



ATTENDANCE **DOES** MATTER... GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

Dear parents

Your child's journey with us is critical in terms of ensuring that they achieve the very best they can. This means they leave us with a reference that mirrors their maturity, academic development and celebrates their successes!

Part of achieving their very best means *brilliant* attendance at school.

The following information is from the Department of Education. It is based on decades of research and summarises the legalities surrounding school attendance.

I have summarised key information into a 'parent friendly' format to remind you of just how important education and the greater school experience is to your child.

Without you and your support your child cannot grow in to a 'rounded', curious and responsible young adult; therefore working together jointly with school is key in securing a *brilliant future* for your child.

If you wish to discuss any of the information please do not hesitate to contact myself, our Attendance Improvement Officer or a member of the pastoral team.

Kindest regards

Ms Emma Booth

Pastoral and Progress Vice Principal



WHY ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL IS SO IMPORTANT?

If a child of compulsory school age is registered at a school it is essential that they attend their school regularly and maintain a pattern of good attendance throughout their school career.

Excellent attendance at school is important to allow a child or young person to fulfil their potential. Below are just some of the key reasons why it is so important children attend school:

- To learn.
- To have fun.
- To make new friends.
- To experience new things in life.
- To develop awareness of other cultures, religions, ethnicity and gender differences.
- To achieve.
- To gain qualifications.
- To develop new skills.
- To build confidence and self-esteem.
- To have the best possible start in life.



Miss School –
Miss Out!!



WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

Parents and pupils are supported at school and Local Authority level to overcome barriers to regular attendance, through a wide range of assessment and intervention strategies.

If parent co-operation is either absent or insufficient sanctions are used as a means of enforcing attendance (*never as a punishment*).

The High Court has confirmed that schools, not parents, authorise absence. Parents may be prosecuted if they fail to ensure their child receives an education. The following sections of the Education Act 1996 apply:

- Section 444(1): if “a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil fails to attend regularly” at the school. This leads to a fine of up to £1000 per parent.
- Section 444(1A): if “the parent knows that his child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails to cause him to do so” without reasonable justification. This ‘aggravated offence’ leads to a fine of up to £2500 per parent and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.

The only grounds for challenge in law to an offence under Section 444 are:

- The child was absent for medical reasons (parents/carers should obtain medical evidence to cover the periods of absence);
- The Local Authority failed to provide transport when required to do so;
- The absences were due to religious observance;
- Permission was granted by the school or there was unavoidable cause.

Education is not an option-
it's compulsory and **every
child is entitled**





HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

- Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead.
- Make sure your child goes to school regularly and follows the school rules.
- Ensure your child arrives at school on time – not late.
- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible.
- Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness – this should be followed up with a written note when your child returns to school.
- Take truancy seriously – if your child is not attending school as you expect they may be putting themselves at risk – Who are they with? What are they doing?
- Take family holidays outside term time.
- Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homework).
- Attend parent evenings and school events.
- Praise and reward your child's achievements at school.
- Always support school staff in their efforts to control difficult or challenging behaviour.
- Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school – staff are there to help and will be supportive.



Do NOT be afraid to ask for help and support if you need it. Contact the college on 01530 834925 and ask for a member of the pastoral team



EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS – ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning. Attendance percentages can be misleading...

% Attendance	Number of days / sessions missed	Department of Education 'category'
100% Attendance	0 Days Missed	Excellent
95% Attendance	9 Days of Absence 1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Satisfactory
90% Attendance	19 Days of Absence 3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Poor
85% Attendance	28 Days of Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Very Poor
80% Attendance	38 Days of Absence 7 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Unacceptable
75% Attendance	46 Days of Absence 9 Weeks and 1 Day of Learning Missed	Unacceptable

“Young people who regularly miss school become isolated from friends, underachieve in examinations, are more vulnerable to poor mental health and more likely to become involved in anti-social behaviour and face long term unemployment”

