



The aim of Market Field College's Attendance Policy is to provide an environment which encourages all our learners to attend college regularly and punctually. This is vital if we are to ensure they succeed in college and in their future lives.

The whole college community has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance: parents and carers, learners and all college staff.

This policy has been written in accordance with the requirements in:

- The Education Act 1996 The Education (Learners Registration) England 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration (England) Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration (England) Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration (England) Amendment) Regulations 2013

### **Parent's and Carer's Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all parents and carers to ensure that their children attend college each day unless there is a justifiable reason why this should not be the case.

If a pupil is prevented from attending college because of sickness or other unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to notify the college of the pupil's absence. Ideally this should be by telephone on the first day of absence and confirmed in writing. Wherever possible, parents and carers should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their children during college hours.

Parents and carers do not have the right to take children out of college for a holiday during term time. If, however, parents or carers apply to the college in advance the college may at the Headteacher's discretion, and in accordance with guidance from the Local Authority, grant up to two weeks' term time absence in any academic year.

Attached is a Guide for Parents which may help to answer some important questions.

### **College's Responsibilities**

All the staff at Market Field College will provide an ethos which places a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.





College staff are responsible for ensuring that learners have good attendance by:

- Ensuring that attendance registers are kept accurately.
- Differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absences (a letter or message from a parent or carer does not in itself authorise an absence – only the college can decide whether the parent or carer’s explanation justifies authorising the absence);
- Responding to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care;
- Contacting parents or carers when they are concerned about a pupil’s absences, and recording the contact;
- Consulting with the Missing Education and Child Employment Service (MECES) if a pupil’s attendance continues to give cause for concern;
- Promoting regular college attendance (for example, by contacting parents on the first day of absence if parents have not contacted the college);
- Acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual learners.

In addition, our written home-college agreement includes clear expectations about attendance and punctuality. A guide for college staff is attached. This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if needed. This policy has been evaluated for the potential adverse impact it may have on any individual by reason of their ethnic origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, belief, marital status, caring responsibilities or chosen working pattern, in accordance with the requirements of the Single Equalities Act 2010. It is not believed that this policy will have any such adverse impact on staff or learners for any of these reasons.

## **MARKET FIELD COLLEGE ATTENDANCE POLICY – A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS**

1. When does my child need to be in college? Your child should be ready in good time for the transport to ensure they arrive in college on time.
2. Does the College need letters explaining my child’s absence or will a phone call do? We would expect a parent to telephone the college on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. However, we need a written explanation on your child’s return to college. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child’s end of year report.



3. What reasons will the college accept for absences?
  - Illness
  - Emergency dental/medical appointment/hospital appointment (Please make routine GP appointments after college or during the holidays)
  - Day of religious observance
  - Family bereavement
  - Approved sporting event
  - Family holiday (only when prior approval has been given – see question 6)
  - Extended family visits abroad (only when prior approval has been given – see question 7)

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss college well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

4. What is unacceptable? The college will not usually authorise absences for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping or birthdays. There would be some exceptions to this, for example visiting a relative with a terminal illness but these would need to be agreed with the college in advance.
5. Will the college contact me if my child is absent? The college operates a first day response to absences: a member of the class team or one of the Admin team will phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's welfare as well as their regular college attendance. If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.
6. Can we take family holidays during term-time? Family holidays should, wherever possible be taken during college holidays. If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to accompany you on a family holiday during term time, you should complete an application form, at least three weeks in advance, stating the reason why the holiday must be taken in term time. The Headteacher has the right to refuse permission having given consideration to the guidance provided by the Local Authority.
7. I am thinking about sending my child on an extended trip overseas to visit relatives. What should I do? The college recognises that such trips are important and help children keep in touch with their extended family. Contact the Headteacher as soon as possible to discuss the best time for such a visit. You need to complete an application form for extended leave of absence and if the Headteacher then approves the visit, the college may set work for you child to complete while away. As far as possible we will ensure the work reinforces the educational value of such a visit.



8. What can I do to encourage my child to attend college? Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Your child will bring home a college diary each evening. Please ensure you look at it, and add any comments or information you feel are important.
9. My child is trying to avoid coming to college. What should I do? Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding college for a number of reasons – difficulties with college work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend college and work together to tackle the problem.
10. Does my child's work placement count towards their overall attendance? Yes. Days missed when on work placement serves as a college day. Work placements serve to support specific curriculum targets and as such, poor attendance in this regard can impact upon their ability to complete their course. If your child is to miss their work placement, where possible, we would ask that you notify either the College or employer directly at the earliest opportunity. Repeated unauthorised absence will result in your child being removed from placement and, possibly, lead to a change in their Pathway.