



New Marston Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A Guide for Pupils and Parents January 2023

New Marston Primary School believes that regular attendance at school is vital to ensure:

- Pupils achieve their full potential
- Pupils make the most of all the opportunities provided by the school
- Pupils maintain and develop good relationships with friends and teachers
- Pupils are in a safe and positive environment
- Pupils can leave school with an excellent record for their next school

Education Act 1996

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly

NEW MARSTON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY POLICY INTO PRACTICE

Registering Attendance

At New Marston Primary School we register attendance through:

Formal registers

- Pupils are marked present or absent at the beginning of the morning and afternoon school.
- These registers are legal documents and we take great care to complete them accurately
- Registers must show whether absences are authorised or unauthorised. If we are not given any explanation to why your child is not in school it will be unauthorised.
- Registration is taken in class electronically.
- A designated attendance officer checks the registers have been completed.

The school has a duty to distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence

Authorised Absences

An absence from school is authorised when the school is satisfied the absence was for good and legally acceptable reasons, e.g.

- The pupil was ill and the parent has phoned in daily to let us know.
- The pupil was taking part in a day of religious observance and a letter has been received from the parents explaining this.
- The school has been informed, in advance by letter, of an intended absence, and this has been authorised by the head teacher.
- For an absence authorised at the discretion of the headteacher, e.g. emergency within the family or caregiver illness.

Unauthorised Absences

- For which no written or verbal explanation has been given.

- Where a parent contract (see Parenting contract – A guide for parents on our website) has stated that no more authorised absence will be given without a medical note.
- When a pupil arrives after registration without an acceptable reason.
- When the parent takes a child away from school for a trip, visit or holiday, which has not been agreed by the school in advance.

Holidays in Term Time

- Holidays in term time are very disruptive to a pupil's learning and will not be authorised, except in very exceptional circumstances. Each individual case will have to be agreed by the headteacher.
- Holidays should normally be taken during school holidays.
- Parents are especially asked to avoid taking children on holidays when they should be taking exams or tests.
- Parents should not expect the school to agree a family holiday during term time. Formal requests should be made using the appropriate application form and an interview with the Headteacher. The school do issue fines to parents who take their children out of school for holidays.

Weddings and funerals

1 day will be authorised for a wedding or funeral. If these require travel, 3 days may be authorised (2 days for travel and 1 day for the wedding or funeral).

Medical appointments

Routine dental and non urgent medical appointments should not be taken during school hours. Proof of hospital appointments will be requested. If your child's attendance is below the 97% target, a doctor's note may be requested if you have been to an urgent appointment.

Lateness

- Pupils should arrive in time for morning and afternoon sessions.
- A record is kept of children arriving late.
- Registration is at 8.55 a.m. and 1 p.m./1.15p.m.

- If pupils arrive after registration at the above times they will be marked as late. If pupils are more than 30 minutes late they will be marked as unauthorised for that session. This will go on their attendance records as an unauthorised session.

NEW MARSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY PARTNERSHIP IN PRACTICE

PARENTS

If Your Child Has To Miss School

- Contact the school by telephone or come into the office on the first morning of the absence, so we are aware of the problem.
- If your child is ill, it is helpful if you can give us some idea of how long the absence will last.
- Continue to ring in every day so we know where your child is for their whole absence.

If you do not contact school, please be aware that we will try to contact you and may conduct a home visit, or ask the police to do a welfare check on your child. This is a safeguarding regulation regarding a missing child.

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Prolonged Absence

- If you know your child will be absent from school for a prolonged period, let us know as soon as possible.
- If the absence can be supported by a medical certificate, the school may be able to arrange some home tuition.
- Parents will be asked to provide a medical note to explain a medical absence of more than 3 days.

THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

- By law the Local Education Authority (LEA) must enforce school attendance.

THE SCHOOL

In addition to taking formal registers the school monitors and supports good attendance through the following methods:

- On the first day of absence we will make contact by phone/truancy call/letter. We may then conduct a home visit.

If we're concerned about levels of attendance:

- We'll send a formal letter.
- A meeting in school will then be arranged to discuss the problem if attendance does not improve. A parental contract can be set up at this meeting if the attendance is below 90%.
- We may conduct a home visit on day 1 of your child's absence if their attendance is below 85%.
- In case of persistent absenteeism (below 90%), the school reserves the right to issue a penalty notice warning which could result in a referral to The County Attendance team to issue a fine or take it further through the Magistrates court.

At New Marston Primary School, the headteacher is the named Senior Leader monitoring attendance. The link governor is Chris Jinks.

Information gathering

Each week percentage attendance figures are produced for each class and the whole school.

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Fortnightly, we conduct an attendance check to identify pupils who have an attendance rate which is less than 95% . The school will work with them and their parents to improve their attendance.

Written: January 2023

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