

20th September 2022

Dear Parents & Carers

School Attendance Update

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.

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 Grade or more 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:

- 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.

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

A small number of parents are not proactively keeping us informed. We will contact parents on the first day of absence where we have not been advised and regularly thereafter, which may include home visits.

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.

This year, Form Tutors will be supporting attendance by contacting families directly. This supportive contact is to check that everything is OK and return to school can be discussed.

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It is still the parent or carer's responsibility to make school aware if a child is absent from school. If we are not aware, the absence will automatically be classed as unauthorised.

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.

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.

Yours faithfully



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