

MARLWOOD CLUSTER ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS



RATIONALE

We want to do our best for all our children and believe that regular attendance at school is vital for children as it promotes good learning, positive attitudes and maintains continuity in their education and in their friendships.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by a parent.

STATUTORY DUTY OF SCHOOLS

The Education Act requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive full time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. In addition schools have a statutory duty to set an annual attendance target.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents) as either AUTHORISED OR UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of the absence is always required preferably in writing.

AUTHORISED ABSENCES

- Such as illness or other unavoidable causes.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

These are morning or afternoons away from school for a reason such as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which are not properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot be arranged out of school time.

HOLIDAYS

When requests for holiday absence are considered the school may decide to authorise up to ten **consecutive** school days holiday being taken during the school year, provided there is no other concern about the pupil's attendance. **Only one request for holiday per year will be authorised.** Where there is concern, a request for holiday absence normally will not be authorised. We hope that parents will request holiday absence during term-time only when it is unavoidable.

Holiday absence for longer than 10 consecutive school days will not normally be authorised by the school. The governors' expectation is that only in exceptional circumstances will parents request a longer period and the grounds for the request will be individually considered.

No holidays will be authorised during the assessment period of Term 5 when all children will take part in mid-term assessment in preparation for report writing.

LATENESS

A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her own continuity of learning but also that of other pupils.

Pupils who arrive late, (after register closure) should 'sign in' to record their presence in school. The school will investigate persistent lateness and work with the parents to set targets for improvements.

MONITORING

Attendance registers are monitored on a regular basis, where this falls below 90% and is cause for concern, the school will investigate further.

In accordance with local authority guidance, should attendance fall below 85% and be a cause for concern, the Education Welfare Service will be contacted to promote attendance in conjunction with the school.

The Governing Body sets targets for attendance regularly. The Head teacher monitors attendance regularly and reports to the Governing Body 3 times per year.

PROCEDURES

- Children and parents/carers may enter the playground from 8.45am.
- At 8.55am a bell will ring and children must line up. Parents/carers then leave the playground.
- Each class register must be marked at 9am and 1.00pm (KS1) 1.30pm (KS2) daily.
- Registers are returned to the school office by 9.15am.
- Registers will close by 9.10am for the morning session and 1.10pm (KS1) 1.40pm (KS2) for the afternoon session.
- Pupils who arrive after 9am, but before the register closes will be marked as late and counted as present.
- Pupils who arrive after the register has closed will be marked as late by the administrative staff and counted as an unauthorised absence.
- Pupils who arrive after the register has closed but have a valid reason for doing so will be marked as late but will have an authorised absence.
- Pupils arriving after 9am will have their name and reason written in the school 'late book.' Accompanying parents will be asked to sign the late book.
- Parents/carers of pupils who arrive late three or more times in any half term (without an accompanying parental signature in the late book) will be informed by letter.
- Only the school can authorise absence and clear direction on the type of absence that may be authorised is clear by the DfES.
- Punctual, regular attendance is celebrated termly in assembly.

MONITORING OF POLICY

The governors will review this policy annually.

Review Date: