



Attendance Matters, Make Every Day Count

Regular attendance at school is important for ensuring that Focus students make good progress, achieve their academic potential and participate in a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities that develop work-related skills and attributes.

Every student is expected to achieve an attendance level of 95% or above. It is the responsibility of everyone in our school community – parents, students, staff and Trustees to ensure that they achieve this. We monitor and review the attendance data from our schools and they in turn monitor the attendance levels of each student. In schools inspected during 2016, the SIS, Estyn, Scottish and Irish inspectorate expected school attendance to be at least 95%. This is the target for Focus Schools during 2016-17.

Good school attendance habits are best started early. Children learn from those around them and you as parents can set the standards and expectations for your child. Showing your child the importance of attending school every day not only helps your child to settle quickly when starting school but helps them to keep and sustain friendships and enjoy the school environment.

Many Sixth Form students are following intensive course AS and A Level courses and cannot afford to miss valuable teaching and study time. Students will have timetabled lessons as well as time for private study, homework, PSHE/Citizenship, PE and enrichment activities. All Sixth Form students should aim for at least 95% attendance. For an employer, an exemplary attendance record says much about the dedication, motivation and reliability of a potential employee.

Schools recognise that there are times when students will miss school through illness, educational visits or staff training days. School absence falls into one of two categories; Authorised, those which schools will give you permission for, and Unauthorised, those which they will not. Your school is unlikely to authorise absence for holidays and excursions, non-urgent medical and dental appointments. By law, all children of compulsory school age must receive a suitable, full-time education and, as a parent, it is your responsibility to ensure this happens.

Attending school every day = 100% attendance.

During a school year, if your child has:

95% attendance = nearly 10 days absent from school

90% attendance = nearly 4 weeks absent from school

85% attendance = 5½ weeks absent

80% attendance = nearly 7½ weeks absent

**The graph is typical of those produced by schools to show the link between attendance and achievement.*

Evidence suggests a correlation between % attendance and GCSE performance. Attendance matters: it is an important factor in determining your child's success at school. Make every day count.

Tamra Bradbury, Regional Principal, January 2017

