

Attendance Policy

Marish Academy Trust



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1. Aims

Our Academy Trust understands the difference that high attendance can make to outcomes and life chances for every child. Therefore, we have designed and implemented an extremely robust policy and procedure to ensure that:

- every family is aware that every school day counts
- highest rates of attendance and reduced absence are the norm in our schools
- the devastating effects of unauthorised persistent absence are eradicated
- every pupil has full access to the quality full-time education to which they are entitled
- prompt action is taken when a child or family has a concerning pattern of absence or does not respond to initial enquiries about their child's absence.
- we support all parents in the fulfilment of their legal duty to make sure their compulsory school age children attend school regularly and on time.
- we are proactively safeguarding the well-being of every child, every day.

At Marish Academy Trust, we recognise that excellent attendance begins with creating schools where all pupils feel they belong and are motivated to attend every day. Therefore, we believe the foundation for securing high attendance lies in ensuring that the school environment is calm, orderly, safe, and supportive, enabling all pupils to feel valued, confident, and ready to learn.

To achieve this, we promote regular attendance through the following approaches:

- Embedding a culture underpinned by strong values, high expectations, and a sense of belonging and connectedness
- Prioritising restorative practices and unconditional positive regard in all aspects of school life
- Providing a stimulating, ambitious, and inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of all learners
- Maintaining a highly effective pastoral team, with the Zones of Regulation and a robust PSHE programme fully integrated into daily practice
- Offering a broad and enriching range of clubs, educational visits, and learning experiences that develop pupils' cultural capital
- Implementing a clear and consistent behaviour system that promotes positive conduct and applies fair, proportionate consequences

This policy and our associated practice also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. Our practice includes making first day absence phone calls, home visits if we cannot contact parents and involving Slough Borough Council's Attendance Service, social services or even the police, if we believe a child is either missing education or is missing.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

As an academy, this policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken by the class teacher at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 08.30, or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6), by calling or emailing the school office.

Marish – 01753 819 900 officemarish@marishandwillow.co.uk

Willow – 01753 551 854 officewillow@marishandwillow.co.uk

Absence due to illness will be an authorised absence unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide

medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We undertake not to ask for medical evidence without due cause.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Parents should email or call the school office and notify them of these appointments in advance with the evidence attached.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. Parent meetings will be arranged for any pupil who is persistently late for school.

Pupils must arrive in the classroom by 08.15 on each school day for soft start. Nursery children should arrive by 08.00 for the morning session and 12.00 for the afternoon session.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 08.30 for Years Nursery to Year 6 and at 08:45 for the SEN Unit and will be kept open until 08:40. The morning register will close at 08:45 for Years Nursery to Year 6 and 09.00 for the SEN unit.

The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12.00 for Nursery, 12.30 for Reception and the SEN Unit; 12.50 for years 1 and 2; 13.00 for years 3 and 4 and 13:15 for years 5 and 6. The registers will be kept open until 12:30, 13.00, 13.15 and 13.30 respectively, at which times the register will close.

If a child arrives after the register is closed, they will be given a U code, which counts as an unauthorised absence and is therefore liable for penalties.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed, will be marked as late using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed, will be marked as absent for that entire session, using the appropriate code
- Any pupil who arrives after 08.30 will be recorded on the Inventory office system in case of any emergency drill.
- Late pupils will wait with their parent/carer until they are collected by a member of school staff and escorted to their classroom or until the office staff have opened the doors for the pupils to enter and walk to their classroom.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up on all absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether or not the absence is approved and identify the correct attendance code to use. Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending without reason, the school will respond following statutory guidance as set out in the DfE Children Missing Education 2016:

- On the first day of absence, if no contact is received from the parent/carer by 08:30, the school will make reasonable enquiries to contact them that day by phone, text message or email, using all contacts for the family recorded on Arbor, in line with the duty under section 10 of the Children Act 2004. The school will also record that they have completed these procedures.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and record it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- On the second day of absence, if no contact has been made, further reasonable enquiries will be carried out. The procedure may include checking with other known relatives, neighbours and friends. In safeguarding cases, the local authority will be informed.
- If, by the end of the third day there has been no contact made, the school will conduct a home visit.
- If there is still no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. Parents will be informed by other media that if the absence persists a referral will be made to the local authority and failure to comply with the expectations set by the school may result in further action.
- After 10 days of absence and if no contact made by the parent/carer a referral will be made to the school's Attendance Advice Officer.
- If at any time during this process the school believes that non-reply to enquiries is out of character for the family or the school believes the child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or a police welfare check will be requested.
- Where relevant, the school will report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer.
- Where appropriate, the school will identify whether the pupil and/or family need support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support has not been successful or engaged with by the parents or carers, the school may issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 4.2 below), as appropriate.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance will be reported to parents several times during the academic year:

- In the autumn term parents evening
- At the end of the autumn term via our Autumn Term Traffic Light – see appendix 2.
- In the spring term parents evening
- At the end of the spring term via our Spring Term Traffic light
- At the end of the school year via the end of year school report.

Parents are also made aware of their child's attendance throughout the year, especially if it drops below our Trustwide target expectation of 96%. This information may be shared via letter, email, automated alerts via our attendance monitoring system and telephone call or at a meeting. Attendance will be reported to parents as a percentage on all reports and communication.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

At our Academy Trust we expect that every child will attend school every day. The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as the life-threatening illness or death of a family member or near relative. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Executive Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent. If a situation arises where a parent feels they need to request a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances, the parent whom the child lives with must apply in writing, to the Headteacher at least two weeks prior to the proposed absence using the application for leave of absence form which can be accessed via the school office or on the school website.

In line with DfE guidance, school will not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Age Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Examples of **unauthorised absence** include:

- term-time holidays in the UK and abroad
- travelling in the UK and abroad to visit family and friends
- celebrating birthdays

Marish Academy Trust targets children with unauthorised/unexplained absence and tries to help them improve attendance by: meeting with parents regularly; closely monitoring the situation; offering the child incentives such as the breakfast club, individualised reward charts, a space in a particular extra-curricular club and in particularly difficult circumstances free minibus pick up and drop off.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices.

Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send them a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This includes a prosecution, per parent/carer per child, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Summary of Penalty Notices (per parent, per child)

Effective from 19 August 2024

Absence	If paid within 21 days	If paid within 22–28 days	After 28 days
First absence (since 19 August 2024)	£80	£160	Prosecution
Second absence (within 3 years of the first penalty notice)	£160 (<i>no early payment discount</i>)	£160	Prosecution
Third absence (within 3 years of the first penalty notice)	Penalty Notice not issued – case referred for prosecution	–	–

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

4.3 Deleting a pupil from The Admission Register:

A pupil's name can only be removed from roll in certain circumstances, for example:

- (i) on the day that it is confirmed the child starts at another educational provision
- (ii) where a pupil was granted a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and fails to return.
In these cases, a referral will be made to the local authority.

Full school procedures for children missing education and the removal of a child's name are set out in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and will be followed.

Elective Home Education (EHE) is an option that some parents/carers choose, where they take responsibility for providing education to their child at home.

Parents/carers must put in writing their wish to EHE their child and the school will then complete a referral form and inform the local authority before removal from roll.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Assiduous monitoring and analysis of our overall attendance data enables us to make strategic decisions on the monitoring and promoting of attendance. Whilst all groups of children are monitored, the use of our dashboard in previous years enables us to take prompt, proactive action whenever attendance starts to become an issue amongst specific groups.

The following strategies are established as a routine practice:

1. A range of exciting rewards that consist of prizes, Mufti days and certificates are in place to encourage and celebrate both excellent and improving attendance.
2. Every class teacher closely monitors new and existing absence and lateness patterns for all children in their class and takes immediate action by reporting this to the attendance officer, talking to the parents and children and or putting in place individual reward strategies to improve the attendance of particular children.
3. Every staff member, whether class based or non-class based has the opportunity to take part in The Teachers' Attendance Champions' League to promote good attendance. This is a voluntary scheme, where every staff member is an Attendance Champion and is paired up with a focus child whose attendance is below 90%. Attendance Champions meet up with their focus child once a week to play a game, listen to them read and just have a chat about attendance or anything on the child's mind. The Attendance Champion whose focus child makes the most improvement from their starting point at the end of the half term is the winner of the Teachers' Attendance Champions' League and receives a £50 worth gift card prize.
4. Each day our minibuses collect children who are vulnerable for a number of reasons, including attendance. If their attendance does not improve over half a term, parents are warned the transport will be withdrawn. In most cases, this resolves their attendance issue.
5. First day phone calls and home visits are completed if contact cannot be made with the parents for any children whose attendance is below 90%. Regular attendance team meetings review existing and emerging attendance concerns in all year groups; the office staff and the attendance officer contact the parents via phone calls to discuss patterns and causes of absence that can be resolved easily through partnership with parents.
6. If attendance continues to be a concern, the attendance officer and senior leaders meet with parents to discuss barriers to attendance and the child is put on an attendance action plan with clear actions, support when appropriate, targets and time scale for improvement.
7. Depending on the barriers to attendance, in-house support such as the breakfast club, after school clubs or the school minibus (in rare cases) and or support through external partners via referrals to the school nurse, Slough Mental Health Team or Early Help are offered to improve attendance.
8. The attendance for children on action plans is monitored on a daily basis and Senior Leaders are informed by 10 am if a child is absent from school. Decision is made whether a home visit is required on the same day to check-in on the child and family depending on the individual circumstances.
9. In cases where there is no valid reason for absence and no improvement with support, senior staff will make a referral to the LA Attendance Officer for action such as fines and prosecution.
10. Every week all children with below 92% attendance are flagged up and any new additions to the persistent absence list are monitored closely.

6. Attendance monitoring

6.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

6.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads, behaviour leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

6.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school and/or local authority considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance

- Explain the help that is available
- Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 4.2, above)

6.5 Nursery procedure

Children at Nursery should be at school on time, every day that the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Parents are expected to inform the school of an absence. The register closes at 08:45 and 12.00.

Messages of absence from parents are passed to the key worker.

If a child is absent without an explanation for 2 days, the Attendance Officer will contact parents to ascertain the reason for the absence. If the child is known to social care, this service will be informed of the unauthorised absence on the first day.

If this does not produce a satisfactory explanation, The Attendance Officer will make contact, initially by telephone. If there is no contact after one week, a letter will be sent to the family. If necessary, an appointment will be made to discuss the matter.

If after one month there has been no contact, the child's name may be removed from the register and the place allocated to another child on the waiting list. The local authority will be informed that the child has left the nursery.

Children can sometimes be reluctant to attend school. If this is the case, communication between home and school is the best way to support children's well-being and attendance needs. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any issues together.

Parents of children whose attendance is inconsistent and generally poor will be contacted by the Attendance Officer and their future attendance monitored. If there is cause for concern, external agencies such as social services, may be contacted.

Although attendance at nursery is not statutory, authorised absence is only normally granted for emergency situations and medical appointments. All planned absences in term-time must be requested using the Leave of Absence Request Form.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The Strategic Board of Marish Academy Trust is responsible for:

- Holding the Executive Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting this across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties in relations to attendance
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it the most
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance

7.2 The Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising Deputy Headteachers to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

7.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance (Senior Attendance Champion)

The Senior Attendance Champion at Marish Academy Trust is Mrs A Da'Ud. Her contact details are:

Tel: 01753 551 854 and 01753 819 900

Email: officewillow@marishandwillow.co.uk and officemarish@marishandwillow.co.uk

The Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the schools
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining excellent attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Devising targeted intervention and support to pupils and families and referring families to external agencies for support

7.4 The attendance officer

The Attendance Officers at Marish Academy Trust are Mrs A Rehman and Miss M Banga. Their contact details are:

Tel: 01753 551 854 and 01753 819 900

Email: officewillow@marishandwillow.co.uk and officemarish@marishandwillow.co.uk

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and at an individual pupil level
- Benchmarks attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Contacts parents/carers as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Makes initial enquiries to parents/carers of pupils who are attending irregularly and/or have persistent lateness, expressing the school's concerns and clarifying the school's expectations regarding regular school attendance
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Senior Attendance Champion and the Headteacher
- Provides regular attendance reports to class teachers, Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Board
- Works with Slough Borough Council's Attendance Service to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Arranges home visits when a pupil has been absent for 2 consecutive days and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct register codes, and submitting this information to the school office in a timely manner
- Promoting excellent attendance and punctuality
- Noticing patterns of lateness/absence and informing the Attendance Officer in a timely manner
- Building and maintaining strong positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers
- Creating a safe and stimulating classroom environment where there are effective routines and rules in place
- Understanding risk and protective factors for all children they teach to identify barriers and possible ways to overcome them
- Providing academic and emotional support to children who experience attendance challenges

7.6 Teaching Assistants and Learning Mentors

Teaching Assistants and Learning Mentors are responsible for:

- Promoting excellent attendance and punctuality
- Being vigilant in identifying attendance patterns and reporting concerns to the class teacher
- Building and maintaining strong positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers
- Providing individualised support to children who may be struggling with attendance
- Supporting pupils with special educational needs so they receive the necessary support to overcome attendance barriers and participate in school activities

7.7 Office staff

Office staff are expected to:

- Take calls/emails from parents regarding absence and record it on the school system
- Contacts parents/carers as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Carry out home visits with the attendance officer, CP team or senior leaders when required

7.8 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 08:30 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when the child is expected to 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
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school office

7.9 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by the senior leader with responsibility for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

8. Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
9. Behaviour policy
10. Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact policy
11. SEN and Inclusion policy
12. Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

Appendix 1: Coding Attendance in line with DFE guidance 2024:

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available

Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil is absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence

G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

Administrative codes

z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not yet joined school, but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 MAT Attendance Rewards

Name of the reward	Who Receives it?	How often?
Daily attendance announcement via the school tannoy for everyone to hear	Classes with 100% attendance or class with the highest attendance for the day	Every day after the afternoon register.
100% Attendance Trophy and Mufti Day	Classes with 100% attendance for the whole week as announced in celebration assembly. Class with the most improved attendance for the week	Every week on a Friday
Monthly Attendance Treat	All children with 100% attendance for the whole month. AND 1 child from each class with the most improved attendance for the month enjoy together a snack of choice at breaktime	Every Month
100% Attendance Certificate and Prize	All children with 100% attendance for the whole half term and full term.	Every Half term and full term.
Nandos Vouchers	One child per year group per term.	End of every term.
Most Improved Attendance Award & Trophy	Child with the highest improved attendance in every year group	Once a year at the End of Awards Evening Ceremony

Appendix 3 MAT Attendance Traffic Light Letter to parents

Dear Parents/Carers,

Excellent attendance is very important for your child to make the most of the opportunities available to them in school, both academically and socially. When children are absent from school, they often find it difficult to catch up on the work they have missed and can also feel unsettled.

We have been using a “Traffic Light” system to monitor our children’s attendance across the Marish Academy Trust for a few years now. This approach allows us not only to highlight and celebrate excellent attendance in our schools, but it also helps us with identifying quickly any attendance concerns and addressing these in partnership with parents and carers.

Marish Academy Trust Traffic Light System explained

At different points in the academic year, your child will be bringing home one of the following:

1. **A 100% Attendance Certificate:** this means that your child has achieved 100% attendance which should be celebrated – a big THANK YOU and huge CONGRATULATIONS!
2. **A GREEN attendance letter for 96% attendance and above:** this means that your child’s attendance is at **or above the expected good level of attendance by the Department of Education** – well done and keep up the good work!
3. An **AMBER attendance letter for 92% - 95.9% attendance:** this means that whilst your child’s attendance is not a cause of concern yet, it is **below** the expected **96%**. and your child had **an above average absence**. These absences may have been due to illness, but we feel you should be aware that your child’s attendance this needs to improve over the next half term.
4. A **RED attendance letter for 91.9% attendance and below:** this means that your child has had a **significant amount of time off school** so far this year and is at **great risk of underachieving** as a result. In this case, we would ask for your support, and work with you to ensure that your child’s attendance improves rapidly over the next few weeks. To achieve this, we will be monitoring your child’s attendance very closely and you will also be invited to an attendance meeting if your child’s attendance falls below **90%**.

We are asking for the support of all our parents and carers in improving attendance levels as we believe this is one of the main ways in which our children will be happy at school, form good relationships with their peers and achieve their full potential academically.

Your Sincerely,

Marsh Academy Trust Attendance Team
Mrs. A. Da'Ud, Mrs A. Rehman, Miss M. Banga

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	24 February 2012		
2.0	March 2015		
3.0	April 2018		
4.0	June 2020	LK/SA	
5.0	June 2022	LK/SA	
6.0	July 2024	LH/AD	
7.0	November 2025	AD/AR	

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1.0	24 February 2012	Strategic Board
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