



# Marshall's Park Academy

**Name of Policy**

**Whole School Attendance Policy**

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**SWECET**

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## **WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Marshall's Park Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all students and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential; the school will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all students. In addition it is essential that all students arrive on time for school unless there are exceptional circumstances. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to Education Laws and Marshall's Park Academy Attendance Policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education. This policy will be updated to reflect any changes in legislation.

Each year the school will set attendance/absence targets which will reflect both national and local attendance information.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance termly to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

Information on term dates and training days can be found via the Marshall's Park Academy website ([www.marshallspark.org.uk](http://www.marshallspark.org.uk)).

## **Attendance**

Students are expected to be registered twice a day (as well as in each lesson). Morning registration will take place at 8.40am and the registers will remain open until 9.10am. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Afternoon registration will be at 2:45pm. Students arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

Marshall's Park Academy has high expectation for student's attendance and punctuality. Students should aim for 100% throughout the year. Students who drop to or below 90% will be regarded as persistent absentees and may be subject to referral to our Educational Welfare Service/Officer (EWO).

## **Punctuality**

If a student arrives late to school before the school register closes (9.10am) then a 10 minute detention at the end of the school day will be set. Parents / Carers will be notified of this by text message. If a student arrives after the register closes then a further detention will be held by their Year Leader in addition to the end of the day detention. Persistent timekeeping issues will be addressed by our Monitoring Attendance / Punctuality procedures

## **Role of the Student**

To commit to attend school every day and on time

## **Role of the Family**

It is the responsibility of the parent /carer to ensure that the student attends each day and arrives on time. Students should only be absent for genuine reasons such as sickness, medical appointments or exceptional circumstances (e.g. funerals) etc. **Parents / Carers must notify the school immediately if a student is absent on 01708 436216.**

## **Role of the Academy**

We commit to working with students and parents / carers to ensure that a student gains the maximum attendance possible. We will ensure that we communicate with all parties concerned and that our procedures will identify any issues as early as possible. In addition, attendance matters will be included in the induction programme for all new staff.

## **Attendance Targets**

The school will set attendance targets each year. These targets will be based upon the previous year's data on attendance and will always be aspirational.

## **Celebrating Good Attendance**

It is important that good attendance is acknowledged, celebrated and rewarded. Achievement in attendance is as important as achievement in subjects and this should be embedded within the ethos of the Academy. Inter form competitions are promoted by Form Tutors and Year Leaders.

## **School Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period will have their absence recorded as either authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. The Headteacher, or a member of staff acting on his/her behalf, will authorise absence if appropriate. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. A range of

support for parents/carers will be made available where they (parents/carers) are seeking the schools assistance to encourage a child to attend school more regularly. The Academy will not ask children to remain at home other than those that are formally fixed term or permanently excluded unless there is a serious risk to the child in question or other children in the school. In this case this school will seek advice from the Local Authority. Religious observations are recorded as an authorised absence.

### **Authorised Absence**

This is when the Attendance Officer accepts that there is a genuine reason for absence which has been supported by a note from the parent / carer. Examples are:

- Illness, medical and dental appointments
- Interviews with prospective employers and colleges
- Dual registration
- Approved educational off-site activities
- Representation in sport or other areas
- Public performances (licenses must be obtained from the LBH and sent to the Academy)
- Special situations and occasions (e.g. funerals, caring) NB: absence for pupil or family birthdays/celebrations is not acceptable.

### **Unauthorised Absences**

This is when the Attendance Officer does not accept there is a genuine reason for absence. Examples are:

- Known truancy
- Absent with no note from parent / carer
- Working (this will be reported to the Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance)
- Time off for birthdays, family celebrations
- Holidays or being out of the country for other reasons (e.g: to visit family or seek medical treatment abroad)
- Looking after siblings (this will be reported to the Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance)
- Errands for parents / carers (e.g. shopping).
- Persistent absenteeism without documentary medical proof

### **Request for Leave of Absence**

Marshalls Park Academy takes a very firm view on such absences which will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances in line with the DfE guidelines. Although we appreciate difficulties many parents / carers have in arranging their annual leave, they are asked not to make arrangements for holidays or trips abroad during term time as it will not be authorised. The Headteacher may consider authorising holidays or trips outside of the UK for other reasons for sudden emergency circumstances.

The school will require the student's parent / carer to complete a leave of absence form which will be provided upon request. An example can be found in **Appendix 1 & 2**. Each parent/carer of children on roll at this school will be notified of the likely penalty they will face if their request is refused and they still take their child on leave. **An extended absence for a holiday will inevitably have an adverse effect on a student's progress and achievement.**

### **First Day Absence**

This school has adopted first day texting as part of its attendance policy. When a child is absent, a text is made to the parent/carer asking for an explanation. If no explanation is received, the absence will be marked as unauthorised until an acceptable reason is received. If an acceptable explanation is received the absence will be marked accordingly.

### **Unexplained Absence(s)**

If we have a concern about a student who is absent without adequate explanation, a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service/Officer (EWO). This action does not preclude the school taking all the necessary steps to ensure that a student is/are safe. Details of any action taken by the school will be submitted to the Education Welfare Officer/Service (EWO) in order that they are fully equipped with the necessary information. Unexplained absences and/or frequent absences can be a serious cause for concern and therefore, in terms of safeguarding children and young people, any unexplained absences will be a priority for this school.

- A student with an absence of 5 days or more may need to substantiate this absence with medical evidence. This can be in the form of either a letter from their G.P or proof of dispensed medication.

### **Absences immediately before and following a school holiday**

Any absences that occur immediately before or following a school holiday will be flagged up by the Attendance Officer during the register checks. In order that there is consistency across the school, a decision will be made as to the required course of action which may be either:

- Phone call home
- Letter home
- Meeting in school with parents /carers
- Or a combination of any of the above

Our decision on a follow up will be based on the length of the absence, if siblings are in the school and if they were absent at the same time.

### **Frequent Absence**

In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents/carers and interventions implemented. The school may also refer a student to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be medical. A range of professional staff may need to be alerted to the attendance concerns for this particular child, i.e. a child that has a statement of special need. Where it is deemed appropriate the school will arrange to meet with the student concerned, parents/carers and professionals involved to discuss the matter.

### **Absence notes**

Notes received from parents/carers explaining absence will be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the student that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

### **Monitoring Attendance & Punctuality**

Student attendance and punctuality is monitored by the:

- Form Tutor at registration
- Subject Teacher in each lesson
- Year Leader
- Attendance Officer
- Senior Leadership Team
- Education Welfare Service

### **Persistent Absence**

Any student whose attendance falls to or below 90% is defined as a Persistent Absentee (P/A). Every absence must be supported by official documentation proving appointments, on-going illness/medical conditions. Without such documentation, absences are recorded as unauthorised and will continue to be unauthorised

until documentation has been received by the Attendance Officer/Education Welfare Officer. If a student is categorized as a persistent absentee then the Attendance Officer will intervene with strategies after liaising with the parent/carer. Continued absence may result in a Penalty Charge Notice or Court Action to the parent/carer.

### **Welcome Back**

It is important that upon returning from an absence all students are made to feel welcome and this school will adopt this approach. For example the student will be helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other students. This will be led by the Form Tutor and Year Leader.

### **Alternative Provision**

Some students attend education at an alternative site. This could be for one or more days each week. Both the student and their parent /carer will have been on an introductory visit to the alternative education site prior to their start date. As part of that visit, they are made fully aware of the importance of good attendance and that the same arrangements for notifying absences apply as within school. Failure to attend regularly without good cause could result in the provision being suspended or ceased. The alternative provider is required, as part of their service level agreement, to inform the school immediately if a student fails to attend. The provider cannot approve leave of absence or approve absences. A robust system is in place for monitoring both the attendance and progress of each student on Alternative Provision.

### **Working Together with the Local Authority**

Registers: Schools have a duty in law to ensure that their registers can be made available to the Local Authority for inspection; Marshalls Park Academy employs Education Welfare Advisory and Support Service Limited who undertake register reviews and will work in collaboration with the local authority.

### **Legal Intervention**

Local Authority Officers have a responsibility for ensuring that any decisions regarding legal intervention are progressed appropriately; in order that the Local Authority can exercise their duty, school staff will co-operate where required. A range of interventions is available for Local Authority Officers, some of which involves the courts involvement. Where an Education Welfare Officer is placing a case before the Magistrates Court the school will provide all the necessary information in the form of 'Certified Extracts' of the register, which will be signed by the Headteacher in advance of the hearing. Intervention may require school staff to attend planning meetings which will be arranged by the Local Authority. This Academy is fully committed to co-operating with all of these procedures.

- Formal Cautioning – this may include the need for a Headteacher or Senior Member of Staff to be in attendance.
- Penalty Notices (see Code of Conduct – Penalty Notices). This Academy will consider any consultation that the Local Authority implements in respect of Penalty Notices.

## Appendix 1



## Marshall's Park Academy

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO REMOVE A STUDENT FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

As a parent / carer you will understand that regular attendance at school is necessary for your child/children to make good progress with their education. Therefore we expect that family holidays will be arranged in the school holiday periods.

Request for leave of absence for students may be made on the understanding that the circumstances are exceptional. Your request will then be looked into by the School and if it is felt



that the request falls under the category of “Exceptional Circumstances” then the request will be granted. We understand that holidays are cheaper out of term time but this does not come under “Exceptional Circumstances”. Requests should be made by the parent or carer and forwarded to the School at least **14 days** before the period of absence.

**The Local Authority may consider issuing parents / carers who take their children on time term holidays with a Penalty Notice or Formal Caution.**

The Penalty Notice will be issued in line with the Education Penalty Notices Regulations 2004.

“Where a parent / carer has taken the student on holiday during term time without the school’s authorisation or (in cases where the school has authorised absence for a holiday) has failed to return the pupil to school on the date agreed with the school”

If you wish to request leave of absence for your child/children please complete the attached form and return to the Attendance Officer at the School Office.

## Appendix 2

### REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Please complete this form and return it to the school at least 14 days before the proposed absence. The form will be returned to you after consideration by the schools Attendance Officer.

**Leave of absence may be requested in exceptional circumstances. The school’s policy is to proactively refer cases to the Education Welfare Officer for fixed penalty notices or formal cautions to be issued where parents / carers are not following the appropriate procedures**

I wish my child.....Form.....to be excused from school

Dates .....to .....inclusive

The number of school days to be missed is .....

Please give full reasons for asking for leave of absence in term time:-

**Signature of Parent/ Carer .....** **Date .....**

**Date received in school.....**

**Authorised.....**

**Refused.....**

**Date.....**

A copy of the school’s holiday dates is attached to help you plan holidays so there will be no effect on school time.