



Attendance Policy

September 2024

Governor responsibility	Full Board
Owner	Headteacher
Status & review cycle	Annually
Policy details (date & version)	September 2024 V2
Next review date	September 2025

Rationale

New updated statutory information from the Government effective from September 2024

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)
(publishing.service.gov.uk)

1. **Daily Attendance Data Sharing:** Every state school in England is now required to share their daily attendance registers with the Department for Education, local councils, and trusts. This data will be used to identify and support students with persistent absence issues¹.
2. **Attendance Hubs Expansion:** The government has expanded the attendance hubs programme to 32 hubs across the country. These hubs share best practices and support over one million pupils¹.
3. **Attendance Mentors:** Piloting attendance mentors who work directly with students to address barriers to attendance¹.
4. **National Framework for Parent Fines:** Fines for unauthorised absences are now under a national framework. A fine must be considered if a child misses five days of school without authorisation. The fine amounts have increased to £80 if paid within 21 days and £160 if paid within 28 days¹.
5. **New Absence Codes and Penalty Thresholds:** New guidance includes updated absence codes and thresholds at which penalties must be considered².
6. **National Attendance Ambassador:** Rob Tarn has been appointed as the new national attendance ambassador to champion attendance and share effective practices¹.

These changes are part of a broader effort to address the rise in absences following the pandemic and to ensure that all students have the opportunity to benefit from regular school attendance.

At Moon Hall, we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for our students and endeavour to provide an environment in which pupils feel safe, valued and welcome.

We consistently strive to achieve a target of 100% for our young people. This goal is promoted in School and rewarded during assemblies throughout the year. Improving attendance is also celebrated. Andrew Rowe, Assistant Head, is the school's Attendance Mentor.

It is well established that young people who attend school regularly find learning more satisfying, make better progress socially and academically and make more successful transitions from school into higher education, training & employment.

For your child to reach their full educational achievement and take full advantage of the educational opportunities here, it is vital that your child is at school. We know and accept that there are times when a young person cannot attend school due to illness, personal circumstances or other commitments.

When attendance drops below 95% (8 days in a year) research shows that there is a corresponding drop in academic and social progress. We need your support at this stage and request that you make every effort to keep us informed immediately of any safeguarding, medical or other pastoral issues so that we can plan the best support possible for each student whose education is being negatively impacted.

The School and parents have legal responsibilities to ensure that young people attend school, regularly, that young people's absence is accounted for promptly and this policy should be read in conjunction with the parent responsibilities laid out by the Department of Education, The Education Authority and the Education Welfare service along with the School's other published policies. The DfE has updated guidance for 2024 to help schools support attendance and can be found here: [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/124212/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

1. Promote good attendance & punctuality
2. Reward good or improving attendance
3. Reduce absence & lateness
4. Ensure that all students reach their full potential
5. Ensure parents and guardians understand the statutory and pivotal role they play in ensuring good attendance.
6. Ensure parents understand the role of the Educational Welfare Service in supporting the School in maintaining high levels of attendance for all students.

Roles & Responsibilities – Pupils, Parents & Staff

The Role of Parents Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law. We expect our parents to make every effort to ensure that their child attends school and is punctual. All parents are asked to:

- be familiar with the school times & procedures regarding absence and avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent appointments.
- communicate with the school where safeguarding, medical or pastoral issues exist which may impact on their child's attendance or punctuality.
- support the school's 100% attendance targets and support the school when sanctions or referrals are required for poor attendance.
- Familiarise themselves with their statutory responsibilities to ensure their child attends School regularly and is punctual Attendance will be recorded and analysed to ensure attendance concerns are identified at an early stage so that pastoral or academic support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

What to do if your child is absent?

- If your child is absent you must telephone the school and speak to or email the school Reception as soon as possible on their first day of absence. An appropriate reason for absence should also be given at the time. If a parent or guardian fails to notify the school, as part of our school Safeguarding procedures we will contact the Local Safeguarding team for advice and next steps. Other professionals may be involved if we are concerned for the safety and welfare of the child.

Our expectations of our students

We expect our students to attend every day in time for registration. Registration takes place each morning from 8.20am until 8.50am. Registration takes place each morning with the assigned form tutor.

The Role of Staff at Moon Hall

Our staff promote and reward good attendance and ensure that all students are clear about the procedures regarding absence and punctuality and apply the procedures fairly and consistently. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance.

Absence from School Action Plan

At Moon Hall, we have a duty of care to ensure your child's safety, regular school attendance and have clear and consistently applied attendance procedures. To ensure parents and the School can each fulfil their statutory requirements the following process will be followed. Half termly a spreadsheet will be updated and those identified with lower than 95% attendance will be identified. SLT will review the spreadsheet and then decide on appropriate action. If there is a justifiable reason for a period of absence this will be taken into account and actions judged on a case-by-case basis because of this. The spreadsheet will be RAG's

- Above 95%, no concern and green
- Between 90 to 95%, monitoring and amber
- Lower than 90%, concern and red

Stage 1- Attendance letter 1

In the first half term;

If a pattern of absence is detected or if the attendance rate falls below 95%, except where the absence is clearly the result of illness, for which there is independent evidence, the school will contact home and send an attendance concern letter/email making parents aware but also offering support.

Stage 2- Attendance letter 2

In the second half term;

f a pattern of absence continues, or the attendance rate falls below 90%, except where the absence is clearly the result of illness, for which there is independent evidence, a second letter will be sent to parents informing them of the reduction in attendance since the previous communication. If necessary, there may also be a phone call home or perhaps a face-to-face meeting to discuss support, set targets for improvement. This intervention will be closely monitored and led by the Pastoral team at school. SLT will be kept informed and consider possible actions.

LEA and Caseworker support

In the second half term;

If there is no improvement in attendance and concerns are still present, there is persistent absence and lost learning a concern will be raised. Except where the absence is clearly the result of illness, for which there is independent evidence, a referral will be made to the LEA. As many of our pupils are also in receipt of an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) at this point the caseworker will also be contacted. Once again dialogue will be encouraged with the family to offer support and guidance. The aim will always be focussed on support and increasing attendance. Advice may be sought from the Education Welfare Service and if there are safeguarding concerns a referral made for support to Surrey C-SPA.

[The Inclusion Service \(formerly the Education Welfare Service\) | Surrey Local Offer](#)

In addition to a referral to The Education Welfare Service the School will proceed as follows if the situation does not improve:

Stage 3 – Attendance Panel SLT meeting

In the third half term;

Parents will be written to and invited to attend a review meeting with members of the School's Leadership Team at which next steps will be planned. This is a very serious matter at this stage and the parent and young person involved will be required to agree an improvement contract, notwithstanding any independent evidence of reasons to justify the significant absence. Unless there are specific reasons identified and documented for the unacceptable levels of attendance the parent and student will be required to complete an Action Plan and Contract with targets for improvement in attendance and punctuality. ***If there is no reason or justification for the poor attendance the place at Moon Hall may be withdrawn. At this point parents will be notified of this potential action if they have not been already at previous stages in communication with the school.***

Stage 3 – The Board of Governors and the LEA

In the third half term in conjunction with stage 3

The Board of Governors and the LEA will be informed that the place at the school is likely to be withdrawn. The removal of a place will only be considered when all pastoral support strategies have been unsuccessful. Additionally, if the improvement contract has not been adhered to which will have been agreed at stage 3.

At all stages the School will make every reasonable attempt to resolve attendance issues expediently while reminding parents of their statutory responsibilities.

Guidance:

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)
\(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Related Policies:

MHR Behaviour Policy

MHR Admissions Policy