

2015

Attendance Information for Parents





Attendance = Achievement

At Southchurch High School excellent attendance and punctuality is our aim for every student. Full attendance maximises learning opportunities and parents/carers have a vital role in promoting positive attitudes to good attendance. Evidence shows that students who attend school regularly make better progress both academically and socially. We ask for support from parents / carers to ensure that their child:

- is present at every opportunity and avoids staying at home unnecessarily
- arrives at school on time.

The school attendance target of 96%, is the minimum we expect for all students. Every lesson counts and it is this commitment to learning that will have a positive impact on attainment and progress. The table below shows the impact that missing just a few days of school can have over the course of an academic year.

Percentage	Description	Days Absent per Year	Number of Lessons Lost	Weeks Lost
100%	Excellent	0	0	0
98-99%	Very Good	2– 4 days	Up to 20	Almost 1 week
97%	Good	5.5 days	Up to 27.5	Just over 1 week
96%	Satisfactory	7.5 days	Up to 37.5	1.5 weeks
93-95%	Cause for Concern	9.5 -13 days	Up to 65	Almost 2.5 weeks
91-92%	Unsatisfactory	14—17 days	Up to 85	Almost 3.5 weeks
90% and below	Persistent Absence	19 days or more	more than 95	4 weeks and over

As a school we reward good and improving attendance in many different ways. Many of our students receive their gold (100%), silver (98-99%), bronze (96-97%) and purple (for improvement) attendance certificates each term. In addition we have inter-form competitions; rewards in assembly; coffee mornings with the Headteacher; attendance trips and shopping vouchers.

However, the greatest reward of all is knowing that as a parent you are giving your child the best possible chance of academic success at school.



Your Questions Answered

What do I do if my child is going to be absent from school?

Try to encourage your child to attend school, if not for the whole day then at least for the morning or afternoon sessions. There are two legal registration sessions each day. If your child really cannot make it into school, you must leave a message with the Attendance Officer on 01702 415300 before 8:30 am on each day of absence. On return to school we request that you provide a written note detailing the reason why your child was absent. You may also be required to provide evidence such as medical appointment cards. On return to school your child will have a return to school interview with their form tutor. Both the letter and the evidence should be given to the form tutor during this interview.

Who do you contact if you know your child is going to be absent in advance?

We ask that where possible you make routine medical and other appointments out of school time. If this is not possible, you must contact the Attendance Officer to explain why your child is unable to attend school before the absence. Please telephone, email or provide a note from home or an appointment card to confirm the appointment. In most cases your child should attend school before the appointment and return to school afterwards where possible.

On what grounds will we authorise absence?

To authorise an absence we will require a written note from a parent/carer and possibly medical evidence before we can make a decision. It is within the school's discretion whether absence is authorised or not. Your child's current attendance will be taken into account when the decision is made. **Please note no holidays will be authorised in term time.**

What constitutes an unauthorised absence?

If we are not informed of an absence before 8:30am and we do not receive a written explanation following this we will 'unauthorise' the absence. If your child receives a number of unauthorised absences we may have to make a referral to the Local Authority who will consider issuing you with a Penalty Notice. We will not authorise absence for reasons such as shopping, uniform, birthdays, day trips etc. If parents / carers wish their child to be absent for other reasons such as compassionate leave, special family events or to participate in sporting or musical competitions etc. an application must be made in writing in advance, where possible, to the Attendance Officer.

Why is my child being questioned about attendance during tutor time?

Tutors will be encouraging students to attend every day. Following each absence your child's tutor will conduct a Return to School Interview with your child. Details of the absence will be recorded and this proforma together with any evidence will be forwarded to the Attendance Officer.



How can I ensure my child catches up on learning missed due to absence?

Your child will have an interview with their form tutor on return from absence. Part of the interview will be to discuss how and when your child can catch up on work missed. It is your child's responsibility to ensure that missed work is completed.

Why am I being called in for a meeting as my child has attendance over 90%, that is good isn't it?

No, 90% is almost 4 weeks missed per year! There is a clear link between progress and attendance. Studies show that students who miss 50% of school have only a 3% chance of achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs. We want to find out why your child has missed up to 10% already.

Can I take my child on holiday during school time?

No, we are unable to authorise any holidays during term time. Following amendments in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2013, Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If the decision is made not to authorise a letter will be sent to the parent / carer confirming this fact and that a penalty notice may be issued. If a holiday is taken without authorisation the school will complete a request to the Local Authority who will decide whether to issue the penalty notice. The current penalty stands at £60 rising to £120 (if not paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Punctuality

Students who arrive late to school will receive a "late text" to inform you that they were late and that they have a 30 minute detention after school. We take our safeguarding responsibility very seriously as a school. If students do not arrive by 9:15am and we are unaware of any absence, you will receive a "First Day Absence Call". If we are unable to speak to you directly we will follow up the phone call with a text message. Calls are made on a daily basis even where your child has been absent on previous days.

On time	Your child has the best possible start to the day
1 minute late	Your child arrives after most students and feels unsettled
5 minutes late	5 minutes per day = 3 days learning lost
10 minutes late	10 minutes per day = 6 days learning lost
15 minutes late	15 minutes per day = 9 days learning lost
30 minutes late	30 minutes per day = 18 days learning lost