**

*6th February 2020*

*Dear Parents & Carers*

*One of the areas identified in our recent Ofsted inspection that needs to be improved is attendance.*

***We really need your help and support with this, for this to improve.***

*Ofsted have identified:*

***‘Too many pupils are persistently absent. Poor attendance hinders their learning. Leaders should ensure that efforts to overcome persistent absence are successful and that levels of attendance improve’.***

*Currently the* ***persistent absence*** *rate is at* ***24.8%.*** *In 2018/19 the national figure for* ***persistent absence*** *was* ***10.5%.*** *This means that at Marlborough Primary nearly a* ***¼*** *of the children in the school have an attendance rate of* ***below 90%.*** *As a consequence, learning is being missed. If a child misses even a day of lessons, they will have to play catch up when they return, which is not always easy for them, if the rest of the class is moving on.*

*Our overall attendance for this academic year currently stands at 93%. Our target is set at 96%, to bring us in-line with national figures.*

***Yearly School Attendance %***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***% Attendance*** | ***Days Missed*** | ***Weeks*** |
| ***95% =*** | ***8 days*** | ***1 week & 3 days missed*** |
| ***90% =*** | ***16 days*** | ***3 weeks & 1 days missed*** |
| ***85% =*** | ***24 days*** | ***4 weeks & 4 days missed*** |
| ***80% =*** | ***32 days*** | ***6 weeks & 2 days missed*** |

*Some of the children at Marlborough have attendance rates* ***below 80%.*** *This means that if their attendance rate remains the same for the rest of the academic year, they are missing more than a term of school each year.*

*As parents/carers,* ***you have a legal responsibility to make sure that your child attends school regularly****. We understand that some children have ongoing medical needs, and that all children on occasion are unwell and cannot attend, however too many are off school too often. We all need to work together to improve this.*

*Strategies we use to try and combat the poor attendance, such as phone calls, letters home and the Education Welfare Officer contact with parents, don’t appear to be are working as effectively as we need them to. We need your support in finding new ways to work together to ensure children attend school more regularly.*

*We are wanting to start a ‘****Walking Bus’****. This is where 2 or more volunteer adults (dependent on the number of children being collected) pick up children from their homes from 8.30am, going on a safe route walking together to school. This can support parents who may have circumstances at home that make it difficult to get to school on time. We have already had a parent offer to support this but would need more volunteers for this to be possible. All volunteers would have to have an enhanced DBS check. If any of you would be able to volunteer to do this that would be great. The more volunteers the better. If you would like to volunteer for the ‘Walking Bus’, please let me know.*

*We are reintroducing the ‘****Early Bird’*** *lottery, whereby every child who arrives on time for school for the week, has their name put into a hat and winners from EYFS, KS1 and KS2 are selected randomly. Each winner will receive a prize.*

*We will continue to give out, class certificates for attendance each week; for individual children at the end of each term; and have prizes at the end of the year for those with 98% + attendance for the year.*

*We would also like to invite you to come into school on* ***Wednesday 12th February at 2.30pm*** *to meet with Denise Skinner, Parent Support Advisor and myself, giving you an opportunity to share any other ideas you may have, which would help.*

*Thank you for your support*

*Rachel Summers*

*Head Teacher*