

# Moss Bury Primary School and Nursery

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Acting Headteacher: Michael Dean

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Dear Parents,

## Attendance

Your children's safety, welfare and education is the most important aspect of school life and it is our job to ensure we deliver this message and that we all adhere to the protocols; so as you read further on in this letter you will understand the importance of why we have these procedures in place.

### Safeguarding

I cannot stress enough how important it is for you to inform us of your child's absence, so we know your child is safe.

As a school, we practise a 'first day response' procedure, whereby, if you have not contacted the school office to inform us that your child is absent, we will call you.

The school has a legal obligation to look after your children whilst they are in our care so we need to know that the children are safe. Our concerns arise if you haven't contacted us or left a message about your child's absence, and we are unable to contact you. To give you an example: *Your child has left for school in the morning as usual but has not arrived at school. The school tries to call you but we either do not have an up to date telephone number or there is no answer. Where is your child? Is your child safe?*

Hopefully, you can see by this example, the importance of the school office having your most up to date contact numbers and being able to contact you at all times.

### Reporting your child's absence

When reporting your child's absence **please contact the school office**. If you are reporting your child's absence by telephone and leaving a message, press option 1 leaving your child's name, class and reason for absence; saying they are 'unwell' is insufficient and you may be contacted for further information.

Of course children fall ill on occasions but we would encourage you to send your child into school and if they deteriorate throughout the day we will contact you. However, if your child has been physically sick or has an upset stomach, we ask that you keep your child off school for **48 hours** after the last bout of either.

### Lateness

Routines are a very important part of the children's school day and children coming in late can cause disruption to a settled class, embarrassment for the child who is late and of course they may miss a vital part of their education, which can then have a knock-on effect to their learning.

Once the doors have been closed to the classes or if the children have all been brought into school from the playground, and the main doors have been closed, any children arriving after this will be classed as late and must be signed in at the school office by an adult.

We have a duty of care to all our children and it is imperative that all children are registered if they are in school in case of emergencies. We have had times where children have arrived in school late and missed registration but not signed in at the school office. As you can imagine, this causes unnecessary stress and anxiety to parents when the office then ring home to find out where their child is.

For those children who will be late in due to appointments, we ask that parents contact the school office beforehand or ring the school and leave a message on the school's answer phone. You may also be asked for medical evidence, which you will need to hand into the office.

**If your child arrives at school after 9:15am and has not had an appointment, this will be classed as a full-unauthorised session and could result in a contribution towards a penalty notice.**

**School Times:**

8:45am to 11:45am – Nursery

8:45am to 3:10 – Reception and Year 1

8:50am to 3:15pm - Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

**Holidays taken during term time**

Holidays taken during term time have not been authorised since 2012. Holidays taken during term time will affect your child's attendance record, as they will be marked as unauthorised. Again, these absences will impact on children's learning.

**Unauthorised Absence (Truancy)**

The Governors of Moss Bury Primary School and Nursery adopted Hertfordshire County Council's recommended Attendance Policy, which details information about Penalty Notices below.

Hertfordshire County Council's Attendance Improvement Officers actively monitor children's attendance at our school. It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their child is in school. Unauthorised absence could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued.

If your child has 15 or more sessions (7.5 days) unauthorised absence, both parents could be fined £60 each, per child, (if paid within 21 days), which rises to £120 each, per child if the 21 day deadline is not met; this must be paid to the Local Authority within 28 days. If the fine is not paid within 28 days, parents could be prosecuted for their child's poor attendance.

At Moss Bury we send out letters of concern for those children whose absence is less than 92.5%. We may also ask that parents send in medical evidence for us to photocopy; this can be a prescription, medical appointment letter/card or even the medication. If these children's attendance do not improve, parents will be invited in for a meeting to help resolve any issues.

We regard regular attendance a priority, and communication between parents and the school is very important; therefore, a letter should follow all absences on your child's return to school.

Thank you for your support in these matters.

Mike Dean  
Acting Headteacher

