Great Marlow School

Excellence • Compassion • Integrity

ATTENDANCE FOR LEARNING POLICY

Recommended by the Leadership Team:	July 2023
Approved by Trustees' Policies Sub Committee/ Curriculum Committee:	July 2023
Ratified by Trustee Board:	July 2023
Review Due:	Summer Term 2024

There **has been** a change to the previous policy

Contents

1.   Introduction

We are committed to raising the level of achievement of all our students; promoting regular attendance is integral part of this objective. Regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life. Children who frequently miss school often fall behind. There is a strong link between good school attendance and achieving good outcomes.

The Trustees at Great Marlow School view attendance as a safeguarding issue and in accordance with this policy, absences are rigorously pursued and recorded. The school, in partnership with the appropriate agencies, takes action to pursue and address all unauthorised absences to safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. We implement the statutory requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting children missing education (CME) and taking off roll and understand how important this practice is in safeguarding children and young people.

Good attendance and punctuality at school shows potential employers that a young person is reliable. Young people who are frequently absent or late for school are more likely to become involved in or be a victim of crime and anti-social behaviour. We will contact parents directly if we have any concerns about a child's attendance. Buckinghamshire County Council offers a range of services to support families who encounter difficulties in ensuring their children attend school regularly. This policy recognises that attendance can be affected by a range of factors and therefore should be set alongside other school policies: behaviour, curriculum, and special needs.

2.   What the Law Says

Parents have a legal responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive a full-time education 'suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs that they may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise' Section 7 Education Act 1996.

Parents whose children are on a school register and fail to ensure the regular school attendance of their children, may be guilty of an offence under Section 444 or 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996. The council may issue a Penalty Notice or take other statutory action through the courts to secure regular school attendance

3.   Target

The school is committed to raising overall attendance. All students should aim for 100% attendance, but we appreciate this is not always possible. The target set internally by the school is 95% which would place us above the current National Average attendance figure.

4.   Promoting good attendance

At Great Marlow School, the importance of good attendance will be promoted in the following ways:

• Home School Partnership • Visual displays • Parents/carers evenings • Reminding parents/carers of their legal obligations	• Year 7 induction day • The prospectus • The Voice (newsletter) • House and year assemblies • Good communication with parents/carers to include access to the policy, letters home & attendance figures • Attendance certificates

5.   Roles and Responsibilities

All members of staff are instrumental in promoting good attendance, with the following staff having specific roles and responsibilities:

Tutor

- Setting an example by arriving on time

- Promoting habits of regular attendance with the group and individuals

- Accurately maintaining morning registers

- Liaising with Attendance Officer

- Alerting others such as **Director of Learning** (DOL) and **Student Support Officer** (SSO) regarding absence and initiating follow up procedures

- Using the attendance rewards and sanctions systems

- Welcoming long-term absentees back into the form

Subject teacher

- Setting an example by arriving on time

- Accurately maintaining lesson registers

- Informing the Attendance Officer immediately if a student is absent from the lesson who has been present in the lesson before

- Providing work for long term absentees through liaising with DOL if deemed appropriate

<u>Attendance Officer</u>

- Accurately maintaining registers daily

- Produce daily absence sheets for each year group for the DOL and SSO team

- Communicate with parents/carers on first day of unexplained absence and forward information to DOL and SSO

- If continued absence with no parental/carer contact, Attendance Officer would follow up with another attempt to make contact

- Unexplained absences are cleared on SIMS using parental/carer information either written or verbal, in preparation for termly school census

- Input information from student late book into SIMS

- Absence reports/ late reports are produced as requested by DOL and SSO

- Fortnightly produce percentages for each year group's attendance for the DOL and SSO

- Produce half termly attendance letters as requested by the specific DOL

- Letters (1a – under 90% cause for concern) as requested by County Attendance Officer at regular meetings with the school Attendance Officer. The County Attendance Officer is responsible for sending out 1b letters requesting a meeting with parents/ carers at the school

- Conduct half termly analysis of trends and patterns of attendance and punctuality for each tutor group, year group and whole school. This data will include:

  - types of absences e.g., holidays, medical appointments, authorised and unauthorised

  - historical data on individual students

  - patterns of individual students' absences relating attendance to the curriculum

  - analyse attendance according to gender and home address

<u>DOL and SSO</u>

- To promote good attendance within his/her year group

- Monitor and supervise the work of their Tutor team in promoting excellent attendance and punctuality

- Organise where appropriate a programme to help students to catch up on missed work due to prolonged absence

- Promote good attendance in the year group assembly

- Display motivational attendance materials within school

SENCO

- Monitor the attendance of all statemented students

- Support students who have very poor attendance and who are statemented

- Liaise with DOL and the Attendance Officer regarding strategies for specific students

Leadership Team Member Responsible for Attendance

- Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented and that systems are operating effectively

- Create a school ethos which promotes excellent levels of attendance

- Report to Leadership Team (half termly) and Trustees (termly) on attendance

- Induction of new staff on attendance policy

- Ensure school prospectus, Attendance Officer, County Attendance Officer, parents' booklet, and school newsletters promote attendance

Trustees

- Ensure that statutory attendance statistics are submitted

- Review and approve the attendance for learning policy

- Annually review attendance data

Parents/Carers

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives at the correct time

- Confirm promptly the reasons for absence; this may be done by phone, letter, e mail, medical certificate, or medical appointment card

- Contact the school or County Attendance Officer if there are any attendance problems so that together we may plan the solution

- Never arrange holidays within term time

- Ensure their child is punctual to school

- Be involved in promoting attendance and achievement

County Attendance Officer

- Implement strategies as agreed with the school and keep the school updated on their effectiveness

- Send 1b letter to parents/ carer requesting meeting

- Attend meetings with identified students currently falling below the expectations of Great Marlow School

6.   Rewards

Rewards are effective in motivating students and the following rewards will be used to encourage excellent attendance:

- Attendance displays around school and recognition at celebration of success events
- Termly presentation to the form in each year group with the highest % attendance
- End of year award for students who have attained 100% attendance for the whole year
- Achievement points are awarded for attendance above the school target (95%) for each half term. If someone has a 100% attendance for a half term, they will be awarded additional achievement points

7.   Sanctions

- Students may be placed on attendance/punctuality report if deemed appropriate

- Unauthorised late marks will initiate a break time detention on the same day. Persistent offenders will be identified, appropriate support and sanctions will be applied. All cases will be dealt with on an individual basis

- In liaison with County Attendance Officer letters are sent home via the Attendance Officer (1a) or direct from County Attendance Officer (1b) and meetings arranged as appropriate

8.   Support for Students

In order to pre-empt the escalation of attendance problems, the school offers the following support:

- Discussion of emerging attendance issues at Form Tutor meetings

- Intervention from SSO or DOL

- Contact with parents/ carers at an early stage to raise the issue of attendance and inform parents/ carers of their legal obligation to ensure attendance at school

- Placement on attendance/punctuality report

- Referral to SEN team if an issue is recognised

- Referral to County Attendance Officer, PRU, Connexions and counsellors

9.   Support for Parents and Carers

- Face to face meetings for early intervention; advice given for strategies to use

- Referrals are made to relevant outside agencies

- Contact with parents/ carers at an early stage to raise the issue of attendance and inform parents/ carers of their legal obligation to ensure attendance at school

10.   Monitoring and Evaluation

- SSO to work with Attendance Officer   to produce reports on attendance

- Impact and consistency to be evaluated by the Deputy Headteacher Monitoring of patterns and trends identified in the role descriptors for Attendance Officer, SSO and DOL

11.   Expectations

- Good habits start early in life, so even before your child starts school, establish good routines

- If your child is absent from school, you must let the school know why and tell us when we can expect your child to return to school

- Make all appointments for the doctor, dentist, optician etc. after school hours or during the school holidays where possible

- Take an active interest in your child's schoolwork and offer support

- Attend parent's evenings to discuss your child's progress

- Make sure your child understands the benefits of regular attendance at school

- Do not let your child stay off school for a minor ailment

- Take all holidays during the school holiday periods

12.   Truancy and Punctuality - (See Behavioural Policy)

Truancy identified during a school day - Reception to inform parents by telephone as soon as the unauthorised absence from a lesson or the school site is established. This may also be the result of a student leaving the school site without permission during the school day.

- SSO and DOL to discuss strategies with Form Tutor, student, and parents/carers

- Time missed, because of lateness to school, should be made up by detention at break time, lunchtime and/or After School

- In extreme cases of persistent truancy, the DOL and SSO in liaison with the LT may decide to use the inclusion room to ensure that the academic work missed can be completed

- SSO in consultation with DOL, should report unauthorised absence to Attendance Officer who will liaise with County Attendance Officer

- If unauthorised absence becomes more frequent and persistent, SSO and DOL to meet with parents to discuss strategies to improve attendance and explain parents'/ carers legal responsibilities

13. Children Missing in Education (CME) and persistent absenteeism

- Children absent from education: children who are persistently absent (absent repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods). Children missing education: children of compulsory school age who aren't registered pupils at a school and aren't receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

  It's important that your response as a school to persistently absent pupils helps to prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.
- Children Missing in Education (CME) The school follows the Local Education Authorities policy regarding the protocol for children missing education. (Protocol for children missing education. September 2017 Version 9) The purpose of this document is to make sure that children not receiving a suitable education are identified quickly, and effective tracking systems and support arrangements are put in place

- Children missing education are: "Children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school, for example, at home, privately, or in alternative provision."

- Children not receiving a suitable education are at increased risk of a range of negative outcomes that could have long-term damaging consequences for their life chances