



15 October 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we start the new academic year, I write to inform you of our new systems to address one of our OFSTED key issues of improving attendance. We have many students who attend regularly and only have the occasional absence and we thank you for your support with ensuring your child attends regularly. Unfortunately, however, we do have a large number of children who do not attend regularly and this is having an impact on their learning.

The national attendance average for Secondary students in England is 96%, which means that most children do not miss more than 7.5 days per school year. Currently our Academy attendance is 94% and this needs to improve.

Students who attend 90% or less are considered 'persistently absent' by the Government and their names are part of our data submission to the Local Authority on a half-termly basis.

Illness

If a student is ill, please ring to let us know so that we can authorise the absence. Can we request that you only keep your child off school if they are really too unwell to attend. We are currently experiencing a lot of student absence for very minor reasons such as students being tired or having blisters on their feet and these students should really be in the Academy.

If a student's attendance falls below 90% however, we will not authorise any absence due to sickness without medical evidence such as a doctor's note or a prescription. Any absences for sickness of five days or more will require medical evidence to be authorised. If we do not receive medical evidence, a penalty notice will be issued.

Medical appointments

We urge you to try to make medical/dental appointments outside of Academy hours but appreciate that this is not always possible. If you do need to take your child to an appointment, please bring them to the Academy before their appointment and return following it. This way your child will receive their attendance mark for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

Leave of absence in term time

We will not be able to authorise any leave of absence during term-time unless there are very exceptional circumstances and they have been agreed in advance by the Principal. All unauthorised leaves of absence will result in legal action being taken. This legal action may take the form of a penalty notice.

Lateness

The Academy opens at 8.20 and students are expected in by 8.40. Students who arrive after this time receive a break time detention. Students who arrive after the registers have closed are

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recorded as absent and this is considered as an unauthorised absence for the morning sessions. Parents/carers of students who consistently arrive late after the registers are closed may be subject to a penalty notice.

Monitoring of attendance

Attendance is monitored on a weekly basis in the Academy by the Vice Principal, Education Social Worker and Head of House. We will inform you by letter if a student's attendance falls below 96%. If a student's attendance falls below 90% we will inform you by letter that he/she is persistently absent and will invite you to attend a meeting to support you with improving the attendance. At this point, no further absences will be authorised and a penalty notice may be issued for non-attendance.

I hope that we can all work together to ensure that the vast majority of our students are attending the Academy regularly and are, therefore, able to achieve their best. Our Heads of House, Pastoral Support Workers and Education Social Worker, are very happy to support you with your child's attendance in any way and I urge you to contact them if you would like any support.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with your child's Head of House if you have any questions regarding your child's attendance and the procedures we will be following this year.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Avoth
Principal

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