



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

This is the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy which outlines what parents can expect from the school and what the school can expect from every parent/carer and pupil. The policy will be reviewed to accommodate any changes which may occur. Please read the policy and ensure that your child is familiar with it. Please keep it in a safe place for reference.

Attendance and Academic Performance

At Marvels Lane Primary School, the Head Teacher and staff recognise that there is a direct link between regular attendance and good academic performance. It is our aim that all pupils will reach their full potential both academically, creatively, personally and socially. At our school we aim to achieve very good or better attendance for all our pupils.

(Good = 96%, Very Good = 97.5%, Excellent = 99%, Perfect = 100%)

Aims and Objectives

- ▣ To raise and maintain attendance levels to 96%+
- ▣ To reduce the levels of unauthorised absences
- ▣ To improve levels of punctuality on a daily basis

1) PUNCTUALITY

Lateness

Arrival times at the school are as follows:

Nursery

Gate is opened at 8.55am for the morning session.

Gate is opened at 12.40pm for the afternoon session.

Primary School

Gates open 8.30am. Whistle is blown at 8.55am. School starts promptly at 9.00am.

Marvels Lane Primary School actively discourages lateness. A pupil who arrives late not only disrupts their continuity of learning, but also that of others in their class. All teachers should operate the same attendance rules when taking the registers. Registers should be marked as soon as the children have gathered in their classroom. Children not present will be marked absent.

If your child arrives after 9.00am, they are considered to be late and will need to register with the office. Your child will be marked with an 'L' in the register and note made of the time arrived. If your child arrives after 9.30am (after the register is closed), they are considered to be absent from the morning session and will be marked with a 'U'.

Any persistently late pupils will be discussed with the Attendance and Welfare Officer (AWO) with a view to monitoring. The School Attendance Officer (SAO) will write to parents/carers if their child is late three times within a two week period.

Collecting your child

School finishes at 3.15pm. Parents should collect their children promptly from school as teachers have further commitments after school.

If a child is not collected at 3.15pm, they will remain in class until 3.30pm when they will be taken to the late room. At 3.30pm any child not collected from the late room will be taken to Little Acorns after school club and will be charged a late fee to cover your child's supervision costs (currently £5 per 30 minutes).

Children who are persistently collected late after 3:15pm will be referred to the Headteacher or possibly Social Care.

2) ABSENCE

Authorised Absence

Absences will be authorised by the school if we receive an acceptable explanation for the absence from parents/carers. Authorised absences are mornings and/or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as:

- ▣ Illness – The Head Teacher can authorise absence due to ill health, but is not obliged to do so and will not if there is any doubt
- ▣ The death/funeral of a close family member
- ▣ Medical or Dental appointments where an appointment card or letter has been provided.
- ▣ Religious Observance

Unauthorised Absence

All absences without explanation or insufficient explanation/proof will be marked as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences include:

- ▣ Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. birthdays, shopping, haircuts
- ▣ Unexplained absences
- ▣ Children who arrive at school after 9.30am (too late to get a registration mark)
- ▣ Parents who do not return children back to school after a medical appointment where circumstances show that they can come back.
- ▣ Children attending medical/dental appointments where an appointment letter/card has not been provided
- ▣ Holidays which have not been authorised by the Head Teacher (see below)

Any absence not authorised by the school and not an approved educational activity is deemed illegal and an unacceptable absence (n.b. Yr 6 visits to their prospective secondary school are not deemed as absences).

Schools do not have to accept parental reasons for absence and will make a reasoned judgement regarding each absence considered on both individual merits and any pattern of attendance behaviour.

Parents/carers whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school as soon as possible and work together with staff to resolve any problems that may affect attendance.

Reporting an Absence

In order to minimise the disruption to your child's education, whenever possible all medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours. If your child has an appointment, please inform the school office in advance and provide evidence of your appointment.

In the event that your child becomes ill and cannot attend school, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to inform the school on the first day of absence (by 10.00am), giving a reason. There is an answerphone service to enable parents/carers to report the absence before the office is open.

A telephone call or letter does not authorise an absence – only the Head teacher can authorise an absence.

First day phone call by the school

If the school does not hear from the parent/carer by 10.00am during the first day of absence, you will receive a telephone call asking for a reason for the absence and the expected date of return. Any absences for which the school does not receive a reason will be followed up. From the second day of absence, the Pupil Parent Support Worker may conduct a home visit if there has been no contact from parents.

Persistent Absence

When a pupil's attendance falls below 92%, the school will alert the parent/carer and, if there is no improvement, offer a range of support, including working with the school's Pupil Parent Support Worker. If a pupil's attendance falls below 85% without any good reason, a referral will be made to the school's AWO. Additionally, where a pupil has had three or more broken weeks over a six week period, the AWO will monitor the pupil's future attendance to identify any concerns that may need to be addressed.

The Attendance and Welfare Officer can also offer a range of support to families in the first instance, but may initiate legal action against the parent/carer if they fail to ensure their child/children go to school regularly and where there is no legitimate reason for the absence. This action may take one of two forms:

- ▣ The issuing of a Penalty Notice and Fine
- ▣ Prosecution in the local Magistrates Court

Request for Term-Time holiday

This is strongly discouraged as, in many cases, a term-time holiday results in pupils falling behind in their work and also losing out in friendship groups. Decisions on whether or not a pupil is given permission for a

holiday in term-time rest with the Head Teacher who acts on behalf of the Governing Body. Parents/carers are asked to complete a Request Form (obtainable from the school office) **in advance of the absence.**

Permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances (see Request Form), otherwise any absence due to a holiday will be deemed as unauthorised. Incidences of children being taken on an unauthorised holiday will be dealt with on a case by case basis, but may result in the Parents/Carers receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Under no circumstances will the school authorise an absence (especially Year 6) during SATs week.

3) SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

- ▣ The SAO and the Head Teacher are responsible for monitoring attendance on a weekly basis.
- ▣ The SAO and the Head Teacher are responsible for liaison with the AWO.
- ▣ The Head Teacher will consider pupils' attendance difficulties on an individual basis.
- ▣ The SAO will telephone parents/carers if an absence is not notified to the school by 10.00am.
- ▣ The Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring and updating the attendance policy.
- ▣ The Head Teacher will inform parents about the Attendance and Punctuality Policy and the methods and criteria applied for recording absences and lateness during his meeting with new parents/carers.
- ▣ The school will discuss attendance and punctuality during parent/carer consultation days and parents will also receive a print-out of their child's attendance in the end of year report.
- ▣ The Pupil Parent Support Worker (PPSW) organises places on the walking bus for those families experiencing difficulty getting their children to school.

4) REWARDS FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE

There are a number of reward schemes for the children to encourage good attendance and punctuality at the school on a weekly, termly and end of year basis. These take the form of best class attendance certificates, cups and prizes as well as individual certificates, pens and badges. Each week, children with perfect punctuality have the chance to win a Privilege Card.

A weekly attendance chart for each class is displayed in the main office.

SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to publish its attendance figures to parents/carers and to promote good attendance.

Equally parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure their children attend school.

Marvels Lane Primary School is committed to working with families to ensure that the highest levels of attendance and punctuality are achieved for all its pupils.

November 2019