



15 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

## IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ATTENDANCE

I would like to thank you for your support in ensuring that your son/daughter has had a smooth return to school. It has been wonderful to have everybody back on site and I hope that all students have had a good first few days back.

### The importance of good attendance

Attendance on the first day was 95%, which was excellent under the circumstances. By Friday that had already dropped to 92%, which is a concern, especially given the fact that students have been off for months due to measures out of anyone's control. As I am sure you will understand, it is our priority to ensure face to face learning time is maximised, perhaps now more than ever.

Days off school soon add up and missing lessons results in students having to work harder when they return to fill in any gaps in their knowledge, so that their progress is not hindered. The table below gives you an idea of the learning which is missed as a student's attendance begins to decrease. While 85% would generally be considered as an impressive test score, in attendance terms, 85% equates to nearly six weeks of missed learning across a year.

Student attendance %	Days missed	Lessons missed (each lesson is 1 hour of learning)
100	0	0
97	5.7	28.5
95*	9.5	47.5
90	19	95
85	28.5	142.5

\*Our schools' target for attendance for 95%.

All students had a message from Mrs Veal on Wednesday as they returned. She talked about lockdown having taught us how important our freedom is to us. Also it showed us that we learn best with and from other people, face to face, and that is why school is so important. We need to remember this long after lockdown becomes a distant memory. The better educated we are, the more choices we have, the more choices we have, the more freedom we gain and the more we have to offer other people. It goes without saying that good attendance plays a vital part in students' education and success.

### Can we help?

If your son/daughter is struggling to attend school, for whatever reason, I would encourage you to make contact with us via their Tutor or Head of Year. We are here to provide support and guidance and will seek input from the relevant professionals to ensure we break down any barriers to regular school attendance.

### You can help

All teaching staff are posting lessons on Teams prior to their lessons in the day so, if for any reason, absence is unavoidable, students do not miss out on learning. However, this is no replacement for being in the classroom, learning with and from others. Please help us to ensure all children are in school as much as possible.

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### Holidays during term time

Finally, I would just like to remind you of the amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, which gives greater clarity regarding the issue of schools authorising absence requests. These changes reinforce the Government's view that every minute of every school day is vital and that pupils should only be granted authorised absences by the school in '*exceptional circumstances*'.

A family holiday is not normally considered by the Government to be an 'exceptional circumstance' and therefore will not be authorised. This includes the time that a family might need to spend in quarantine, following a holiday abroad. As the world begins to open up again, hopefully in the not too distant future, the Government's position on taking holidays in term time has not changed, despite the restrictions we have all lived with for so long.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Kind regards



Dave Ray  
Associate Assistant Head teacher

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