

MALBANK SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2018-2020

Mission statement

Malbank School is committed to providing quality education in a friendly environment, characterised by support for the individual and high achievement amongst students of all ages, aptitudes and abilities. Malbank School recognises that punctuality and regular school attendance are essential to social inclusion and a prerequisite to effective learning.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parent(s)/carer(s), local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

Statutory Duties

The school takes account of:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Students Attendance Records) Regulations 1991
- The Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2006(as amended)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) regulations 2007 (as amended)
- Guidance for Local Authority & schools on Behaviour and Attendance in place of circular 10/99 & 11/99
- School attendance parental responsibility measures (2017)

Aims of the Attendance Policy

1. To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at school to above 95%.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students.
4. To develop a systematic approach to collating and analysing attendance related data.

5. To further develop positive communication between home and school.
6. To work effectively with the Education Welfare Team and other services and agencies.

Targets

- To ensure that all staff take responsibility for student attendance.
- To achieve a whole school average attendance rate of 95% and over.
- To reduce the number of persistent absentees (PA) pupils.
- To ensure that data is available and used effectively by school managers and staff in conjunction with the EWO.
- To keep parents, carers and governors informed of policy and practice.

Parental Responsibilities

Section 444 of the Education Act states that: ***'If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence.'***

Parents (or the person with parental responsibility):

- Are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school.
- Should ensure that their children arrive at school on time (**before 8.45am**), correctly dressed and prepared to learn.
- Should avoid making non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.
- Should be aware that medical or dental appointments made for the early morning which result in the pupil arriving in school after 9.15am when registers close, will result in an absence being recorded for the morning session whereas an appointment made in the afternoon will not have the same effect on absence as long as the child has registered for pm registration. (This is how national policy is made).
- Should not, except under exceptional medical circumstances, keep their child off school all day for a medical appointment.
- Should phone the school daily for the first 3 days of their child's absence. On the fourth day they should provide full

medical details of the absence and explain any likely further absence beyond the initial 3 days. A written note in the student planner to confirm details of the absence is required to reconcile the register.

- Should provide the school with medical evidence upon request.
- Should be aware that the school may **not** grant any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Should understand that **only the school**, within the context of the law, can approve or authorise absence. Parents have no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time.
- Should provide the school with full written medical documentation confirming any medical condition that is likely to impact on attendance upon their transition to Malbank.
- Should work closely with the school and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to resolve any problems which may impede their child's attendance.

Students' responsibilities

Students:

- Should attend school and all of their lessons on time, equipped and ready to learn.
- Must bring a note to explain their absence on the day of their return, or in advance if known.
- Must follow correct procedures when arriving late to school after the close of registers.
- Should understand that records of attendance and punctuality are included on all references.
- Should understand that failure to comply with policy and practice will result in sanctions eg truancy can result in a period in seclusion.
- Should discuss any problems concerning attendance with their form tutor or a member of the Key Stage Team.

School responsibilities

The school will:

- Identify a member of staff with specific responsibilities for attendance.

- Endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive to educating every pupil.
- Fulfil its statutory obligation to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both morning and afternoon sessions.
- Give high priority to punctuality and attendance.
- Develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- Consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the Student Registration regulations 2006 (as amended) and the EWS Best Practice Guide.
- Use a variety of strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality among parents and carers.
- Develop a range of strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance.
- Encourage open communication channels between home, school and the Education Welfare Team.
- Apply for a Fixed Penalty Notice when appropriate.
- Promote good attendance via a range of rewards.

Staff responsibilities

Staff:

- Will ensure that they accurately mark their registers using SIMS Lesson monitor or a paper copy at morning and afternoon registration.
- Will ensure that they follow the school's attendance and lateness procedures.
- Will be proactive in providing a positive ethos which places a high value on attendance and punctuality.

The Education Welfare Team

The Team:

- Will discharge the Local Education Authority's legal duty to ensure that all registered students of compulsory school age attend school regularly and punctually.
- Will liaise with the member of staff designated the School Attendance Lead to share good practice, discuss annual targets and monitor progress.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING AND MONITORING ATTENDANCE

Registration

- Form tutors will register their forms at 8.45am and 1.20pm by recording attendance and absence using either SIMS Lesson Monitor or a paper copy accessed from the Main Office.
- If a form tutor, supply teacher or cover supervisor does not have access to SIMS they must collect a paper copy of the form list from the Main Office and return it straight away to the Main Office.
- The following codes only can be used by the form tutor:
 - / = present
 - I = illness
 - L = Late (arriving up to 9.15am) and enter minutes late
 - U = Late after 9.15am
 - M = Medical eg appointment with doctor, dentist, Hospital
 - N = No reason yet provided for absence
- Form tutors should not leave registers blank, with a ? or an O
- Form tutors should not enter a C unless they have liaised with the Key Stage Team
- During an assembly a register must be taken either on SIMS or by using a paper copy and returned to the relevant Key Stage office straight after.
- Pupils who arrive late to school should report to the Boulevard or Main office after 9.15 to sign in.
- Form tutors should chase up letters for absence and reconcile registers on a weekly basis.
- Form tutors will ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the link between absence and attainment.
- Form tutors will ensure that attendance statistics and criteria are regularly discussed with their form groups as a whole and with individuals on a one-to-one basis, where appropriate.
- Form tutors will liaise with the Key Stage Team about pupils who have long terms illnesses/issues which might affect their attendance.

Subject registration

- Staff will register their classes every lesson using SIMS lesson monitor

Key Stage Teams

- The Key Stage Administrator will initiate first day absence calls after the close of registers on a daily basis; ensure that late procedures are carried out; meet with the Assistant Head responsible for attendance on a regular basis to discuss PAs; flag up attendance issues at STAR meetings; arrange attendance meetings with parents for the Key Stage Leader/Learning Manager; send out appropriate letters to parents of pupils whose attendance is under 90%; liaise with the Assistant Head teacher (Inclusion) to review data and policies.
- Key Stage Leaders/Learning Managers/Progress Managers will monitor attendance by forms, groups eg SEN pupils and individuals eg Cared for Children; apply the BfL policy where appropriate to deal with persistent latecomers; lead small group intervention work to improve attendance and punctuality; promote good attendance via assemblies, attendance leagues and competitions, reports and the pupil progress file; have attendance and punctuality as a regular agenda item at Key Stage Meetings; meet with parents and pupils to discuss attendance and punctuality issues.

Attendance Administrator

- Co-ordinates whole school attendance data and provides the Assistant Head teacher (Inclusion) with termly reports.
- Collates all data and contacts parents by phone and letter.
- Chases up missing registers and unexplained absences with individual form tutors and pupils.
- Prepares reward data and certificates.

School trips and residentials

- It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to arrange for their departmental administrator or the key stage administrator to mark the register with a V.

Lateness

- Students are expected to register with their form tutor at 8.45am daily. The PM register will be taken during period 4 by the class teacher.
- Students arriving after 8.45 must sign in at the Boulevard or the Main Office after 9.15. They will be signed in as late.
- A pupil who signs in late after 9.15am will be recorded as absent for that session.
- Pupils who are persistently late will be given an after school detention or day in seclusion, as appropriate. Parents will be informed. Pupils may be required to register with the relevant Key Stage team so that punctuality can be closely monitored.

School criteria for attendance

For the purposes of monitoring attendance within school and with the EWO, report writing and job references we record attendance statistics as follows:

97%	=	Outstanding
95%	=	School average
94%-90%	=	Below average, causing concern
Below 90%	=	Persistent Absentees

Monitoring pupil absence

The school recognises the need to monitor all student attendance closely and to put in place strategies to ensure that it meets our targets.

Strategies include:

- Publicising our attendance criteria and the link between attendance and attainment to parents via the website, the student planner, parents evenings and reports.

- Publicising our attendance criteria and the link between attendance and attainment to pupils via form notices, the student planner, pupil log on screens, Large screens around the school, assemblies, competitions, rewards and Celebration of Achievement Day.
- Providing parents with attendance and punctuality data.
- Operating a first absence call via the Key Stage Administrator.
- Reviewing attendance regularly.
- Providing form tutors with attendance data on a monthly basis
- Monitoring attendance and punctuality data at STAR meetings.
- Contacting parents by phone and letter
- Arranging meetings with parents to discuss their child's attendance and set targets.
- Holding 'Late Gate' checks
- Putting students on attendance/punctuality report.
- Holding multi-agency/CAF meetings, where appropriate.
- Close monitoring of persistent absentees, using a variety of intervention strategies to reintegrate eg time in the IRC, referral to Home Tuition etc
- Applying for a Fixed Penalty Notice

Persistent Absence (PAs)

The school recognises that pupils who are persistently absent from school require particularly close monitoring as, not only will their attainment be adversely affected but they may also be putting themselves at risk.

- Separate spread sheets will be kept by Key Stage Administrators to monitor PA attendance and intervention strategies.
- The Key Stage Administrators will meet regularly with the Assistant Head responsible for attendance.
- The STAR group will monitor and put into place strategies to improve attendance such as, set targets; reintegrate into the IRC; hold an attendance meeting; referral to mini-Respect Group
- The Assistant Head teacher (Inclusion) will review data on a half termly basis

Unauthorised absence/Leave of Absence

- Authorised absences include illness and emergency treatment during school hours, funerals of close family.
- Absences which will not be authorised include: looking after siblings, birthdays, shopping, general trips
- Only the school, within the context of the law, can authorise or approve absence – not parents. The fact that a parent has submitted a note does not mean that the school must accept the explanation as a valid reason for absence. Absence without a valid reason, or where there is no explanation is offered at all is recorded as unauthorised absence. School may require medical evidence in order to authorise absences.
- Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any request for a leave of absence under exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the Head teacher.

Where children have unauthorised absences as a result of a family holiday in term time, legal action may be taken against each parent under the following legislation:
Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her child, being of compulsory school age, fails to attend regularly the school at which he or she is a registered pupil. Section 444A allows for a penalty notice to be issued to parents who commit such an offence. The penalty is £60 which rises to £120 if not paid within 21 days. If the fine is not paid after 28 days the parents may be prosecuted. Failure to pay may result in prosecution; if convicted you may be likely to face a higher fine and a criminal record.

Reintegration of pupils after long term absence

Pupils who have been absent from school for personal, social and emotional reasons will be reintegrated on a flexible timetable via the Inclusion Resource Centre.

The school will continue to support pupils who become pregnant by personalising their timetable and putting risk assessments in place. Upon their return to school

arrangements will be put in place for a phased return in accordance with their needs. No more than 18 calendar weeks absence will be authorised to cover the time immediately before and after the birth. The school will liaise with external agencies such as the Education Welfare Service to facilitate the smooth running of the process.

Rewards

The school offers a variety of rewards for good attendance, including termly certificates, vouchers and attendance badges for 100% and most improved attenders; and form prizes for best form attenders in the year. On Celebration of Achievement Day certificates are awarded to all pupils with over 97% attendance throughout the year; those with 100% also receive a badge and gift token. Both Key Stage 3 and 4 run an attendance league cup.

The Year 11 Student Prom Committee determines the attendance criteria for tickets for the Prom.

Accountability

- The Assistant Head teacher (Inclusion) is responsible for overseeing attendance by chairing the weekly STAR meetings; reviewing data and intervention strategies with members of the Access and Admin Teams; setting targets and reviewing progress with the EWO, SLT, Governing Body, Local Authority Personnel and Ofsted and ensuring that legal requirements are fulfilled.

Links to other policies

Single Equality Policy

Anti-bullying

Behaviour and Attendance handbook

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Jan 2018

Signature of Head teacher.....date.....

Signature of Chair of Governors.....date.....