



Martley C.E. Primary School Attendance Policy

Document Full Name	Attendance Policy
Developer/Developer's Role	Lucy Cox – Head of School
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Our Christian Values

Our Core Christian values are the 5 C's - Commitment, Creativity, Compassion, Co-operation and Courage. They permeate our curriculum and are taught through our collective worship, within our curriculum and as part of our personal development programme.

Our vision is that everyone will know that they are loved by God. We nurture all children and adults so that they flourish as individuals and make the best of their God-given talents, through embracing our diverse world.

'Every good action and every perfect gift is from God. These good gifts come down from the creator of the sun, moon and stars. God does not change like their shifting shadows'.

James 1:17 International Children's Bible

We also support and follow the vision of the Diocese of Worcester Multi-Academy Trust (DoWMAT) of which we are a member school:

'To Love, To Learn, To Serve' sums up the DoWMAT's vision for those who come together to create the MAT, enabling all to flourish both as individuals and in community with each other; living life in all its fulness. (John 10.10).

Introduction

Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them.

This policy is intended to ensure every child's regular and punctual attendance at this school. We strive to work in partnership with parents/carers to give every child the opportunity to develop to their maximum potential academically, socially and emotionally.

This policy is based on the DFE Guidance, 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance':

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

Aims

- To ensure good levels of attendance for all children
- To raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality for all children
- To promote positive and welcoming provision in which children feel safe, secure and valued
- To ensure attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently
- To ensure that all parents/carers are aware of the processes to follow in relation to absence from school or in the event of lateness

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors/ Executive Headteacher

- To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance, in consultation with the Head of School
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy
- To compare attendance rates at the school with national benchmarks

Head of School/Attendance Lead

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group and whole school attendance patterns.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies in cases where attendance and/or punctuality becomes a concern.
- To contact with parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance (this may be by telephone, face to face and/or in writing).
- Take appropriate action regarding attendance and punctuality.
- To offer support to parents/carers experiencing difficulties that affect children's attendance.
- To support parents/carers to fulfil their legal duty to promote regular attendance.
- To refer the child/family to appropriate agencies and/or the Local Authority when necessary.
- To review and update the attendance policy.

Class Teachers

- Promote regular attendance through praise.
- Ensure that registers are always completed appropriately.
- Ensure the HoS is informed of concerns over attendance. Add attendance concerns to our 'My Concern' Safeguarding Reporting Tool.
- Following absence, do your best to provide catch-up opportunities so absentees do not fall behind. Where appropriate, ask parents to play a part in reinforcing missed learning.

Parents/Carers

- To ensure regular and punctual attendance.
Children are welcomed into the school at 8.45am and lessons start promptly at 9.00am.
The school day ends at 3.15pm for Key Stage 1 children and 3.20pm for Key Stage 2. We expect all children to be on time to start their day and to be collected promptly at the end of the day as School staff are not always available to stay after school with your children as they often have other work commitments.
- **If a child arrives after 9.00am we expect the parent/carer to bring their child to the office, where they must sign them in, giving the reason for lateness; this will be recorded as an official late, 'L' in the register.**
- Any child arriving after 9.10am will be marked as absent for the morning session unless it is for a medical appointment which will be recorded as 'M'.
- To contact the school office either by phone 01886 888201 or via the office email office@martley-pri.worcs.sch.uk on the morning of **every** day of absence to give a reason for the absence and suggest a likely return date.

Non-urgent Medical/Dental Appointments

- Where possible, to arrange all non-urgent medical appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, advance notice should be given and parents/carers must sign the child out at the school office, and sign back in again upon return.

Holidays in Term Time

Rationale

There are 13 weeks in each academic year when parents and children may take their holidays.

In arriving at an overall policy, school has considered:

- that a pupil who takes a term-time holiday for 10 days in a single academic year can achieve a maximum of 94.7% attendance, assuming no additional absence. This is below average attendance and will impact on pupil progress
- Guidance from DFE
- Guidance from Worcestershire Children First Education Welfare Office

Regulations came into force on September 1st 2013, which makes it clear that Head Teachers are not permitted to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There are very strict guidelines determining what constitutes exceptional

circumstances and even in such circumstances, the head teacher does not have to authorise the absence. *Family holidays in term time do not count as exceptional circumstances.*

If parents/carers want their child to have leave of absence during term time, **the request must be put in writing to the Head of School at least 4 weeks before the required leave date.** The request will not be granted unless the HoS, considering statutory guidance, deems the circumstances for making the request to be exceptional. If the leave is not granted but still taken, the pupil's absence will be marked as unauthorised then a referral will be made to the Local Authority, requesting that a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued. The penalty carries a fine of £60 to £120 **per parent, per child.** Non-payment of the Penalty Notice can result in prosecution. Each request will be considered on an individual basis.

Authorised or Unauthorised Absence

- **"Authorised"** absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

The following may be reasons for authorising absences:

- Illness
- Family bereavements
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available
- Days of religious observance, within certain parameters
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated
- Traveller absence

All other absence must be regarded as **"unauthorised"**.

Attendance Thresholds

Thresholds	Actions at each threshold:
>90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registers are checked daily to identify absentees. If a child is absent and no reason has been provided by their parent/carer, the school office will send a Dojo message and/or make a telephone call home to the parent/carer asking them to contact school that day, to explain the reason for absence. • On each day of absence, parents must inform the school office of the reason. • Where no reason is given or contact cannot be made, this is referred to the Head of School (HoS) and a member of staff will make a house visit.
<90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils deteriorating to 90% (equivalent to one session missed per week, persistent absence threshold) • The office staff will make first day calls as above. • School Attendance Lead/ HoS will monitor the attendance of pupils whose

	<p>attendance is less than 90%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare checks may be made by EWO/HoS if deemed appropriate. • A standard letter will be sent to parents pointing out the deterioration in attendance levels and will be reminded of the school's target levels for attendance and the negative effect of irregular attendance on learning. • Continue to monitor weekly attendance. • Should attendance continue to be an issue, then it may be necessary to refer to Worcestershire Children First Education Welfare office. • Parents may be requested to attend a meeting to discuss the child's attendance and/or punctuality and the detrimental effect on learning with support offered. • Children in Pre-School who fall below 75% may have their funding for their place removed by the Local Authority and will either have to leave or parents fund the place.
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Monitoring and Evaluation

- Attendance data is collected weekly to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This includes cases where there may be:
 - Persistent Absence e.g. less than 90%
 - Incomplete weeks
 - Monday and Friday absences
 - Lateness
 - Periods of extended absence
 - Periods of "unauthorised" absence
 - Periods of absence for leave taken in term time

The HoS will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance at least annually and will ensure the Governors are kept informed of the whole school's attendance percentage.

The Governors, HoS and Executive Headteacher will set an annual target of attendance and review this annually at its first meeting. The attendance target for Academic year 2023/2024 is 96.5%.

Following our analysis of weekly attendance patterns and trends, targeted intervention may be delivered to support pupils and their families. Martley CE Primary School is a Trauma Informed (TISUK) establishment and our staff are trained to support those pupils who are reticent in attending and can work with them to help overcome anxieties.

Should there be no improvement, a six-week attendance improvement plan will be put in place where the family will be invited in to school for a meeting with the Head of School. Targets and support will be put in place and a review date planned.

Review

Policy Written: March 2023 Lucy Cox

Policy reviewed September 2023

Approved by Governors: March 2023

Review: September 2024