



24th April 2017

Dear Parents / Carers

Re: Attendance

As you will know, high attendance is critical if students are to achieve their full potential in school. We are committed to maintaining high attendance and working with our parents to ensure that all students attend school to get the most from the opportunities available. The school's target for attendance, agreed by Governors, is 95%, which would be rated by Ofsted as 'Good'. So far this year, attendance overall is 92%. Your support is key in achieving this attendance target. It is of crucial importance to the school and to your child's progress.

To put this in context:

Attendance Grades				
97+%	95.0 - 96.9%	93.0 - 94.9%	90 - 92.9%	0 - 89.9%
Outstanding attendance (no risk)	Risk of underachievement	Serious risk of underachievement	Severe risk of underachievement	Extreme risk (court action)

I am delighted that punctuality has been good so far this year and would like to thank parents for ensuring that students arrive on time each morning. Please remember that if your child is ill and unable to attend school, you must phone us before 9.15am on 01823 348201, stating your child's name, tutor group, reason for absence and likely return date. Mrs Holley is our Attendance Officer and monitors attendance. Mrs Francis, our Home School Liaison Officer, monitors your child's punctuality each day.

To help encourage students to attend school whenever possible we publish weekly attendance figures for each tutor group on our website and in our school bulletin. We have weekly and termly prizes for attendance including Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards for high individual attendance, and 'Student of the Week'.

In response to parent feedback, the next section of this letter is written to clarify the rules around the circumstances in which leave of absence can be granted during term time.

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Registered Office: Richard Huish College, South Road, Taunton, Somerset TA1 3DZ



Holiday in Term Time and extended leave

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 has been amended (as of 1 September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (Head) of a school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the Head Teacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. The expectation of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as a matter of course as they are likely to be unauthorised and will lead to the issuing of a penalty notice (fine).

Exceptional circumstances are defined as Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting and exceptional significant family events or circumstances. These will be considered on an individual basis by the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will consider every above request individually but the following will not meet the criteria:

- Relatives coming to visit.
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad.
- Family day trips.
- Visiting family/friends that have different half term holidays and may include refusal to attend family weddings and visits to see family abroad.

I will continue to consider the individual circumstances of each request when making a decision and do fully appreciate the difficulties faced by families trying to juggle employment and financial decisions around the timing of holidays. If you are considering making a request for leave of absence during term time, please contact us as early as possible so we can provide advice on whether your request is likely to be granted. Please note that, in line with Government guidance, leave will not be granted if a student has low attendance or if leave coincides with controlled assessment or examinations in Years 10 and 11.

We work closely with the Local Authority to support parents and students to have good school attendance. Our Year Leaders and Home School Liaison Officer also continue to provide support for families in improving attendance. If you have any questions about attendance please do not hesitate to contact your child's Year Leader, Mrs Francis (Home School Liaison Officer) or Mrs Holley (Attendance Officer) for advice.

I hope this information is helpful to you and I would like to thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J Veal
Head Teacher