

Maryport Church of England Primary School



'Learn, achieve, shine'

Attendance Policy

To be reviewed: September 2021

Rationale

In law every parent of every child of compulsory school age has a duty to ensure that he or she receives fulltime education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude. Full-time education means attendance for the period prescribed by the school. At Maryport C of E Primary School we recognise the importance of regular school attendance as a key factor in promoting the welfare, social inclusion and achievement of pupils. A high priority is given to ensuring that parents and pupils are supported to achieve regular attendance of pupils registered in our school.

Aims

- ✓ All pupils gain an equal right to access and education in accordance with the National Curriculum;
- ✓ All pupils attend school regularly and achieve attendance levels of 95% +;
- ✓ Communication between home and school will be effective in regards to absence and in maintaining high levels of attendance
- ✓ To ensure the safety of all pupils by recording attendance and lateness

Expectations

Maryport C of E Primary School expects that all our pupils will:

- attend school regularly
- arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day as stated in our home/school agreement which parents will be asked to sign when their child starts school.
- carry out any work provided by the school during an authorised leave period.

Maryport C of E Primary School expects that parents:

- fulfill their legal responsibilities and ensure their child/ren attend(s) school
- contact school, as soon as is practical whenever their child is unable to attend school
- endeavour to keep health appointments out of school hours when possible.
- inform a member of staff of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school
- Should there be concerns about attendance, parents/guardians will be expected to listen to the child and the school, to work in partnership with them and the LA and ensure they fulfill their statutory responsibilities.

Parents and children can expect the following from the school:

- Annual issuing of government regulations to parents with regard to unauthorised holidays and fines;
- regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
- early contact (the first morning) when a pupil is absent without explanation
- action on any attendance problem notified to the school
- referral of specific attendance issues to supporting agencies where appropriate
- attendance figures are published in the Governors' Annual Report to parents.

Guidelines

1. A register of attendance will be kept at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Computerised records of attendance will be updated weekly.
2. Registration period in the morning is from 8.55am to 9.00am and immediately at the start of the afternoon session. Any children arriving after 8.55am but before 9.00am will be classed as late. Any children arriving late after 9.05am will be classed as being absent without authorisation unless a valid explanation can be provided
3. Parents should contact the school and give a reason for absence ideally before 8.55am on the first, and each subsequent, day of absence. A note, verbal message or telephone call from a parent/guardian is required. If contact is not made on the first day of absence then a letter shall be sent to parents requesting a reason for the absence.
4. Parents may not authorise absence - only schools can do this. If school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised.
5. Absences are recorded and will be monitored. When attendance or punctuality are a cause for concern, the Headteacher will contact parents initially by letter. If attendance does not improve, parents may be invited to an attendance panel meeting. If there is still no improvement then the Headteacher will make a referral to the School Inclusion Officer for intervention and support.
6. In line with national guidance, holidays taken in term time cannot be authorised by the Headteacher. Where parents believe there are exceptional circumstances (see appendix 1), these must be discussed with the Headteacher to determine if the absence will be authorised. The Headteacher's decision will be final.
7. Absence when national assessments (SATs) are taking place or during times of internal school assessments are strongly discouraged. Dates for these assessment periods will be published in advance and can be found on our school website.
8. The Headteacher will always raise concerns with the children's Services and, in addition, the following departments will also be contacted when there are attendance concerns about specific pupils:
 - Pupils on Child Protection (CP) register - Social Worker, Social Services
 - Looked After Pupils – LACES team
 - Pupils with statements of SEN - Caseworker, SEN section
9. The school and LA target for attendance is set at 95%. Absence of 90% or below must be monitored and may be referred.
10. Attendance will be regularly reported to governors and the local authority.

Promoting Attendance

Good attendance is promoted in a number of ways –

- Accurate completion of registers
- 100% attendance certificates for each half term
- 100% attendance certificate and reward for the year

- Parents whose child's attendance falls below LA/school target of 95% are informed by letter termly
- Parents whose child's attendance falls below 90% will be asked to meet with the Headteacher to discuss concerns
- Continuous absence below 90% will result in a referral

Monitoring and Evaluation

The attendance of all pupils will be regularly monitored by the Headteacher and Governors.

Data will be collected regarding the attendance of particular groups i.e.

- Pupils on the CP register
- Looked After Pupils
- Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs
- Groups by ethnicity

The following exceptional circumstances will be considered:

- *The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family*
- *To attend a wedding or funeral of close family*
- *Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical/emotional issue*
- *Service personnel returning from tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future out of term time.*

However, if attendance is already below 90% the Headteacher will be unable to authorise the request of the above points.

Also, the Headteacher is unable to authorise requests:

- *The first half term of any academic year*
- *Year 6 transition day*
- *Year 6 SAT's week.*