child is absent who is a concern.
- Attendance & Punctuality Plans being implemented between families and school following a meeting with the headteacher or SENDCo/Inclusion Leader if being supported through Early Help.



Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every half-day absence from school is classified as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers. As a school, we will always work with parents, and other agencies as appropriate, to understand the reasons underlying absence.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, for example:

- Medical or dental appointments, which relate directly to the pupil and unavoidably fall during the school day - evidence may be required by the headteacher for authorisation.
- Illness of the pupil - evidence may be required by the headteacher for authorisation.
- Leave which has been authorised by the headteacher due to exceptional circumstances.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable, for example:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily including absence / illness of siblings and other family members.
- Failure to provide medical evidence when attendance is a concern.
- Truancy during the school day.
- Absences which are not explained satisfactorily.
- Children who arrive at school after the register has closed.
- Birthdays, days out and shopping.
- Looking after other children or relatives.
- Leave, including day trips, and holidays in term time which have not been agreed by the headteacher.
- Days that exceed the amount of leave agreed in exceptional circumstances by the headteacher.

In every instance, it is the headteacher who determines whether an absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised. This decision is often made based on information provided by parents, however, because the register is a legal document, the headteacher has a responsibility to ensure that it is completed accurately and in accordance with legislation. For this reason, parents may be asked to provide evidence of reasons for absence before authorisation is granted. For example, in the case of absence due to illness or medical appointments, evidence may be requested in the form of a prescription, prescribed medication, a medical appointment card or similar.

Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they miss out on valuable learning and do not spend time with their class teacher getting important news and information for the day. Pupils arriving late also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. Being 10 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.

If your child is often late you will be asked to meet with the headteacher to discuss ways to improve punctuality, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. Persistent lateness after the register has closed may result in further action – see Use of Penalty Notices.

Signing out

The school office is responsible for overseeing the procedure for releasing children where parents have requested and been granted leave during the school day. The original mark in the register must remain in the register and the signing in/out sheet should be referred to during an evacuation situation to ensure all pupils can be accounted for.

The child(ren) can only be released to a parent or authorised carer/family member. When an authorised adult is picking up a child within school time, the school office is responsible for signing pupils in and out.

The school office is responsible for inputting the appropriate absence code on the electronic register, where appropriate.

Absence procedure

- Parents are required to contact the school office on the first day of absence, advising of the reason for the absence and expected return date; if known.
- Where the absence is for several days, the parent is responsible for informing the school of the continued absence and updating them as to the reason for the absence on a daily basis.
- The reason for absence should be linked directly to the pupil (e.g. illness or medical appointment of/for the child). Reasons for absence relating to parents or siblings may not be authorised – see unauthorised absence.
- Where no explanation for absence is provided, or the reason provided is unsatisfactory, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the headteacher will be informed who will decide on what action is needed which could include a home visit.
- Schools have a responsibility to report such absence to the local authority after a period of 10 school days, or sooner if appropriate.

Emergency Contacts

If a child is absent and no contact has been made by the family, the school office will contact the family on the first day of absence, after the registers close at 9:00am. If contact cannot be made, school will try to contact the people named as emergency contacts. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, we will hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Our school will request emergency contact numbers from the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. If no contact is possible with any of the emergency contacts, the headteacher will be informed and consideration made whether to request/undertake a welfare/home visit. In the case of prolonged or repeated absence without justification being given, the headteacher will determine whether a referral to the Pupil Attendance Support Team, or other agency, should be made.

Leave of absence

By law, maintained schools cannot authorise any leave in term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year – these leaves 175 days not in school. Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their education and progress as much as any other absence. Regular attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The government expects that all parents ensure their child(ren) attend school daily and on time.

The headteacher is the person authorised by the governing body to approve leave of absence requests. Parents must complete the leave of absence form, which are available from the school office, as soon as possible and return to the school office for the attention of the headteacher. At Mossgate Primary School, **no holidays during term time will be approved with unauthorised absence(s) being recorded in the school register for every day your child is absent from school.** Please note that taking repeated holidays in successive years which negatively impact on your child's attendance could result in a penalty notice being issued. Parents should still complete the leave of absence form prior to making a holiday booking.

Leave of absence **will not** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made in advance, by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides (using the form on the school website or from the school office), **and**
- the headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **exceptional circumstances** relating to the request.

Due to the need to evidence exceptional circumstances, parents are advised to provide school with any relevant information regarding their request at the point of application if they believe the circumstances are

exceptional. Information provided after a decision has been made may not be considered. The headteacher may request a meeting with parents before any period of leave is authorised. If work commitments are stated as supporting evidence towards an exceptional reason for requesting leave, parents may be asked to provide employer details and any additional evidence which shows why leave cannot be taken during the school holidays.

Additional factors for consideration may include:

- Is his/her attendance / punctuality a cause for concern, or could become a concern as a result of taking leave?
- Will leave at this point in time be detrimental to the pupil's education?
- Is the proposed absence during the month of September or any other transition period?
- Has he/she already had leave during term time this year or in previous years?
- Does he/she have any absences which have been recorded as unauthorised?

No leave will be authorised during statutory assessments for pupils in the following year groups:

- Y6 complete national assessments, known as SATs, in May.
- Y1 pupils complete the Phonics Screening Check in June.
- Y4 pupil complete the Multiplication Check in June.

Any periods of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract legal sanctions such as a penalty notice. In certain circumstances, as outlined in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if leave is taken and the criteria governing removal from roll are met (see appendix).

Reasons why you should not take your child out of school in term time

- Evidence shows that even small amounts of absence from school can affect your child's progress and attainment.
- The education of your child could be disrupted both prior to and after any leave, causing them to fall behind and struggle to catch up.
- For every week of school a child misses, they lose 27 hours of education which can never be regained.
- If you choose to take your child on holiday in term time without permission, you may be issued with a penalty notice.
- Approximately every 6 weeks, your child gets a holiday from school, therefore you should use this time to take your child on holiday.

Persistent absence

The minimum attendance level which is expected at our school is 97%. When a pupil's attendance is at risk of falling below this level, we will consider whether it is appropriate to offer support in order to improve the situation. We will also use attendance levels from previous academic years to identify patterns and determine what steps may need to be taken to improve.

When a child's attendance falls below 90%, they are classed as a persistent absentee. Both local and central government pay particular attention to reducing the number of pupils who fall into the persistently absent category (PA). When attendance nears this level, children will have missed significant amounts of schooling; meaning that their educational progress is put at risk. The headteacher will contact families when attendance is a concern to look at how it can be improved and identify support which may be needed. Support may involve the need for parents, and children of an appropriate age, to agree to an attendance & parenting contract. Due to the seriousness of PA status, if there's no sustained improvement, such cases will be referred to a local authority, which could result in legal action being taken.

School systems and support for dealing with absence and lateness concerns

- The school office is responsible for advising the headteacher of pupils who are persistently late or absent as issues arise.
- The class teacher is also responsible for raising concerns about lateness or absence of class members to the headteacher and sharing these with parents as issues arise.
- In addition, the headteacher will use electronic systems to monitor the attendance of individual pupils at least once per half term.

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with us in resolving any attendance concerns together; this is nearly always successful. However, if concerns persist, school will use the following procedures and interventions, as required, to support parents in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality. At any stage, we may seek advice from our School Attendance Consultant.

- Telephone calls and/or letters to make parents aware of school's concern about their child's attendance.
- Invitation to meetings to discuss concerns with our attendance lead and/or head teacher.
- Parenting contracts to identify barriers to regular attendance, ways to overcome these and agree targets for improvement.
- Incentive and reward schemes for individual pupils, if appropriate.
- The Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and/or referral to other agencies and services, including School Nurses and Primary Mental Health Workers, if appropriate.
- Request support from the local authority Pupil Attendance Support Team.
- For unauthorised absences, request legal interventions by the local authority, such as penalty notices, prosecution or other attendance-related court orders.

Use of penalty notices

We take unauthorised absence seriously and, particularly in the case of repeated unauthorised absences, will undertake further liaison with the family, pupil, the School Attendance Consultant and the Pupil Attendance Support Team as appropriate. Furthermore, Mossgate Primary School may request that the local authority issue penalty notices in respect of unauthorised absence. This also includes:

- Leave of absence which is taken without a prior request being made.
- Leave taken after a prior request has been made and parents have been informed that the period of absence would be classed as unauthorised but the leave is taken regardless of this advice.
- Days taken in excess of the agreed period of leave, without good reason. (Parents also risk losing their child's school place if they do not return from leave, as agreed, and readmission cannot be guaranteed.)
- Leave taken in successive years.
- Other unauthorised absence that meets the required threshold, including sessions marked as late after the register has closed (code U).

The school office is responsible for recording leave requests in the electronic register and will retain copies of correspondence regarding requested leave of absence for 5 years. They will also be responsible for highlighting to the headteacher if absence continues after the notified period.

Pupils with medical needs, including mental health difficulties, who have difficulty attending school

At Mossgate, we recognise the barriers to attending school can be caused by mental health difficulties as much as physical illness and will work with parents and professionals to support children and families. When referring to medical needs, we include mental health within this.

The introduction of statutory guidance on 1st September 2014 places much more emphasis on the role of governing bodies in ensuring that pupils with medical conditions are able to fully access education in the same way as other pupils. A key element of this responsibility is reducing the amount of time missed by these pupils; whether their condition is short or long term. The school will work with parents and other

relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This may be as a result of specific practices or resources used within school or by sourcing more appropriate provision at another establishment. When education is to be provided at an alternative location, this will always be done via the use of a direction or notice - see Alternative Provision and Use of Directions).

School system for reintegrating pupils who have had long term absence

When a pupil has been absent from school for an extended period, the headteacher, the class teacher and other support services will liaise with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

Religious absence

The school will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, e.g. Eid, and this will be marked as 'R' in the register. (The day set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member.) Parents must request any additional leave in advance and this can only be authorised if it is felt that exceptional circumstances apply; this would be marked in the register as 'C'.

Participation in sporting events

Parents can request leave of absence for their child to take part in regional, national and international sporting events. However, as always, granting leave is at the headteacher's discretion and he will need to discuss with you the length and frequency of the absence(s) requested and how learning will continue if absence occurs, e.g. the sports club or association providing an approved education tutor.

Leave for a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school can be marked in the register as code P.

Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late in order to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the headteacher and is unlikely to be approved if it would occur regularly.

Participation in performances (eg theatre, television, modelling)

Parents of a child performer can request leave from school for their child to take part in a performance. A local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. Before a licence is granted, school will be consulted and headteachers must be satisfied that the leave will not have a negative effect on the child's education. Parents wishing to apply for a performance licence should go the Lancashire County Council [Child performance licences webpage](#).

Where the licence specifies the dates that the child is to be away from school, the headteacher should authorise those days. However, where the licence does not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise the leave request. Any absence authorised for the child to take part in a performance will be recorded as code C.

Alternative provision and use of directions

There are a range of reasons why pupils might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school. The main reasons are listed below:

- Pupils who have been excluded, either for a fixed period (for more than 5 days) or permanently.
- When a pupil is unable to access provision at their main school for medical reasons.
- When a pupil is required to attend another venue for the purpose of improving behaviour; either on a temporary basis or with a view to making a permanent move to the alternative provision (managed move).

When a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour, the governors of the main school must issue a written direction or notice informing all parents of the alternative provision which their child is required to attend. Where a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for other reasons, the issuing of a written direction is considered best practice.

Monitoring the attendance of pupils who are educated off site

For sessions when a dual registered pupil is expected to attend Moss gate Primary School, the usual attendance procedures will be followed. When this pupil is expected to attend the other establishment, our registers will display the D code (Dual Registration). As the main school, we retain responsibility for dual registered pupils. Therefore, the other establishment will be contacted regularly in order to ensure that this placement continues to be successful. When this is not the case, appropriate action will be taken. In cases where we are the subsidiary school, our normal first day absence procedures will be used and any concerns regarding attendance will be reported to the main school. In addition, we will provide other information regarding attendance to the main school on request.

When pupils are present at an approved off-site educational activity, school will decide which of the following codes is most suitable:

- Code B – Educated off site
- Code P – Supervised sporting activity
- Code V – Educational visit or trip

The headteacher is responsible for the pupil's education and wellbeing during these sessions. Therefore, before any of these codes are used, school must ensure that the following criteria are met:

- the activity is broadly educational in nature
- it is suitable for the pupil's age and ability
- it will complement the pupil's curriculum
- it is taking place during the session for which the approved off-site educational activity code is being used and
- suitable supervision and safeguarding arrangements are in place

Notifications to the Local Authority

• Admissions

All schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided (Lancashire currently does not).

• Leavers

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided (Lancashire does not currently).

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the following information as laid out in regulation. In addition to submitting a notification about removal from roll, some circumstances also require school to make referral to other local authority teams such as the Elective Home Education team or the Children Missing Education team. Schools may also contact their School Attendance Consultant for advice on removing children from roll.

• Pupils who fail to attend

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

- **Children at risk of missing education**

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

If a pupil has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, school must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting a pupil’s name from the register. In these cases, school will undertake a home visit themselves, prior to a referral being made to the local authority Children Missing Education team.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Governors (through the School Improvement Committee). A termly report is produced which details attendance by class and key groups across the school. This allows leaders to analyse patterns, identify needs (including training) and learn from past cases. Staff, parents and pupils have been consulted. The policy will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed by the Subject Leader:	Approved by Governors:	Next review date:
Autumn 2023	Autumn 2023	Autumn 2024

This policy has been written in accordance to recent government guidance:

- ‘KCSIE – Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 – Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges’ Department for Education (September 2023)
- Working Together to Improve Attendance: Guidance for Maintained Schools, Academies, Independent Schools, and Local Authorities (September 2022)
- Summary of Responsibilities where a Mental Health Issue is Affecting Attendance (February 2023)
- Support for Pupils where a Mental Health Issue is Affecting Attendance: Effective Practice Examples (February 2023)

See appendix for links to the law.

Appendix: School attendance and the law

There are many pieces of legislation and government regulations and guidance that are relevant to school attendance and to children and their parents and carers. The list below relates to this attendance policy but is not exhaustive.

Parents and carers

Duty to ensure children receive education

[Section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#) covers the duty of parents to secure the education of children in their care who are of compulsory school age and states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and*
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.*

Offence if a child does not attend regularly

Under [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#), if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, their parent is guilty of an offence.

The offence is absolute as the only defences available to the parent are those statutory defences listed within that section of the Act, ie:

- the child was absent with leave granted by the school;
- the child was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;
- absence was on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs;
- that the school is not within statutory walking distance and that the local education authority has made no suitable transport arrangements or enabled the pupil to become registered at an alternative nearer school.

Compulsory school age

[Section 8 of the Education Act 1996](#) establishes that a child becomes of compulsory school age on the start date of the term following her/his fifth birthday, or that day if her/his fifth birthday falls on the day term starts.

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which he/she reaches the age of 16 or if he/she reaches 16 after the last Friday in June but before the start of the new school year.

Legal definition of "parent" in relation to attendance

The law requires that all "parents" are held responsible for their child's attendance. This definition can include any person who has care of the child. [Section 576 of the Education Act 1996](#) states:

Meaning of "parent".

(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

- (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or*
- (b) who has care of him.*

Thus, the definition of "parent" means all natural parents, whether they are married or not, and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.

Attendance and absence registration codes

[Working together to improve school attendance](#), DfE, published May 2022, applies from September 2022 and will become statutory no sooner than September 2023.

Data protection

Schools must ensure that personal data is handled in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 2018](#). See school's Privacy Notice for information about how personal data will be used.

Duty for schools to include attendance information in reports for parents

[The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)

Duty for schools to notify the local authority when pupils join or leave school

[Regulation 12 of The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

Duty for maintained schools to publish attendance data

[What maintained schools must publish online](#), DfE guidance

Duty for schools to report attendance concerns about individual pupils to the local authority

[Regulation 12 of The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

Duty for schools to report attendance data to Government

[Section 537A of the Education Act 1996](#) and

[Complete the school census](#), DfE guidance for schools and local authorities on what data government requires

Duty for schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

[Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges](#), DfE, regularly updated

Leave in term time *

[September 2013 amendment to The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

* This regulation does not apply to academies, though many adopt this as good practice.

Legal interventions

Parents/carers commit an offence if a child who is on a school roll fails to attend regularly and those absences are recorded by the school as unauthorised.

Legal interventions are available under the following Acts, Guidance and Regulations:

- [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- [Section 36 of the Children Act 1989](#)
- [Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures 2015](#)

Pupils with health needs who cannot attend school

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions: Statutory guidance](#), DfE, 2015

Pupils with individual needs and specific barriers to attendance

When considering the individual needs of pupils and families who have specific barriers to attendance, schools should be mindful of their obligations under the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). Schools may wish to refer to the [Technical Guidance for Schools in England](#), published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, which outlines the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for schools.

Regulations regarding participation in performances

[The Children \(Performances and Activities\) \(England\) Regulations 2014](#)

Regulations regarding removal from roll

[Regulation 8 of The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

Regulations regarding the school day and number of sessions

- [The Education \(School Day and School Year\) \(England\) Regulations 1999](#)

Requirement for state-funded mainstream schools to deliver a school week of at least 32.5 hours by September 2023

- [Minimum expectation on length of the school week: information note](#)