

Mickle Trafford Village School



Attendance Policy

Please see Appendix 1 for COVID-19 Amendment

Date of policy	Autumn 2020
Date for Review	Autumn 2023
Signed Headteacher	
Signed Chair of Governors	
Date policy approved by School Governing Body:	

We care, we learn, we belong

Mickle Trafford Village School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend for the full 190 days of the academic year as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school and that high attainment depends on good attendance. Therefore we encourage full attendance to ensure

- our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them
- our children gain the appropriate skills which equip them for life
- standards are raised by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils

We do all we can to encourage the children to attend by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school.

Sometimes a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault and in these circumstances it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family circumstances.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

Mickle Trafford Village School aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents and carers and governors can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

Aims:

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm
- To demonstrate that the school values good attendance and punctuality, and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school

Objectives:

- To involve the children more in their school attendance by discussing with them why attendance is important
- To communicate with parents and carers about regular school attendance through the welcome pack, newsletters and the school website as well as making personal contact with those families for whom attendance is an issue
- To promote an effective working relationship with CWAC officer by meeting in order to monitor attendance and contacting the service should any concerns arise between such visits

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Delegate powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy
- Clare Arnold, as Attendance governor, to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the school office and to report back to the Governing Body
- Ensure that the attendance policy is carried out and updated regularly
- Ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent poor attenders, monitor termly progress

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this Policy
- Undertake the daily monitoring of school attendance via the Admin Officer by using an appropriate and effective registration system
- Monitor attendance of all children and groups including gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for Free School Meals and special educational needs
- Target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders
- Have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence
- Remind parents of their commitment to this policy
- Publicise good attendance during assemblies, newsletters and the termly report to the Governing Body
- Organise training for new school personnel on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance
- Work closely with the link governor, Admin Officer and CWAC
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy

Role of the School Office Staff

The office personnel are responsible for:

- Implementing the policy with the Headteacher
- Monitoring individual and class attendance on a daily basis
- Keeping the Headteacher informed of attendance figures and trends
- Contacting parents regarding concerns about their child's attendance
- Compiling attendance data for the Headteacher, the Governing Body and CWAC
- Ensuring registers completed and are kept up to date
- Contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 9.30am
- Continuing to contact the parents until contact is made
- Sending a letter if no contact is made after text message or phone calls
- Informing the Headteacher of trends in absence

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- Comply with and implement this policy
- Set an example of punctuality and good attendance
- Ensure that registers are taken at the appropriate times and are accurate and up to date
- Inform the school office of any concerns about attendance
- Emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance
- Discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations if issues

Role of the Nominated Governor

The Nominated Governor will:

- Work closely with the Headteacher and the Admin Officer
- Ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date
- Ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy
- Report to the Governing Body every term
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Role of Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance
- Informing the school on the first day of absence
- Informing the school of any changes to their contact details
- Collecting their children on time
- Ensuring that an absence of leave request form is completed prior to the absence

Role of Pupils

Pupils will:

- Arrive at school on time
- Know the value of good attendance
- Take part in questionnaires and surveys

DEALING WITH TRENDS IN ATTENDANCE

When there is a pattern of poor attendance then the following procedure will take place:

- Parents are invited to attend an informal meeting with the Headteacher to explain their child's repeated absence
- Support will be given if there are underlying reasons for the absence
- If not, then the situation will be monitored for improvement.
- If there is no improvement then school will seek the support of CWAC

DEALING WITH LATENESS

Pupils who are late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. They also miss important learning; key skills are taught at the beginning of the day and these include reading, handwriting and similar activities. Children who arrive late to school are often uncomfortable coming into an operational class and this has a negative impact upon their self-confidence. Our registration period is from 9.00 am – 9.10 am during which time all pupils present will be marked in attendance. **KS1 children are expected in the playgrounds for 8.50 a.m. when staff will call the children into line to move with their peers into class. KS2 children can go straight to their class from 8.45am. This gives them plenty of time to sort their belongings and be ready for the register. Any children who arrive after their name has been called will be marked as late.**

These procedures are currently different due to COVID-19 (please see individual bubble procedures).

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken. The office personnel monitor lateness and inform:

- The Headteacher of patterns of lateness
- Parents of the school's concerns and arrange a meeting so that the problem can be discussed/addressed. If following on from this there is no marked improvement in punctuality the matter will be raised with CWAC welfare Officers

ABSENCE

Absence is recorded legally as **authorised** (approved by school when a child has been absent for a legitimate reason) and **unauthorised** (not approved by school when a child is absent without good reason, even with the support of a parent).

Parents and carers should provide an explanation if their child is absent. This should be received on the first day the absence occurs, at the start of the school day and, where possible, give some indication as to when the child is expected to return.

When school has not been informed of any absence then administration staff will try and contact a family and keep a record of the steps they have taken to locate absent children – this includes pupil names, year group, classroom checks, checks with siblings, time phone call was made home, reasons for absence and if any further action is required.

Parents requesting **Leave of Absence** for any reason (other than medical) must complete the form (available from school, or on the website) in advance. All leave of absence is at the Headteacher's discretion. Leave of absence/holidays taken in term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances as defined by the DfE these include

- The parent is on leave from the Armed Forces (Services)
- Family Respite
- Family crisis (Looked After Child, adoption, bereavement, severe medical needs)
- Religious Observance
- Examinations
- Approved sporting activity

- Urgent medical appointments (routine appointments should be made outside of school hours)
- Modelling or special stage performances (as long as it can be proved that the education of the child will not suffer).

Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments – we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time in order not to disrupt the child's education.

Leave of Absence due to Family Holidays

From September 1st 2013, DfE legislation does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Therefore, holidays in term time are classed as unauthorised absence. The Local Authority is informed of these absences and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued in accordance with section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If the fixed penalty notice remains unpaid this could lead to prosecution in the Magistrate's Court. Leave of absence due to a family holiday during term time will not be authorised, however, the request must still be processed by the school. In response to any leave of absence request, a decision will be made and the parents told within **10 working days**.

Fixed Penalty Notice

A fixed penalty notice may be issued by the Local Authority:

- 10 unauthorised consecutive absent sessions due to a family holiday
- Where persistence absence is recorded as unauthorised

The current rates payable by parents are £60 where the amount is paid within 21 days and £120 where the amount is paid within 21-28 days. This charge is per parent/carer per child. If the fixed penalty notice remains unpaid this could lead to prosecution in the Magistrate's Court.

Appendix 1

Attendance during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

All parents have had recovery plans outlining systems in place and detailed explanation of staggered drop off and collection procedures

From September 2020, all pupils are required to attend school. As such, the arrangements set out in the main body of this policy (above) will be adhered to. This appendix has been developed in line with the latest government guidance to set out the additional measures that have been put in place to support pupils' attendance at school.

The school will have due regard for the DfE's '[Recording attendance during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)' guidance when recording attendance during the pandemic.

Attendance expectations from September

As of September 2020, attendance is mandatory for all pupils.

From September, the usual rules on school attendance (as set out in the main body of this policy) apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- The school's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence, in line with the procedures in the main body of this policy.
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Shielding or self-isolating pupils

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August. This means that pupils who were shielding can return to school, as can pupils who have family members who were shielding.

Pupils who are no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional should discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school. Parents should inform the school of any particular measures that need to be in place to ensure their child can return to school safely.

The school understands that there will be occasions where some pupils may not be able to attend school due to coronavirus, including for the following reasons:

- They are self-isolating and have symptoms of coronavirus or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus.
- Rates of coronavirus in the local area have risen and certain individuals are asked to temporarily shield.

Absences relating to pupils following clinical and/or public health advice will not be penalised.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, they will be offered access to remote learning.

Reluctance to return to school

Parents will be advised to contact the school if they have concerns about their child returning to school.

If a parent raises a concern, a relevant staff member will hold a discussion with the parent to discuss their concerns and provide reassurance on the measures that are in place to reduce risk in the school.

Monitoring attendance

We will monitor the school's attendance rates once the school is open to all pupils in September. Any trends in non-attendance will be identified (e.g. due to anxiety) and measures will be put in place to reengage affected pupils with the school