

Morley Victoria Primary School

Autumn Governor report for Attendance

Report completed by Lisa Porritt Governor responsible for Attendance

I met with Judy Grayston on Thursday 3rd November 2016 to discuss the ways in which Attendance is monitored within the school from Nursery through to Year 6 and ask questions to ensure that statutory duties are followed as per policy set by the school.

Q1. Does the school have an attendance policy which is regularly updated in consultation with staff, parents and pupils? Is the policy on the website?

A1. The school has an Attendance policy which is reviewed on a yearly basis and discussed in the Pupil Support Committee where it is ratified. The policy is on the school website, staff, pupils and parents are aware of this and are able to view it if required.

Q2. Does the school keep a register of admissions and a register of attendance.

A2. Yes the school keeps a register of admissions and a register of attendance. I asked Judy in which format this was kept. Judy explained that the register is taken electronically at the start of the school day and by 9.15am she will have checked it and noted any unexplained absences. A text is then sent out to any parent who hasn't rung the school to inform them of their child's absence so that this usually prompts the parent to ring school and notify them why their child is not in school.

Judy has a print out every day of the children who are in school and who are absent, she says this is really helpful as it is colour coded and can flag up children who maybe absent either on a regular basis or who have certain days off every week and could there be a reason for these regular patterns of absence? She also looks at the overall figures every half term to see if there are any trends in absences, for example at certain times of the year are absences more likely to be higher due to issues like "The winter vomiting bug"?

She will have a conversation with parents of children who are persistently having attendance figures below 90% as the school has a reputation of having good relationships with parents, so that parents feel they can come and speak to staff should they be experiencing any family problems. Also it might be that that child is just a very sickly child who is off school ill for genuine reasons.

Q3. Does the school have a clear policy on what is and is not deemed to be exceptional leave. Has this been drawn up in partnership with other schools in the cluster, including high schools to promote fairness and consistency?

A3. Morley Victoria has a very good relationship with the children and parents of the school particularly regarding attendance. The staff have worked hard to build a culture of reasoning and honesty over parents taking children out of school for holidays in term time. Holiday forms are filled out by parents but whilst they are not authorised by the Head Teacher Mr. Elstub the

parents are not fined either. Judy said parents are fully aware that there are no “exceptional circumstances” when the children can be taken out of school for family holidays as this would put the school in a very difficult position having to decide what was and was not deemed as exceptional. Therefore it was decided in discussions which took place involving the rest of the schools within the cluster that whilst not authorising holidays in term time etc. Fines would not be enforced either. Due to the above points the school does not have an exceptional leave policy as it is deemed unnecessary. Should a child require exceptional leave for any reason due to a bereavement ? Family breakup ? Then this would be up to the discretion of the Headteacher.

Q4. How well is the attendance policy communicated to staff, parents and pupils.

A4. The policy is on the school website to view by parents and children. Attendance is discussed in staff meetings. It is also discussed in school assemblies .

Q5.What is your schools agreed attendance target /ambition.

A5.The schools realistic target is 95-96% and is currently running in the Autumn term at 96.4% prior to the winter months and currently in line with the other schools within the cluster. The schools ambition is 97% and from the conversations I have had with Judy the school is vigorously trying to pursue this figure.

The guidance from The Governor Support Unit is that the Attendance governor should go into school each term and ask set questions to give assurance to the governing body that responsibilities are being met, then produce an Annual report. As this would be an exceptionally long report due to the questions set out for each term I have agreed to met with Judy each term and complete a report at the end of each term which Judy is happy with.