



January 2024

MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

Dear Parents & Carers

I would like to start by congratulating the vast majority of our students who have excellent attendance.

However, for those that don't meet expectations, we continue our strong focus on attendance and the detrimental impact it can have on your child's future. It remains vitally important that children are in school and learning. The Government have launched a new National Campaign with the strapline 'Moments matter, Attendance counts.'

Research highlights a direct link between attendance and academic achievement at GCSE; the lower the attendance, the less likely a student will achieve 5 or more GCSE's at grade 4 to 9. This is demonstrated by analysing our GCSE results last academic year.

ATTENDANCE Percentage	Above or below expected grade
96% and above	1 grade higher than expected
Between 93% and 96%	Achieved expected grade
Below 90%	1 or more grades lower than expected

Statistically school attendance of 96% or higher means you will achieve at least 1 grade higher in your GCSE examinations than predictions would indicate.

Far too many children are absent from school on a regular basis for reasons they should not be, which can include:

- Staying up too late, having a poor night's sleep and being tired
- A brother or sister has an appointment
- General aches and pains, including headaches, sore arm/foot/leg
- Friendship issues
- Anxiety – it is proven that anxiety is always made worse by staying off school. If this is the case, you should contact your child's Pastoral Manager to discuss the underlying issues.

The NHS have a useful section called 'Is my child too ill for school' this gives parents good advice on when to keep your child off or when they can still attend school. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Some parents are only giving "unwell" as a reason for absence with no further explanation.



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A number of students have a repeating pattern of 1 day off every week for reasons including those stated above. If this is repeated throughout a student's school career then it is the equivalent of missing 1 full year of education.

A small number of parents are not proactively keeping us informed and in line with safeguarding your child, we have to check on absent children. The easiest way to keep us up to date is by email to: attendance@marshlandhigh.co.uk

We aim to support attendance in a number of ways including:


- Contacting parents on the first day of absence where we have not been advised, and regularly thereafter, which may include welfare home visits.
- Form Tutors contacting families directly. This supportive contact is to check that everything is OK and return to school can be discussed.
- For students who drop below our minimum expected attendance rate of 95%, with a number of unauthorised absences, attendance plans will be put in place to identify barriers to attending school. If there is no improvement, then school is required to follow the statutory legal interventions. These may include 'Fixed Penalty Notices' and Fast-Track attendance plans which could result in the Local Authority taking parents to court.

In line with statutory requirements, it is the parent or carer's responsibility to make school aware if their child is absent from school. If we are not aware, the absence will automatically be classed as unauthorised. As you will already be aware, school cannot authorise term time holidays.

I, and the school would like to take this opportunity of thanking students and parents who have, and continue to support good attendance at school.

I hope we can count on your assistance in this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact either myself, your Pastoral Manager or our Attendance Officer if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours faithfully



Mr J Crawley
Deputy Headteacher



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