MARLING
SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Owner:	Vice Principal (Pastoral)
Approved by:	School Development Board
Last review:	September 2024
Approved:	March 2025
Next review due:	March 2027

COTSWOLD BEACON
ACADEMY TRUST

Marling School and Sixth Form, Cainscross Road, Stroud, Glos, GL5 4HE
Tel: 01453 762251 email: admin@marling.school
Part of Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust, registered in England and Wales no. 769339
Registered office: Cainscross Road, Stroud, GL5 4HE, email: registeredoffice@cbat.com

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 barriers that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed accordingly.

The school recognises the need to establish strong child centred home-school links in which both the school and parents have a pivotal role to play in establishing vital communication links that can be utilised whenever there is a concern about attendance.

2. Objectives

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- To recognise and celebrate students excellent attendance and improvements in attendance.
- 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 the 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.
- To apply appropriate strategies to support students to overcome barriers to attending school.
- To ensure a consistent child-centred approach to attendance and punctuality from all staff 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.

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

This policy also draws on guidance from the following legislation:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and future amendments)
- The Education (Penalty notices) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education (Information about individual pupils) (England) Regulations 2024

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Links with other Marling School policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy

4. Statutory Attendance Responsibilities

Marling meets the legal responsibility to have a morning and an afternoon registration.

The School will:

- Record absence and monitor attendance. It is a legal responsibility to do this twice a day.
- Use an 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 endeavour to inform parents of persistent lateness. This includes whether the school has administered consequences for persistent lateness.
- Close registersat 9.10am and 12.30pm: 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 student absence in appropriate circumstances.
- Maintain strong home-school liaison by following up daily absences via phoning and emailing parents/carers, to inform and support them with managing their child's attendance.
- 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.
- Call the school absence line (01453 762251- option 1) to report their child's absence before 9.10am on the first, and each subsequent, day of absence. They should give a clear reason for their child's absence and advise of an expected date of return.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, parents/carers should provide evidence of the appointment in order for the absence to be authorised.
- Proactively engage with support offered that may support their child to overcome barriers to attendance.

Pupils should:

- Attend school every day on time.
- Attend every timetabled lesson on time.

The School Development Board will:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure that school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and support school leaders to focus resources effectively.
- Hold school leaders to account for implementing this policy.

The Senior Attendance Champion is Katie Hughes (Vice Principal). She will:

- Champion and work to improve attendance across the school.
- Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Regularly monitor Marling School systems for attendance ensuring that they are effective and a good use of resources.
- Support the delivery of targeted interventions that aim to support students and their families.

The Attendance Lead is Kyle Brand. He will:

- Monitor and analyse attendance data.
- Lead a team to ensure accurate attendance recording.
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Provide regular attendance data to Heads of Learning Communities and Senior Leaders.
- Work with school staff, students and their families to tackle persistent absence.

- Advise the Principal and Senior Attendance Champion when a student has hit the threshold for a fixed penalty notice.
- Follow local authority guidance for issuing Penalty Notices when relevant.

Tutors will:

- Keep an accurate register for their tutor group.
- Follow up on absences and lateness within the systems and procedures in this policy.

Subject Teachers will:

- Take a class register for every lesson and take appropriate action with students who are persistently late to lessons.

5. 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)** allows 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.

6. 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 student's general absence/attendance record.
- Circumstances and purpose of the request.

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 an absence 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. The decision to issue a penalty notice is ultimately made by the Local Authority.

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 Inclusion team at Gloucestershire County Council.

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. Where the student is in Sixth Form calls may be placed to them directly to ascertain their whereabouts and safety.
- A detention will be set for all instances of truancy to make up the work missed in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- In cases of persistent truancy the school's behaviour policy will be used to determine the sanctions.

8. When attendance causes concern

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

9. Punctuality

Lateness to School in the Morning

- Morning registration is at 8.40am.
- Students arriving after 8.40am must sign in at the late gate and will be marked as late (Code L)..
- Students arriving after 9am must sign in at reception.
- 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 Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice.

Follow up procedures for lateness to lessons:

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

10. 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 overtype a pre-entered absence codes unless the student is present.
- 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.

11. Absence from School (see Appendix 1)

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 the Attendance team in the first instance to try to clear all absences.
- If no reason for absence has been given, the Attendance team will send home an absence email to the parent/carer.
- The Attendance Officer provides Head of Learning Community (HoLC) with names of students with less than 96% attendance (counted from the start of the academic year). HoLC to decide appropriate intervention.

- Students with less than 96% attendance are discussed by HOLC andVice Principal.
- Concern letters sent home via HoLC/Attendance Officer. HoLC and Attendance Officer may invite parents to attend a meeting to discuss attendance issues.
- HOLC and Attendance Officer may devise a Pastoral Support Plan during such meetings to support students and parents to improve attendance.

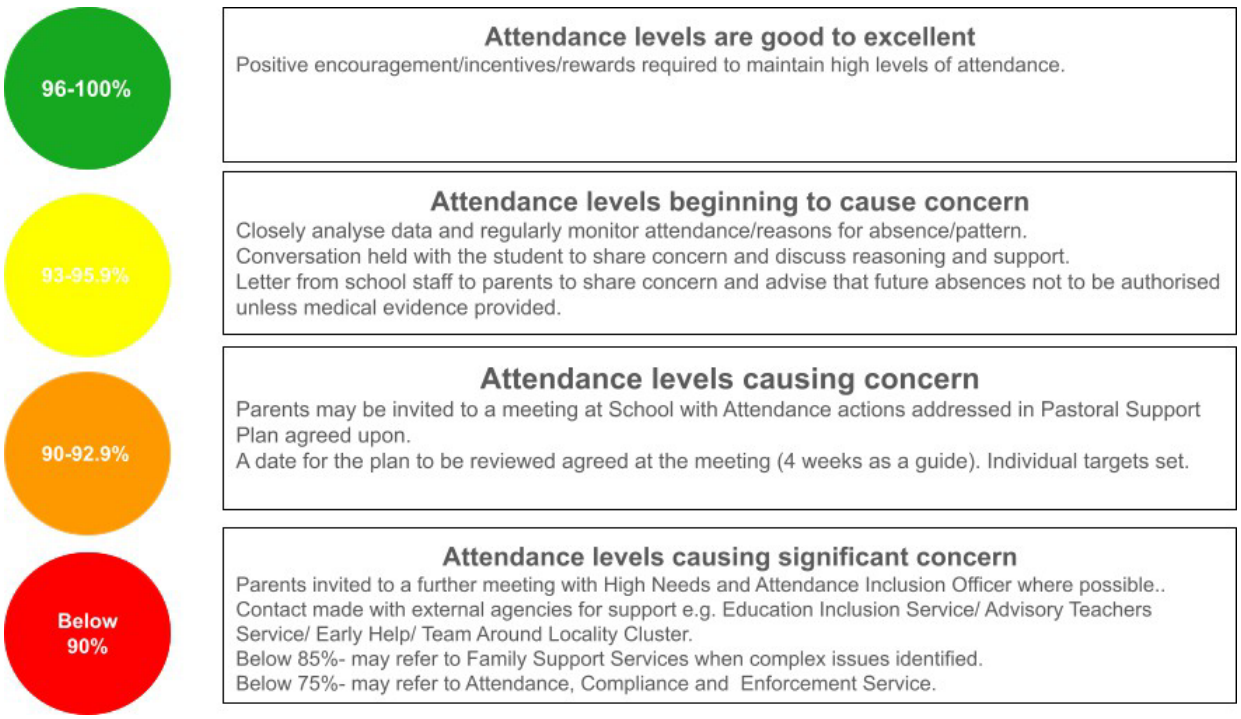
12. Agreed attendance monitoring and intervention levels:

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

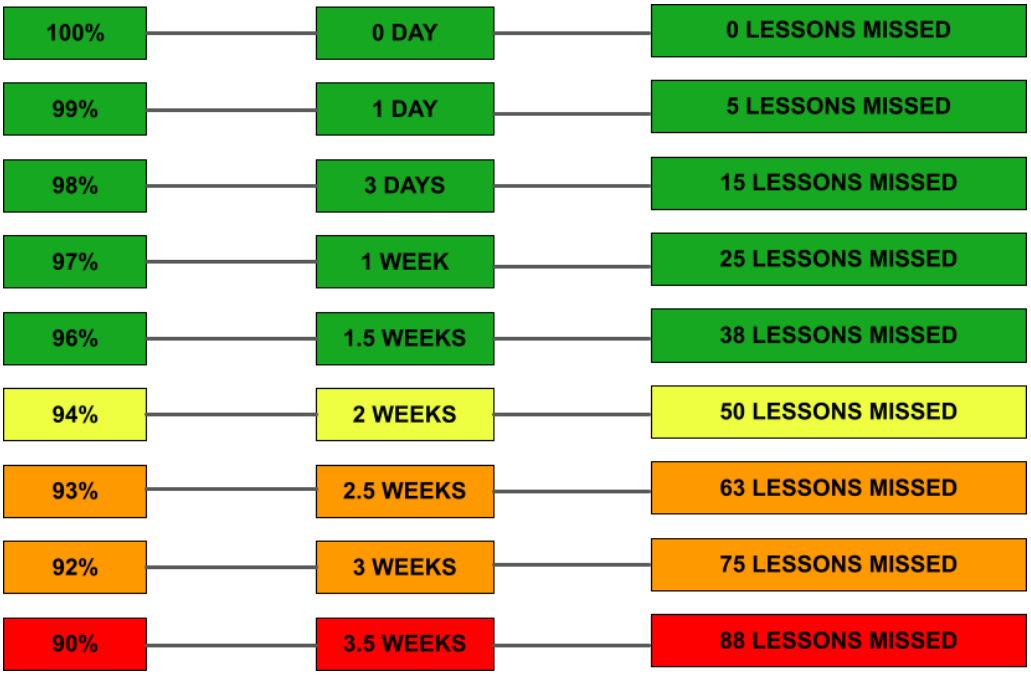
Attendance data will be produced for a fortnightly meeting between Senior leaders, Pastoral leaders and the Attendance Officer where concerns are discussed:

- **Under 96%:** Closely analyse data and regularly monitor attendance/reasons for absence/pattern.
- Conversation held with the student to share concern and discuss reasoning and support.
- Letter from school staff to parents to share concern and advise that future absences not to be authorised unless medical evidence provided.
- **Under 93%:** Parents may be invited to a meeting at School with Attendance actions addressed in an agreed upon Marling Support Plan (to be led by either the Head of Learning Community and/or Attendance Lead. A date for the plan to be reviewed and agreed upon at the meeting (4 weeks as a guide). Individual targets set.
- **Under 90%:** Parents invited to a further meeting with the High Needs Coordinator and Attendance Officer where possible. Contact may be made with external agencies for support e.g. Education Inclusion Service/ Advisory Teachers Service/ Early Help/ Team Around Locality Cluster.
- **Below 85%**: may refer to Family Support Services when complex issues are identified.
- Below **75%**: may refer to Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement Service.
- **For unauthorised absence**, the school will follow the latest guidelines issued by Gloucestershire County Council, to include Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) liaison with Inclusion Team which may lead to a fixed term penalty notice or legal proceedings. More information about FPNs can be found here: Information on Notices to Improve and Penalty Notices (gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Monitoring and Intervention Support Procedures Summary



Non- Attendance and Lesson Impact



Appendix 1 – Useful links

Gloucestershire County Council – Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for school absence 2024
This can be found here: gcc-pn-code-of-conduct.pdf

Gloucestershire County Council – Parent information leaflets
Notices to Improve and Penalty Notices
School Attendance
Prosecution for Non-Attendance at School
Supporting Children and Young People experiencing barriers in school attendance

NHS information – Is my child too ill for school?
Is my child too ill for school? - NHS

Sixth Form Student Session Attendance:

All Sixth Form students are required to arrive punctually by **8:40 a.m.** and attend their **Tutor Period**. Attendance during this time will contribute to their **morning (AM) session attendance record**.

For the **afternoon (PM) session attendance**, students with a timetabled **Period 4 or Period 5 lesson** will have their attendance recorded automatically through that lesson.

Students who do **not** have a scheduled lesson during **Period 4 or Period 5** must register their PM session attendance by scanning the **designated QR code titled PM Register** located in the Downfield area and Attendance Office between **12:20 p.m. and 12:50 p.m.**
Failure to complete this registration will result in the session being marked as an **unauthorised absence**, unless a valid reason is provided.