



Marlborough House
Vinehall
A REPTON SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

PROCEDURES FOR MAINTAINING ADMISSIONS AND ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

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References:

- A. Education ([Pupil Registration](#)) (England) Regulations 2016.
- B. The Education ([Working together to improve school attendance](#)) Regulations August 2024.
- C. [ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools](#), September 2023
- E. [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), ISI September 2022
- F. [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#), January 2024, DfE.
- G. [Children Missing Education](#) - statutory guidance for Local Authorities, August 2024
- F. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/208/contents/made> School Attendance Regulations 2024

1. INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE AND AIMS

Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers of its pupils, an Admissions Register and an Attendance Register.

Marlborough House Vinehall School's procedures for maintaining these two registers are set out below and are available to parents and prospective parents on request from the school office.

Marlborough House Vinehall is committed to promoting good attendance and punctuality. School attendance and registration are an essential foundation to positive outcomes for pupils in all areas of their academic lives, as well as for their safeguarding and welfare. As such, attendance is everyone's responsibility.

Staff work hard to ensure that Repton Prep is a place that pupils want to be by creating an environment where pupils can:

- Make new friends and feel included
- Learn new things and develop skills
- Increase their confidence and self-esteem
- Improve their social skills
- Achieve their potential and fulfil their aspirations

Legally, any child with an attendance of below 90% (regardless of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised) is considered to be a persistent absentee.

This policy has regard to the DfE document 'Working together to improve school attendance' (August 2024)

This is a whole school policy and applies to all pupils of compulsory age and, where applicable, to children in the EYFS.

For pupils to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided by Marlborough House Vinehall, they must have high levels of attendance and punctuality. Ineffective registration and poorly executed follow up procedures can increase the risks of truancy and educational underperformance, which can have a negative effect on personal and social development. Poor attendance or a child going missing from school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect or may indicate that the pupil is at risk of harm.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour policy
- Pupil Wellbeing policy
- Parent Contract
- Marlborough House Vinehall's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- School's Terms and Conditions
- Supervision of Pupils policies
- Children Missing Education policy
- Missing Child policy
- Pupil Code of Conduct

This policy aims to provide a clear framework which complies with statutory requirements and sets out procedures for identifying and addressing situations where pupils fail to attend regularly, or punctually, or go missing.

The primary aims are to:

- Set out the attendance and punctuality expectations of the school.
- Set out responsibilities of the parents.
- Ensure daily attendance registers are taken and maintained appropriately.
- Monitor level of attendance and punctuality, spot trends and listen to and understand reasons for absence.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to families.
- Work with the Local Authority to help families improve attendance.

2. ADMISSIONS REGISTER

The Admissions Register is kept electronically on the school's MIS, Engage. The Admissions Team are responsible for entering the data and for ensuring that, for each pupil, the register contains:

- Name in full (including middle names)
- Sex
- Name and address of every person known to the proprietor to be a parent and/or carer of the pupil (and an indication of the parent with whom the pupil normally resides and which parents hold parental responsibility as defined by Section 3 Children Act 1989). Parents holding parental responsibility, even if not actually caring for the child, have a right to receive relevant information from the school in respect of any pertinent matter affecting the child, unless a court order indicates otherwise.
- At least one telephone number at which the parent/carer can be contacted in an emergency
- Day, month and year of birth
- Day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school
- Name and address of the school last attended, if any
- An indication of boarding or day attendance
- Name and address of the school to which the pupil goes on leaving Vinehall.

In line with the DfE's statutory guidance (Children Missing Education: Sept 2016), the Admissions Team will notify the local authority when a pupil's name is about to be removed from the school Admissions Register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the guidance at Annex A. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admissions register at standard transition points. When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register.

The Admissions Team will also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the Admissions Register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the Admissions Register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The requirements for EYFS set out below are in addition to the requirements of the Pupil Registration Regulations, 2016 (above):

- The name and address of every carer (as well as parent) who is known to the provider. See MIS Engage and any other person who has parental responsibility for the child.

- Early Years Census data for children receiving the EYEE must be recorded and submitted to the local authority. This includes ethnicity (voluntary), special educational needs status, number of funded hours taken up during the census week. Number of hours (funded/unfunded) taken up at the setting during the census week.

This is a whole school policy and applies to all pupils of compulsory age and, where applicable, to children in the EYFS.

3. ATTENDANCE REGISTER

At Vinehall we see education as a partnership between the family and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for each pupil, and we look to parents to support this objective.

The Attendance Register must be completed twice a day, at the start of the morning session and at Lunch.

Children are expected to arrive at school promptly and the school day begins with registration in both the Prep School and in Pre-Prep between 8.15 – 8.40am. The second registration in the Prep School is taken during Junior and Senior lunch, while in Pre-Prep and Early Years, children should be registered by 1.30 pm as they come in from playtime. Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a designated parent or a member of staff, for a trip, visit or sporting fixture.

The Prep School day finishes at 4.45pm (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday), at 4.10pm (Wednesday) and at 12.20pm (Saturday). Sometimes pupils stay later to take part in school matches or co-curricular activities under the supervision of a member of staff. Early Years children in the Nursery and Kindergarten are either registered for morning sessions until 12.45 pm or for full day sessions, until 3.15 pm. Reception and KS1 children stay until 3.15 pm, unless they are involved in a club.

Parents are expected to collect their children promptly at the published times. Where there are any changes to the published times these are notified to parents with as much notice as possible via email, the Engage portal, or telephone.

Where parents need to make changes to collection times or arrangements, such changes should be notified to the school office as soon as possible so that the pupil can be informed of any alteration to the normal routine. Changes to collection times are e-mailed to staff so that all are aware if a child is to be collected earlier or later.

Prompt attendance at morning registration is essential to allow pupils to start the day in an organised manner, to hear any notices given by the Form teacher and to build positive relationships with others in the class. Where a pupil is persistently late for registration in the morning the school (through the Form/Pre-Prep Class teacher) will follow up with the parent/guardian to find out the reason for the lateness and to encourage better time keeping.

The following procedures should be followed by parents in the event of their child being unable to attend school or if their child is late for school:

- If a pupil is absent for any reason, parents should contact the School Office or Pre-Prep Office between 8.00am and 9.00am with a brief reason for absence.
- Parents should ensure that, if their child arrives late for school or misses registration, they sign in using the pupil signing in and out book in the school office or Pre-Prep office before joining their lesson or activity. This book should be completed by the Office Staff whenever a pupil leaves the school premises outside normal times.

- Where a pupil has a medical or dental appointment parents should contact the school in advance (usually via the Form/Pre-Prep Class teacher) with the necessary details. Such information will then be circulated and recorded, as necessary, on the school's MIS Engage.
- In case of planned periods of absence, parents must write to the Head or Head of Pre-Prep for permission at least two weeks in advance.

Where a pupil is absent with no reason provided, the School Office will telephone the parent/guardian to find out the reason for the absence. In Pre-Prep the absence of any Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1 children are followed up by 10am.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Recognise and promote the importance of school attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance and punctuality data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it the most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Share effective practice on the management and improvement of attendance and punctuality.

Responsibility of the School

Every pupil of compulsory school age is entitled to an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. Marlborough House Vinehall expects high standards of attendance and punctuality from all its pupils and will work together with families to achieve this. We will do this through:

- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and punctuality.
- Fulfilling our responsibility in the completion of pupil registers.
- Ensuring a good level of attendance (95%+).
- Monitoring attendance within the school, identifying issues and putting procedures in place to work with families and when necessary, the East Sussex Local Authority, to support children in accessing their right to a high-quality education.
- Retaining attendance registers for a minimum period of six years after the end of the academic year in question.
- On occasions where lengthy absence is known and understood, support pupils to provide continuity of education.

Responsibility of Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable, efficient full-time education, whether by regular school attendance or otherwise.
- Providing a written note (email) to the school, offering a reason for any absence and provide medical evidence where possible.
- NOT expecting any leave of absence to be granted for the purpose of a holiday.
- Seeing themselves as partners with the school in the education of their children.
- Ensuring their children are in the correct, clean uniform.
- Ensuring their children have a respect for their education and for all those involved in delivering it/working in the school.
- Ensuring they and their child(ren) observe the school's code of conduct and school's rules.

- Immediately informing the Head, including those of EYFS pupils, if a pupil(s) will be residing during term time under the care of someone other than the parents or educational guardian.

Responsibility of Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend School every day when the School is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy to do so.
- Be punctual and arrive at lessons on time, particularly those following breaks and lunchtime.
- Pupils (and parents of younger pupils) are expected to follow the protocols in place for late arrival.

5. REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Attendance Registers are taken electronically using the school's Engage system.

Form teachers are responsible for taking the morning registration at 8.15am (Monday – Friday). Pupils come to their Form rooms at the beginning of the school day and a register is taken. In the event that a Form teacher is absent the Deputy Head will take responsibility for the register to be taken by another member of staff. Pre-Prep (EYFS and KS1) children are registered by 8.40am by their key person. Pupils are marked according to the following criteria:

Unauthorised absence	O
School closed	#
Present (AM)	/
Present (PM)	\
Other Authorised Circumstances	C
Excluded	E
Family holiday (not agreed/excess)	G
Family holiday (agreed)	H
Interview (visit to another school)	J
Medical/Dental appointments	M
No reason yet provided for absence	N
Approved sporting activity	P
Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	X
Pupil not on roll	Z
Illness	I
School Trip or Excursion	V
Late arrival	L

Where pupils have been marked as 'N' for 'no reason yet provided for absence', the office staff will find out where the pupil is or the reason for the absence and the entry on Engage will then be changed accordingly.

A further electronic registration is taken during Junor and Senior Lunch and the pupils are marked according to the same criteria and procedure outlined above except that the registration will be carried out by the member of staff on Lunch duty.

Saturday Registration

Saturday morning school is optional for all year groups and is based around co-curricular activities. Children are registered at the start of their first activity at the activity location.

Procedure for Boarders

Boarders are registered with the day pupils as set out above. In addition, further paper registers are taken at supper and at bedtime (Monday – Friday) and at regular intervals at the weekend to ensure that the boarding staff know the whereabouts of the children at all times.

Electronic Registers

The Admissions Register has been kept electronically on SchoolKompanion since 2014 and Engage since 2021. The data is retained on Engage/SchoolKompanion and is backed up by the service providers in the cloud each evening.

Thus the requirement to retain attendance registers for 6 years, after the end of the school year in question, is met either through SchoolKompanion and Engage.

Children leaving the school unexpectedly

In line with the DfE's statutory guidance (Children Missing Education: Sept 2016) whenever a child leaves the School outside normal school transition times, our Admissions will contact the Local Authority to advise them of this, unless the school is aware of the child's legitimate onward destination.

Pre-Prep (EYFS and KS1) Clubs

All clubs in Pre-Prep have registers, including our After School Club. These are taken by one of the staff organising the club. Entries are made in ink and the registers are kept in the Pre-Prep office.

6. REQUESTING LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Applications for leave of absence should be made in writing and will be considered by the Head, who will determine the length of time the pupil can be absent from school. Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Authorised absence

Authorised absence is whether the school has given approval for a pupil of compulsory school age to be absent from school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. Absences will only be authorised when the Head is satisfied that the reason for absence is genuine and meets the following criteria:

- The child is attending an approved educational activity off site, i.e. interviews, school trips, sporting events, music examinations etc;
- The child is unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of school site or part of it; unavailability of transport provided by school or local authority, where the home is not within walking distance);
- The child is observing a religious festival;
- The child has an agreed medical appointment and the school has been notified in advance;
- The child is too ill to come to school and parents have given specific symptoms;
- There are specific circumstances, usually agreed in advance by the Head, where a child is unable to attend the school, i.e. parent graduation, family bereavement and/or funeral, public performances, emergencies,

family weddings (usually for 1 day only, although for weddings in foreign countries, the Head has the discretion to authorise up to 5 days);

- A temporary time-limited part-time timetable, where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable;
- Leave for Exceptional circumstances can be granted at the discretion of the Head. Each application will be considered individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If granted, the Head will determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school;
- Children of non-compulsory school age will be allowed to be absent for sessions they are not timetabled.

Unauthorised absence

All other absences must be treated as unauthorised and referred to the Head. The appropriate code will be used in the register.

Examples of Unauthorised Absence could be:

- Family Birthday
- Holidays not agreed*
- Illness of grandparents and extended family members
- Non urgent appointments dental/ optician etc.

*No parent can demand leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday as a right. The Head has discretionary power to grant authorised leave of absence on behalf of governors. Holidays within term-time will normally be regarded as unauthorised, unless an exceptional circumstance is agreed.

7. MONITORING ATTENDANCE

All teaching staff are required to monitor attendance and punctuality in the classes or forms they teach and report any concerns to the DSL/DDSLs. The DSL will monitor the Attendance Registers regularly for any emerging patterns of absence or when a pupil is absent without a good reason or if a pupil's attendance or punctuality falls below 90%. If such a pupil is identified from this monitoring, then the DSL and DDSLs will work together with the pupil and their family to understand the barriers to attendance/punctuality and offer support to improve their attendance and/or punctuality.

The DSL will:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality.
- Report to the Head and SLT any emerging patterns of absence or whether a pupil is absent without good reason, or if a pupil's attendance or punctuality falls below 90% (persistence absence) or further, where they are deemed to be persistently absent.
- Work with the parents/carers of the pupil to discuss the reasons for low attendance and/or punctuality, and/or barriers to their attendance and/or punctuality.
- Provide support for the pupil and family when necessary.
- Liaise with the Local Authority to support families and pupils whose attendance does not improve after the steps above or attendance levels continue to fall below 90%.
- Use data to support pupils with increasing levels of absence, arriving at school late or taking leave in term time without permission before it becomes a regular pattern.
- Intervene as early as possible and agree with the DDSLs, SLT, Head and families an action plan for pupils with high level of absence and/or poor levels of punctuality, and those demonstrating growing levels of disengagement with school.
- Manage persistently and severely absent children.

The School Office is responsible for contacting parents to establish the reason for absence or lateness. They are responsible for ensuring all registers are completed by the relevant member of staff and after morning and afternoon registrations, confirming if non-registered pupils are in school or absent/late.

SLT will regularly discuss attendance/absence data and highlighting pupils of concern and/or trends relating to absence. SLT will discuss actions to be taken regarding those pupils whose level of attendance or lateness is cause for concern on a half termly basis, and more frequently as required.

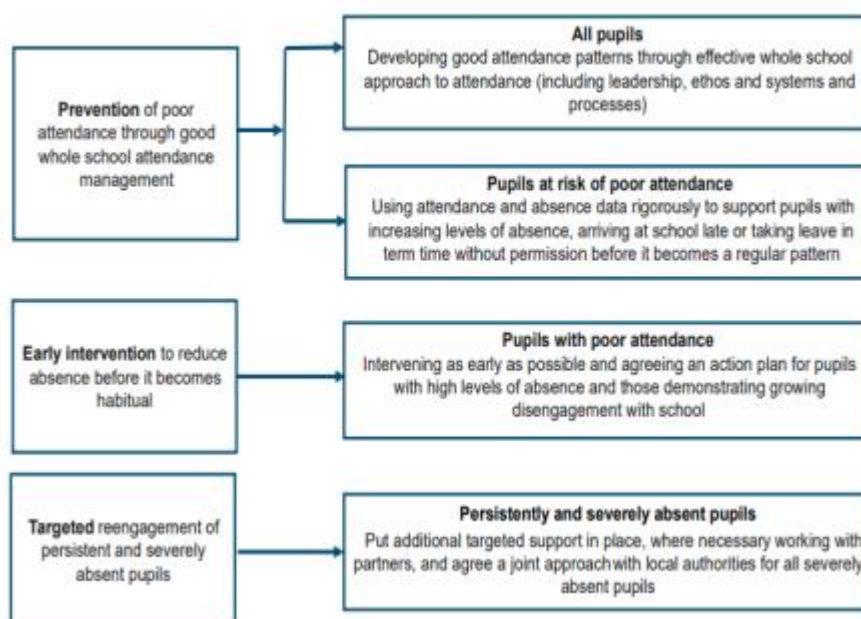
The DSL and Deputy DSLs are responsible for contacting parents regarding concerns over their child’s attendance levels.

The procedure for following up an identified issue with absence is:

- A telephone call to /meeting with the parent/carer to highlight attendance levels
- A follow up letter confirming the conversation and attendance levels
- After the next set of data has been analysed, if there has been improvement, a letter will be sent confirming attendance has improved.
- Should the attendance decline further or not have improved, a telephone call/meeting with the parent or carer, followed up with a letter to confirm the conversation and, if necessary, ask for proof of future appointments or Doctor’s notes.
- If there is further decline in absence, a letter will be sent to the parent/carer requesting a meeting with them and highlighting the fact of a possible referral to the Local Authority.
- Lateness will be addressed initially by a telephone conversation or meeting with the parent, which will be followed up by an email, detailing the conversation.
- A letter will be sent to parents requesting a formal meeting should levels of lateness remain a concern. Support will be put in place to help with the issue if necessary.

The school follows the framework below (from DfE guidance) with regard to managing longer term attendance:

Effective school attendance improvement and management



8. PUPILS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL DUE TO MENTAL OR PHYSICAL ILL HEALTH, or SEND

Pupils who are nervous about attending school

Many pupils will experience nervousness about attending school and this will be for a variety of reasons including worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. These pupils should still attend school regularly and indeed, regular attendance will often serve to help resolve the underlying issues. Prolonged absence can often exacerbate any feelings of anxiousness and future attendance at school.

The school will communicate this expectation to parents and will work with families to ensure that pupils feel included and that barriers to attendance are mitigated.

Pupils who face more complex barriers to attendance

Those pupils who face more complex barriers to attendance can include pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions or special educational needs. The attendance ambition for these pupils is no different to any other pupil, but it may be right for additional support to be provided.

In supporting pupils who face more complex barriers, the school will work to understand the individual pupil needs. The school will work with the pupil and the family to put in-school support in place and will work with the local authority and other external agencies where appropriate. The school will regularly review and update support to ensure that it continues to meet the pupil's needs. The school will always work in partnership with parents to develop specific support.

In cases of long-term physical or mental ill health, the school will:

- Facilitate relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving school attendance whilst supporting the underlying health issue. This could include a time-listed phased return to school where necessary, or a reduced timetable.
- Consider adjustments to policies and procedures, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability.
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent due to sickness, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will miss 15 consecutive school days or more, or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness will reach or exceed 15 school days.

9. LEGAL INTERVENTION TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

The school will prioritise providing support first before attendance legal intervention. As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, the school will always work together with families, partners and local authorities to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis. The school and local authorities will work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution. The school and local authorities will decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These are:

- Attendance contracts, a formal agreement between the parent and the school or local authority to address irregular attendance.
- Education supervision orders, which is made through a Family or High Court, giving the Local Authority a more formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parent(s) to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education.
- Attendance Prosecution, if all other voluntary or formal support has failed or support is deemed inappropriate in the individual circumstances of the case, as a last resort the Local Authority can prosecute the parent(s) in the Magistrates Court, which could lead to a fine or prison sentence.

- Parenting orders, which can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance, which can include a requirement for parent(s) to attend counselling or guidance sessions for up to 3 months. Further details can be found in *Working Together to improve Attendance (August 2024)*. If any of the above are used, the Head and local authorities will make it clear that it is the most appropriate intervention to change parental behaviour and in making the decision to use an intervention, will have regard to their safeguarding duties as set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*.