



2nd September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Statutory changes to attendance: September 2024

As you may be aware, school attendance is a national priority and there are several statutory changes coming into effect from September. Our school attendance proudly sits above the national average; however, we want to do everything we can to increase the attendance, and attainment, of all students.

We previously wrote to all parents and attached a letter from BCP regarding attendance on 4th July. Please refer to this letter for information regarding the importance of attendance, holiday fines and fixed penalty notices.

Attendance

As a school we will follow all statutory guidelines and continue to follow our usual attendance processes, however we wanted to use this opportunity to highlight some ways that you can support your child and their attendance at school.

Routine medical appointments should be made during school holidays, and where this is not possible then these appointments should be made after school finishes for the day. If this is not possible, then please book these as late as possible in the afternoon so that your child can receive their PM attendance mark. We will also need to receive evidence of all medical appointments.

Term time leave. We won't authorise term time leave and encourage families to book holidays in advance in the school holidays so that they are not as expensive.

Mild and seasonal illnesses. If your child has a mild illness which is not one of the NHS's list of legitimate absence reasons ([Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)) then they should be in school. We encourage resilience and for children to be medicated and sent into school. Whilst at school, we have a First Aid Team and pastoral support who can give reasonable adjustments and movement/water breaks to support your child.

If there has been an incident with another student or a member of staff that needs to be resolved, then your child will need to be in school to resolve this. The Pastoral Team will support your child and they can only do this if your child is present. Any absence related to an incident of this nature will be unauthorised.

If your child is feeling anxious about school then we have a well-being hub with trained and skilled staff who can offer your child a range of support, however they can only access this if they are present in school. External professionals such as CAMHs and RIO's also encourage attendance.

Principal: Michelle Dyer



Punctuality

As you will be aware, school **starts at 8.30am** with a line up for all year groups with their pastoral team and tutors. The line ups occur at different locations across the school site and consequently we require students to be on site by at least **8.25am**. Students need to be prepared for eventualities and not leave it to the last minute to get to school.

If students arrive at 8.30am, the entrance will be closed, and students will need to go into the late room. Students who are late to school will receive a one-hour detention on the same day.

If they miss the bus, oversleep or are stuck in traffic then they will still receive a detention. If there are extensive road works or road closures, then the school will be aware of this, and we will decide to cancel the detentions.

One of the changes in the legislation is, if your child is late after registers have closed, this will be an unauthorised absence mark, 10 of these in a rolling 10-week period will result in us having to advise our Local Education Authority who may look to fine or prosecute you.

On occasions, if a child is poorly, we may ask them to come to school slightly later and therefore they will not receive a late detention. This decision will come from direct communication with the school, and this will not be accepted as an excuse for lateness in the late room.

I am sure you will appreciate that all parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children's attendance at school. It is my duty to inform you that a parent is liable to prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 if they fail to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school at which the child is a registered pupil.

Please be assured that all staff at the Academies look forward to working together with you and your family to ensure that your child has excellent attendance and therefore the best chance of reaching their academic potential.

I hope you have had a restful and enjoyable summer; we look forward to welcoming the children back – Years 7, 11, 12 and 13 on 4th September and Years 8, 9 and 10 on 5th September.

Yours sincerely,

Mr David Gorvin
Assistant Principal