Moor Park Primary School

Pupil Attendance Policy

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**Introduction**

Moor Park Primary School believes that very high levels of attendance at school are important if pupils are to achieve well and be successful in their education. Pupils’ absences during term time should, therefore, be kept to an absolute minimum. 100% Pupil Attendance will be rewarded with certificates and an end of year Party at Blackpool Football Club.

The following policy statement has been produced in response to **the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** which came into force on 1 September 2013.

1. **For Sickness Absence**

If your child is to be absent from school we ask that you notify us as soon as is possible, preferably from 8am on the day of absence or as soon as you know that your child will not be in school. School can be informed by telephone (01253 353034) or by calling into the school office. School will phone/text parents/carers of pupils for whom we have not had prior notification of absence.

1. Medical or Dental Appointments

It is expected that all routine (non-emergency) medical, dental or ophthalmic checks will be scheduled either after normal school hours or during the school holidays. This also applies as far as possible to elective minor surgery. It is recognised, however that this is not always possible.

If it is not possible for a parent/student to arrange an appointment outside of the school day, the parent/student should endeavour to arrange for the appointment at a time that will cause the least disruption to the child’s education, for example at the end or beginning of the school day.

The school will require the parent to either write a letter or produce an appointment card for each absence. Parents/carers of pupils with low attendance levels may be asked to have medical/dental appointments confirmed by a medical professional.

1. **Other Non-Sickness Absence**

Parent/Carers are asked to complete the attached **‘Absence Request Form’** for all non-sickness absence. Holidays during term time will not be authorised by school unless there are ‘exceptional circumstances’. These are events which are rare, significant or unavoidable. School is closed for 13 weeks each year and parents/carers are asked to use this time for family occasions, holidays and celebrations.

Schools are legally required to keep Attendance Registers for all pupils on school roll. Each half day absence has to be classified by school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. School is committed to working with parents/carers and external agencies to improve overall school attendance.

1. **Authorised absence** are mornings or afternoons when a pupil is absent from school for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which fall unavoidably in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

The following list of ‘exceptional circumstances’ has been produced to illustrate the types of reason where school may authorise absence during term time. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list but indicative of the type of circumstances where leave will be granted to a pupil:

* Death of close relative
* Funeral of close relative
* Wedding of a close relative
* Degree Ceremonies of a close relative
* Religious Observance of a major feast

Where one of these circumstances applies, the headteacher may grant one day’s leave of absence or, when appropriate – for example in the case of the death or funeral of a close relative– more than one consecutive day. The current attendance level for each pupil will be taken into consideration before any leave is authorised.

1. **Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no ‘leave’ has been given. This type of absence can lead to **sanctions and/or legal proceedings being used by school** (See section 7 for further details). A pupil being absent for the following reasons would be considered as ‘unreasonable’ and will therefore be recorded as ‘unauthorised’ by school.

* Truancy
* Unexplained absence
* Pupils arriving late, after the registers have closed
* Shopping, Birthdays or looking after other children
* Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
* Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily

School would ask that parents/carers consider not requesting leave under the following circumstances:

* The first few weeks in September when children are settling into a new class
* Immediately before and during assessment periods
* When pupil attendance already includes unauthorised absence
* Where pupil attendance is already below 93% or will fall to that level as a result

further leave

**Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notices/Fines. This is currently 10 unauthorised absences in a term which is in line with Blackpool Council’s Policy, they do not need to be consecutive.**

**Persistent Absenteeism**

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more of school during one year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to a child’s education and we need parent/carers fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

School monitors attendance and any pupil whose attendance falls below 93% or is at risk of doing so is given priority attention and parents/carers notified. Parents may be supported by the use of fast track or the PWO to ensure attendance improves.

**4. Punctuality**

Persistent poor punctuality is unacceptable. Late arriving pupils disrupt learning for everyone. School asks that parents/carers make an appointment to see the Deputy Head Teacher, Mr Kirkpatrick if they would like support with improving punctuality. Mr Kirkpatrick will also contact parents of pupils who are persistently late to discuss how this can be improved.

The school day starts at 8.55am. Children arriving through the main office entrance will receive a late mark.

Late Gates may be carried out where staff members and sometimes a pupil welfare officer will talk to parents/carers of pupils arriving late. Parents/carers of pupils who arrive persistently late may receive a Penalty Notice- a fine of £50 (payable within 28 days ) leading to £100 if not paid within 28 days. If the £100 is not paid within 42 days, court proceedings will follow.

**5. Contact with Home**

There are times when school may need to contact parents/carers when children are in our care eg sickness, accidents. School asks that parents/carers keep school updated with telephone numbers and names of adult contacts, ‘designated adults’. On the occasions that school has been unable to contact a designated adult, the Pupil Welfare Officer, Mrs Claire Duerden, will be contacted.

**6. Children Missing Education (CME)**

Pupil Welfare Officers and schools have a clear role to play in ensuring that children who go missing from education are quickly located. Parents/ Carers who require a change of Blackpool school need to complete a transfer form and discuss this with the child’s current school before being able to register at another Blackpool School. If families are transferring to a school outside Blackpool, then we ask that parents notify us of the name of the new school. For safeguarding purposes, Holy Family will only remove a pupil from its register once a new school has confirmed that the pupil has registered with them.

**7.**  Blackpool Council’s Policy and Procedures for Issuing Penalty Notices allows for schools to fine parents who do not ensure their child(ren) attend school as required by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 regulations. Where a child(ren)’s attendance falls below an acceptable level ie persistently absent or at risk of persistent absence, Moor Park Primary School may initiate court proceedings to protect the child(ren)’s education.

The above policies can be downloaded from the school website or paper copies can be requested at the school office.