



Attendance Policy (Students)

1. Introduction

Marling School is committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all students. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial.

Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to educational and social disadvantage.

Each student should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is completely unavoidable.

As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

2. Objectives

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that parents/carers are aware of attendance/punctuality expectations and requirements for their child and to make the parent/carer aware of procedures for dealing with attendance concerns.
- To work with Educational Performance and Inclusion (EP + I) team at The Local Authority and other appropriate agencies to support good attendance and punctuality.
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies.
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the school.
- To improve attainment and achievement of pupils through improved levels of attendance and punctuality.

3. Statutory Duty of Parents and School

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. At Marling School an electronic registration system is in place. Student attendance is recorded for every lesson.

What happens if your child does not attend school regularly (and their absence is not authorised)?

It is a criminal offence for a parent to fail to ensure their child attends school regularly. In certain circumstances the Local Authority may prosecute you in the Magistrates Court where you could face up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2,500. Alternatively the Local Authority could issue a Penalty Notice which carries a fine of up to £120 per parent/carer, per child. You will be given every opportunity to improve your child's attendance and you will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken. The school will be guided by the Local Authority procedures.

Principles

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. This extends to ensuring that students arrive at school on time, properly attired, with correct equipment and in a condition to learn. The School will make every effort to promote good attendance, giving advice and support where needed.

4. Statutory Attendance Responsibilities (see appendix A, section 2)

There is a legal responsibility to have a morning and an afternoon registration.

The School will:

- Record and monitor attendance and absence. It is a legal responsibility to do this twice a day.
- Use electronic registration system to record and monitor attendance of all lessons during the school day to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils.
- Record and monitor the punctuality of all students and, where necessary, inform parents of persistent lateness and apply appropriate consequences. Registers are closed at 9.10am, and 2.35pm: Pupils arriving

after registers are closed will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (L code if pupil arrives during registration, U if after).

- Only authorise pupil absence in appropriate circumstances.
- Maintain strong home-school liaison to inform and support parents with their child's attendance. The school makes phone calls to follow up daily absences.
- Help to investigate, identify and resolve any issues with children and their families which prevent full attendance at Marling School and we will do everything possible to help return students to full attendance.

Parents should:

- Ensure their children arrive on time to school with the correct equipment and full uniform.
- Be aware that any person who has the care of a child or who has parental responsibility is responsible for ensuring good attendance. Ensure that they are fully aware of school procedures – see appendix A section 2.

5. Reporting Absences

- It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the school of the reason for a student's absence by 9.00 a.m. on each day of absence. For known medical absences of more than one day a first day phone call should be made followed by regular contact with school to update information.
- The School will operate a phone home system and the parents/carers of every absent student will be contacted by the Attendance Officer.

Methods of Reporting Absences

In any case of absence, parents/carers should contact the School by one of the following methods:

- By phone using the absence reporting extension from the school number.
- Personal contact with Attendance Officer at the school.
- Notification by e-mail.

6. Authorised Absence

Reasons for Absence

Please be aware that authorisation of absence is at the school's discretion. The following list gives examples of situations where absences have been authorised in the past:

- Genuine illness.
- Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible).
- Days of religious observance.
- Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement or marriage of immediate family member.
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces.
- External examinations.
- When Traveller children go travelling in connection with their parents' trade or businesses.

Please Note:

The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(as amended\)](#) currently allow Headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days' leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations, applicable from September 2013, remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Request for absence during Term Time:

All requests for absence will be considered on a case by case basis, criteria for consideration may include:

- The amount of time requested.
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record.

- Circumstances of the request.
- Purpose of the leave.

An absence request form must be completed at least two weeks in advance for all absences apart from medical or dental; these must be taken outside school hours wherever possible. Advance notice of any appointments is to be provided and students are to sign out of school from the main school office if they leave at any time during the school day. Absence request forms are available from the school website or main school office.

If a parent/carer is refused a holiday request and the student is still taken out of school by the parent/carer, the school may consider asking the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice.

7. Truancy

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends all lessons as required. Parents/carers will be informed by the Attendance Officer if their child has been identified as truanting from the school. Persistent cases will be referred to the EP & I TEAM.

Truancy from Lessons

- Students out of lessons without authorisation will be considered as truanting.
- It is the legal responsibility of parents to ensure that their children attend full time education and therefore attend all lessons.
- A phone call will be made to inform parents/carers in cases of confirmed truancy.
- A detention will be set for all instances of truancy to make up the work missed.
- In cases of persistent truancy the school's behaviour policy will be used to determine the sanctions.

8. When attendance causes concern (see Appendix A, Section 6)

- Heads of Year will set targets to encourage good attendance and to address any concerns. Where a student is on a Behaviour Support plan, this may include attendance based targets.
- Contact will be made with parents to advise them of poor attendance.
- Heads of Year will liaise with Attendance Officer to formulate the school's approach.

9. Punctuality

• Lateness to School in the Morning

AM registration is at 8.40.

- *Students arriving after 8.40 must sign in at reception and will be marked as late (Code L) (by attendance administrator).
- Students arriving after 9.10 a.m. will be marked as late after registration closed (Code U) unless an acceptable reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer. Should persistent late arrival at school reach 10 occasions within a 10-week period, the school may consider asking the LA to issue a Penalty Notice.

Follow up procedures for lateness to School in the Morning:

- Attendance Officer will produce a weekly report to alert HOY to any student who has been late 3 times during a term.
- Office staff will issue a Stage 3 sanction to students who have 3 or more lates without an acceptable reason.
- HoYs will monitor punctuality thereafter and further lateness without an acceptable reason will lead to greater sanctions and communication with parent/carers.

Follow up procedures for lateness to lessons:

- Subject Teacher.
- Mark with Code L and record number of minutes late. (except for period 1 see * above).
- Persistent lateness to lessons will result in subject teacher implementing departmental sanctions and informing HOY and tutor.

Links to other policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix A – Staff Guidance and Procedures

1. Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Role of Governing Body:** Reviews and approves policy, reviews attendance information via Headteacher's report to Full Governing Body.
- **Role of Headteacher:** Responsible for oversight and implementation of policy.
- **Role of Head of Key Stage:** Monitors adherence to procedures. Where procedures are not being followed, HOKS liaises HoY and sets targets for improvement, from data supplied by Attendance Officer, HOK monitors attendance figures from year group and liaises with HoY/Attendance Officer/E&I TEAM as appropriate.
- **Heads of Year:** Monitoring and analysis of year group attendance data with Attendance Officer, quality assurance of effectiveness of tutors in delivering the policy and follow up procedures for students with high levels of truancy, unauthorised absence and lateness.
- **Attendance Officer:** Administration of attendance and punctuality data within the framework of the policy, first day contacts, production of statutory attendance data for LA, production of attendance data for each year group as requested, production of data for SLT / Governors for meetings as necessary.
- **Tutor:** Keeping an accurate register and follow up of absences and lateness within the systems and procedures in this policy.
- **Subject Teacher:** Will take a class register for every lesson and take appropriate action with students who are persistently late to lessons.
- **All staff:** If a child is withdrawn or misses registration for another school activity it is the responsibility of the member of staff who is with the child to notify the attendance officer of the child's whereabouts.

2. Attendance Procedures:

- There should be a clear start to both registration periods when all registers are taken; students will be encouraged to value each registration session and staff will make students feel valued.
- Teachers will take a class register for every lesson they teach to safeguard all children and alert the school immediately to any missing child.
- Tutors and Heads of Year will reinforce the importance of good attendance and punctuality through assemblies and tutor time.
- The Attendance Officer has responsibility for following up any concerns for attendance, informing parents where there are concerns regarding attendance, and for reporting persistent problems to the Head of Year.
- The Heads of Year will actively promote 100% attendance and will praise students with improving attendance.
- Regular information will be sent to parents through the reporting cycle informing them of attendance levels.
- Parents should inform the school by telephone by 9.00 a.m. on the first day their child is absent.
- Parents will be contacted by telephone on the first day of absence whenever any student is absent without reason, or persistently late.
- Parents will be encouraged to assist in promoting their child's attendance, and discouraged from taking family holidays within term time.
- The Attendance Officer will regularly review the progress of any student causing concern and will consult with the HOY and the EE&I Team to develop and maintain good practice for attendance.

3. Distribution of Data:

The Attendance Officer will produce the following attendance and punctuality data:

For HoY & Year Teams:

- a) Weekly reports to HOY and HOKS for 3 or more lates from the start of term.
- b) Termly reports for students with % attendance concerns.

4. User Codes and Reconciliation of Registers:

- If a student is absent, staff will enter a no reason for absence code (N) unless a different code is already entered. Staff should not overwrite a pre-entered absence codes unless the student is present.
- Unacceptably late will incur behaviour points.
- 3 behaviour points for unacceptable lates could result in SLT detention.
- If a student is late during registration, the late code (L) will be entered with the reason and the number of minutes late.

- Only the national attendance codes issued will be used.

5. Absence from school:

Authorisation of absences:

- Appropriate code to be entered in to the electronic registration system.
- Absence notes/records to be filed. These will be archived for 3 years.

Follow up procedures for unknown absence from school:

- Daily phone calls to be made by Attendance Officer in first instance to try to clear all absences.
- If no reason for absence has been given, the Attendance Officer will send home an absence letter for completion by the parent/carer.
- Attendance Officer provides HoY with names of students with less than 90% attendance (counted from the start of the academic year). HoY to decide appropriate intervention.
- Students with less than 90% attendance are discussed by HoY and Headteacher.
- Concern letters sent home via HoY/Attendance Officer. HoY may invite parents to attend a meeting to discuss attendance issues.

6. Agreed attendance concern intervention levels:

All figures are calculated from the beginning of the academic year.

Attendance data will be produced for HoYs on a termly basis and;

- **Under 90%:** Concern letter may be sent by Attendance Officer in agreement with HoY.
- **Between 90% and 80%:** Attendance concerns discussed at fortnightly meeting with HoKS, HoY and Attendance Officer. A second letter may be sent to invite parents/carers into school for a meeting to discuss the attendance concerns and to put strategies in place to improve attendance. A decision will be made as to whether future absence will be authorised without external medical evidence. Parents will be informed in writing that the decision has been made and that with any continued unauthorised absence they are at risk of FTP or legal proceedings.
- **For unauthorised absence,** the school will follow the latest “Managing School Absence” guidelines issued by Gloucestershire County Council, to include Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) liaison with Education Entitlement & Inclusion Team (EE&I) which may lead to a fixed term penalty (FTP) or legal proceedings.