



September 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

At the Bulmershe School we consider student happiness to be very important, and good attendance is an excellent indicator of how well your child is coping with school-life. We would, therefore, greatly appreciate your help to ensure that, when possible, your child attends school every day.

Good attendance is important for a student to develop their social skills, by making positive bonds with their peers and their teachers, as well as ensuring that their academic progress is not disrupted in any way, thus maximising their future potential .

The average attendance for a student is 95% and your child's current attendance can be found on their tracking sheet or, if in doubt, please contact the school. To help parents and carers understand what this percentage means, we have designed an attendance grading model as shown below. This model indicates the level of your child's attendance, with 'A*' being perfect (100%) and 'U' meaning a child has attendance below 85% which, if picked up by the local authority, could lead to court proceedings.

How good is my attendance?

% of attendance	Attendance as a grade	RATE
100%	A*	Perfect
98-99%	A	Excellent
96-97%	B	Good
95%	C	Satisfactory
93-94%	D	Unsatisfactory
91-92%	E	At risk of becoming a child with 'Persistent Absence' (PA)
90%	F	Identified as a child with 'Persistent Absence' (PA)
<89%	G	Education Welfare Officer (EWO) involved - At risk of a Penalty notice
<85%	U	Court proceedings

Students with attendance below 95% are immediately identified, and we would then work together with you and your child to uncover any barriers that may prevent your child from attending school, and put interventions in place to help remedy the situation and improve attendance.

Acceptable reasons for not attending school:

- family emergencies
- serious medical appointments that cannot be flexible
- other medical or dental appointments – please try to book these appointments for after school; if this is not possible, please book the appointment for after 9.00am, or after 12.15pm, so that your child does not miss more than half a day off school

How can I help my child raise their attendance over the next term:

- if your child is feeling poorly, do try and encourage them to attend school, as the school nurse will send a child home if she feels that this is necessary
- if your child is very poorly and is unable to attend school, please ring the school’s absence line – 0118 9353 353 - and leave the following information: your child’s full name, tutor group and the reason why your child is absent on that day - you are required to ring every morning that your child is off sick
- if your child has missed a day off school, please speak to them, or e-mail their teachers, to check that they have collected any work for the five missed lessons of that day
- if you notice that there is a particular barrier that is preventing your child from attending school, please contact your child’s Head of Year - details can be found on the website
- every two days of attendance to school means that your child’s attendance will increase by 0.1%; therefore, within a few weeks, your child could move up a whole 1%
- if you decide to take your child out of school you will need to complete a leave of absence request form one month prior to the leave request. The school will not approve any absence in term time, except in special circumstances. The form and more information can be found on the website.

Too many days off school has proven to have a detrimental effect on a child’s academic progress (see the table below). This can lead to an increase in anxiety, as the child may feel that they have missed too much work and cannot cope with being too far behind their peers.

Attendance during 1 school year	Equates to days absent	Which is about	Which means the number of lessons missed
95%	10 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	20 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	30 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	40 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	250 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	340 lessons

We hope that you will find the above information useful to help us in helping your child to raise their attendance over the next term. If you would like to speak about your child’s attendance further, please contact their Head of Year, details as above.

Yours sincerely

Miss K Lewis

Assistant Head Teacher