

September 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

Rules for Attendance Reminder

Good attendance at school is the foundation of students making good progress in their education. As students return to school from lockdown, we are reminded that learning time is particularly precious and we are very much looking forward to welcoming students back to school and expect their excellent attendance and punctuality. For the vast majority of students, we look forward to celebrating this excellent attendance with them.

With the full support of our Governors, we have a clear attendance policy and we endeavour at all times to work in partnership with families to promote good attendance for our students. As such, I am writing to you today to set out the range of measures that the school may take where attendance is not at the level expected.

Covid-19 update:

All students are expected to return to school full time. More detailed information about school attendance will be provided for parents next week. The start and finish times of our school day are 8.50am - 3.05pm and the school site will be open to students from 8.30am (not before please). Parents with any questions about their child's return to school should contact their pastoral lead for advice. Of key importance is that children should only attend school if they are fit and well. Any child with symptoms of Covid 19 infection (a high temperature, new or persistent cough or loss of smell or taste) must not come into school. Parents should book a test as soon as possible, informing the school that this is the reason for their child's absence. Students may only return to school once a negative test result has been received or in the case of a positive result, after the required period of self-isolation, currently 10 days. Where a positive result occurs for another member of the household, the isolation period is 14 days. Please keep the school fully updated about your child's health, symptoms and test results so that we can ensure that we take all necessary steps to minimise any risk of infection.

Penalty notices and Lates:

All students are expected to arrive before 8.50am. It is expected that parents will inform the school if students are going to be late. Pupils who are late will be given a demerit. Once a student has accrued 5 demerits for lateness a phone call home will be made by the Attendance Officer. If the lateness persists, supportive phone calls will be made until an improvement is seen. Persistent lateness is not only detrimental to the student's learning and progress, but can also become a distraction to other students and places an administrative burden on school staff. **Under normal operations, as a further measure to continue to improve the whole school's attendance and punctuality, students that arrive late persistently will be required to complete a two week punctuality report. If this is successful the report will end. If not, pupils will be placed on report for a further week. Break and after school detentions as additional sanctions may be given. During our reopening from lockdown these measures have been placed on hold, however we will be reviewing our response to persistent lateness.**

Furthermore, I would like to remind you that the morning register closes at 9.30am. Any students arriving after this time without authorised reasons will be marked as "U" and will count as an unauthorised absence. **These unauthorised absences can be counted towards a persistent absence penalty notice** (see below information below regarding the penalty notices).

Term-time holidays:

Hayle Academy does not authorise term time absence for holidays. Families considering taking a term time holiday **must** notify the school formally using a term time absence form which is available from Student Reception or from our website. The form must be filled out and returned to the school at least two weeks before the holiday is due to commence. The school will only authorise term time absence in genuinely exceptional circumstances. Some parents request term time holidays because of parents' work commitments. For the Head teacher to authorise a term time holiday on this basis, the school requires a

copy of the contract of employment which must clearly state that the parent is not permitted to take a holiday at any time during school holiday periods. This evidence must be attached to the form requesting authorisation of term time absence.

If you fail to fill out a form and we have information or evidence that you have taken your child on holiday, penalty notice action may still apply.

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised absence:

Absence can have a particularly detrimental impact on students' progress and achievement and we have clear analysis from previous years which demonstrates the link between poor attendance and lower achievement. Penalty Notices will be requested for persistent non-attendance of students. Should your child miss 2.5 days (5 sessions), without good reason, you will receive a letter warning you of the possibility of receiving a Penalty Notice. If they then miss a further 5 sessions, **a total of 5 days**, a request for a Penalty Notice will be sent to the County for their decision. Once a Penalty Notice is issued, there is no right of appeal (see penalty notice section below).

Penalty Notices:

If you decide to take your child out of school, without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. The school may refer the matter to Cornwall Council who may decide to take legal action against you. A penalty notice can be issued under Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996. This carries a fine of £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this, but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in Court action. Persistent absences not authorised by the school may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court, leading to fines up to £2,500 and/or custodial sentences.

Attendance support:

We monitor all students' attendance closely and begin to take action to support students and families when attendance drops below 95%. Attendance below this level has been shown to have a significant detrimental impact on student progress and achievement.

If you have received a request for medical evidence, been issued with a 1st Warning of Prosecution, attended an Education Planning Meeting or have been issued with a Final Warning of Prosecution, **these remain in place until acceptable progress has been made in your child's attendance.** Should the school feel that your child is no longer in need of this action or intervention, a letter informing you of this decision will be sent.

I understand that reasons for absence can be complex and it is always our goal to work in partnership with parents. If you have any questions whatsoever, please do not hesitate to contact school. In the first instance you can email our attendance officer at attendanceofficer@hayleacademy.net.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



Mr S Horner
Head of School