



MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS AT MARUS BRIDGE PRIMARY



Welcome back to our children, parents and families. Firstly, can I start by wishing you all a happy new year and that we experience good health and happiness for 2024.

At the start of this new year, we have been reflecting on what will make the biggest difference to our children and will enable them to learn, enjoy, achieve. One of the biggest factors in this is that children attend school every day. We have good overall attendance at Marus Bridge and working together our aim is to make it even better! The reason for this letter is to communicate just how vital school attendance is and set out the ways in which we can offer support. For the whole time your child is at Marus Bridge, attendance and wellbeing will be of the highest priority. If children are not in school regularly, then they will miss out firstly on fun, but also on building relationships, knowledge and skills that will support them to succeed in future life.

For clarity, any time your child is not in school (authorised, unauthorised, medical appointments etc) they have to be marked on the register as not in school. Any missing register marks for any reason will affect your child's attendance. Therefore, we ask that routine appointments are made outside of school hours.

Please can we ask that you avoid booking holidays in term time. In each academic year there are only a maximum of 190 statutory school days – this allows time for holidays to be arranged outside term time. Holidays taken during term time have to be categorised as unauthorised. When attendance drops below 90%, we will send a letter to inform you and to offer support as per LA guidance. For reference, 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during the school year – that's nearly 4 school weeks.

We understand that some find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages, we aim to work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers by continuing our strong and trusting relationships and by working together to put the right support in place.

Attendance is Everyone's Responsibility, Attendance Matters and Punctuality Counts.

Our Joint Responsibility

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Research suggests that good attendance is crucial in many ways; developing good mental health, strong wellbeing, secure/healthy relationships and go on to live a full and physically healthy life.

Good time keeping

Being 15 minutes late each day is the same as missing two weeks of school and has a significant impact on attendance levels. Every time a child is later than 8.55am, they will miss their registration mark and their attendance will suffer.

School Opening:

8.45am - doors open

8.55am – school bell – classroom door closed – registration

Be on time



at five to nine

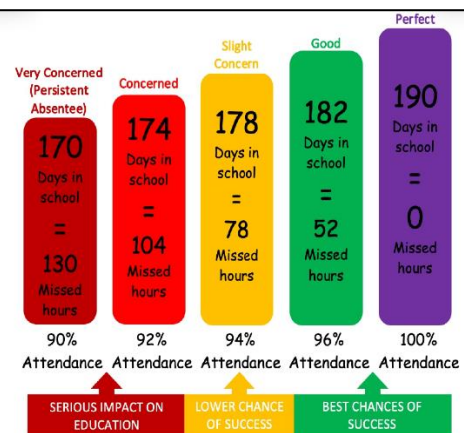
MOMENTS MATTERS – ATTENDANCE COUNTS AT MARUS BRIDGE PRIMARY!



Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of impacts (*DFE: Working together to improve school attendance report, 2022*)

This includes:

- **Education:** children who are not in school miss their work and fall behind. This is likely to result in them not meeting expected standard in reading, writing and maths at KS2 and GCSE's.
- **Friendship struggles:** Children who are not in school miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up.
- **Employment:** Children with low attendance in school are less likely to secure high income and professional employment.
- **Crime:** 90% of young offenders have been persistently absent.
- **Serious violence:** 83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study.
- **Physical health:** Children who are regularly absent from school have increased likeliness to develop physical illnesses.
- **Mental health:** Children who are regularly absent from school have increased likeliness to suffer from mental health issues



Did you know?

When children attend school they:

- Can achieve their full potential
- Have better career prospects
- Learn how to look after themselves
- Learn how to be healthy
- Grow in confidence
- Keep up with work and homework
- Make new friends

A two-week holiday in term-time means the **highest** attendance your child can get is **94.7%**. This is 65 hours of missed school time.



Our aims to celebrate good attendance

At Marus Bridge we celebrate excellent attendance in a variety of ways at our celebration assemblies and offer some great incentives for excellent attendance:

<p>All our children love to compete in our weekly class attendance. The class with the best attendance across EY/KS1 and KS2 will be awarded with a certificate and extra playtime.</p> 	<p>100% Attendance Monthly Prize draw and the chance to win a £10 high street gift voucher – 100% attendance for a week and the chance to be re-entered if they complete any further weeks in the month. They could potentially accumulate 4 entries per month.</p> 	<p>Termly 100% Attendance Award - bronze, silver and gold pin badges. For completing a full term without any absences. Bronze will be for one full term completed, silver for two full terms and gold for completing 100% attendance for the full year – along with a high street voucher.</p> 
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Attendance Procedures

<p>Attendance Team</p> <p>Mrs Bish, Pastoral Manager is our Attendance Officer. She works alongside Mrs Hemingway and Mrs Jackson in the school office to help improve attendance. We are delighted to introduce Mike Roberts our new Local Authority Attendance Officer who will work with Mrs Bish fortnightly to monitor attendance. As a first port of call, Mrs Bish or your class teacher is here to help and discuss anything that is preventing your child from attending school.</p>	<p>Phone Calls and Home Visits</p> <p>Parents must notify school by phone or parent mail on the first day of absence before 9.30am and every subsequent day for safeguarding purposes unless agreed in advance. If this doesn't happen the Office Staff will telephone or text all points of contacts and if necessary a home visit may be undertaken to confirm the child's safety. We will then decide whether to authorise the absence or record it as an unauthorised absence.</p>
<p>Monitoring</p> <p>Mrs Bish and Mr Roberts will review the attendance of all Marus Bridge Primary School children fortnightly. A letter will be sent to the parents of any child falling below 90% to advise and offer support if needed. Further letters and meetings will be offered in order to support and resolve any problems that may be impeding their child from attending school.</p>	<p>Attendance Concerns Drop-in</p> <p>Mr Roberts will be hosting a monthly Attendance Drop-in commencing February 2024, which will take place on the second Wednesday of each month at 2.30pm (this day may change due to school holidays) where you can discuss any concerns around your child's attendance.</p>
<p>Staff</p> <p>Attendance is a big focus in school. As a staff team, we share class attendance weekly and Mr Aldridge communicates the importance of attendance to all staff.</p>	<p>Monitoring - Governors</p> <p>It is the duty of the governors to monitor overall attendance. The Governors will examine information provided to them and seek to ensure that the school's attendance figures are as high as possible.</p>
<p>Parent/Carer Information around attendance</p> <p>Children's attendance figures will be published at parents evening and with the annual reports.</p>	<p>Early Help and Family Support</p> <p>Mrs Bish and Mr Roberts will explore how we can offer support to families with poor attendance including the possibility of Early Help and other wider agency support</p>

Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-School attendance – Parent/Carer Fines

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12 week period

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

you could receive a Penalty Notice of £60 which will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. The Penalty

Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution (a separate penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child).

In law, an offence is committed if a parent fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Wigan Council Attendance Service, in conjunction with schools, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

You may also receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- You fail to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your school and ask for support.

***Achieving our school vision together through excellent attendance in school –
Learn, Enjoy Achieve***