

January 2024

Dear Parent / Carer,

We are writing to all Parents and Carers to remind you of our attendance and punctuality procedures which will be implemented with immediate effect.

We would like to thank all of our parents who support their children with their attendance and punctuality to school every day. It makes a huge difference and prepares pupils for college or work where both attendance and punctuality are essential. By law all schools have to follow strict regulations regarding attendance. Regular and punctual attendance to school is both a legal requirement, and essential for your child to achieve their potential. Your child cannot achieve in school in if they are not here!

All pupils should be aiming for an attendance of at least 96% throughout the year.

You may be aware that there is a national focus on improving attendance. Guidance was published in May 2022 (Working together to improve School attendance) in response to concerns across the whole country that too many children are missing school and their education.

1 day off a fortnight = 90% attendance- National research how pupils that attend at or below this rate achieve on average, one grade less in all their GCSE subjects

2 days off a fortnight = 80%

3 days off a fortnight = 70%

4 days off a fortnight = 60%

Authorised absence will only be given in exceptional circumstances or where there is a validated medical reason. All other reasons will be unauthorised. Five days of unauthorised absence activates a fixed penalty warning notice to be served. Continued unauthorised absence after a penalty warning will result in an automatic fine of £120 to each parent/carers should it not be paid within the first 21 days.

Unfortunately, attendance and punctuality has been a growing issue across all year groups and some pupils are taking time off school for reasons that do not justify an absence. Attendance in all year groups is lower than it should be. We ask that you support us in ensuring your child attends school regularly by; reminding them of the expectations, seeking support from us where required and making them aware of the potential sanctions and consequences should their attendance not improve.

Punctuality

All pupils are required to be seated in their form room by 8.30am for a prompt start. **From Monday 15th January if pupils arrive after this time, they will receive a late mark and will complete a same day after school 30 minute detention that day.** You will receive a text message notifying you of this. Any pupil with 3 or more late marks in one week will be placed in the reflect room. If pupils are regularly late to school, they will be placed on a punctuality passport and you will be asked to attend an attendance panel meeting in school. Should there be no improvement, this will lead to a fine being issued. Not only does arriving late to school impact your child's learning, it puts other pupils and staff at risk.

Breakfast club is available from 8:00 am to 8:20, pupils attending this should use the front entrance, sign in at reception and make their way directly to the canteen where they will remain until form time. They should not roam the building. The front gate will be locked from 8:20.

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All other pupils must arrive through the back gates before 8:30am when the gates will be locked. After this point any pupils presenting to the front gates will be marked as late. Please can we request parents do not drop pupils at the front gates, the car park entrance is for staff only.

Absence

Pupils should not be kept off school for minor / non-contagious illnesses. Many ailments such as eczema, headaches, hay fever and period pains can be managed through simple medication such as ointments, creams, paracetamol and anti-histamines.

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is important that you contact the absence line on 0161 477 3544 selecting option 1 on the morning of each day your child is absent. This is so we know where your child is and can ensure we have the correct safeguarding procedures in place.

All pupils who are absent from school due to illness are required to provide a written absence note which clearly states the reason for their absence. Absence notes should be brought into school by your child and given to their form tutor or attendance team on the first day back. Where absence notes are not provided, the absence will be recorded on their record as an unauthorized absence. Pupils who are off school regularly will receive attendance interventions in school and will be monitored by their year team. You will also be required to attend a meeting and regular absence will lead to prosecution by the local authority. We may also request support from external agencies and the local authority.

Medical appointments

Medical appointments should be made outside of school hours. In the event of exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, they should be made at the very start or end of the school day so your child can still attend school before or after. For all medical appointments, evidence is required in the form of a letter or an appointment card. If medical evidence is not provided, the absence will be recorded as unauthorized and again may lead to prosecution if this occurs regularly.

Holidays during term time

Holidays should only be taken in the school holidays. All of our term dates are published 12 months in advance and can be found on the school website. Holidays in term time will be recorded as unauthorized and will lead to a penalty notice being issued.

Truancy

For safeguarding reasons, it is essential that all pupils attend their timetabled lessons and interventions when in school. **If pupils are not where they are designated to be this will be deemed as internal truancy and this may then be classified as having an unauthorised absence leading to penalty warnings**

Penalty notices

Penalty notices can be issued for a variety of reasons. Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, some examples in which the issuing of penalty notices will be processed include:

- Regular unauthorised absences
- Sporadic absences
- Holidays taken during term time
- Repeated lateness to school
- Repeated truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences

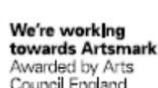
If penalty notices are not paid, this will lead to further prosecution and involvement with the legal system. You may be taken to court or as a last resort you may go to prison.

Rewards

We regularly reward those pupils who achieve excellent attendance each half term. Pupils with excellent attendance and punctuality will often receive the following rewards:

- Free breakfasts
- Amazon vouchers
- Chocolates

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Prize draws
Cinema sessions
Certificates
Badges

We appreciate that the majority of our pupils are conscientious and understand the importance of having excellent attendance and punctuality. It is great to see so many pupils rewarded at the end of every half term and also those pupils who are still on track to achieve 100% attendance for the full year.

We are very proud of our pupils who arrive to school on time every day, equipped and ready to learn. We also appreciate that there may be barriers to regular attendance and punctuality that we are keen to work in partnership with familiar and external agencies to remove. In line with National guidance we want to work together:

“Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to”:

1. **MONITOR** Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

2. **EXPECT** Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

3. **LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND** When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

4. **FACILITATE SUPPORT** Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

5. **FORMALISE SUPPORT** Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

6. **ENFORCE** Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Our Attendance and Pastoral Team has already been successful in monitoring, expecting, listening, understanding and formalising support for the small number of parents who are genuinely struggling to get their child back into school and will continue this, but we also have a duty to 'expect' and 'enforce' when a child is not ill but is not attending.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Your sincerely,

Mrs C. Evans



Deputy Headteacher Behaviour and Pastoral Care

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