



Our Lady Queen of Peace

Catholic Engineering College

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Dear Parents/Carers,

New DFE Guidance on Attendance at School

You may or may not be aware that the Department for Education has published new guidance on attendance at school. The purpose of this letter is to outline the school's attendance strategy and to explain the guidelines that the school has to follow in response to the new DFE guidance document.

It goes without saying that regular attendance at school is important for your child. You will be aware that there is a direct correlation between good academic progress, good GCSE grades and high levels of attendance at school. We do recognise that, post-Covid, some students have found attending school regularly more of a challenge. As a school, we have therefore made some changes to our Attendance Strategy and are always looking at improving the ways in which we support students to attend school regularly. This letter summarises our expectations around attendance.

Attendance Team

Our Attendance Team comprises of Mr Diamond, Assistant Headteacher in charge of attendance, Mrs Scott, our Attendance Officer and Mrs Hall, our Attendance Improvement Worker. Mrs Hall's role is to work with students and families to support parents to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Learning Managers also have an overview of attendance. In addition, we have a team of five Pastoral Support Assistants who make daily calls to support student attendance.

Year Group	Learning Manager	Pastoral Support Assistant
7	Ms T. Poskitt	Mrs S. Quane
8	Mr T. Hudson	Mrs G. Banks
9	Mrs H. Roby	Miss O. Jones
10	Mrs K. Leicester	Mrs C. Snead
11	Mrs K. Knight	Mrs K. Batchelor

School Attendance Targets

Every student should have a minimum attendance of **97% or higher**.

All students should strive to achieve **100%** if they can.

Persistent absence is defined as any child whose cumulative attendance is **90%** or below at any point during the academic year. 90% attendance means a student is missing half a day of school every week throughout the year. That is equivalent to 4 weeks of learning.



In Christ We Grow

'As a learning community, we live out our Mission Statement striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving'.

ABSENCE = LOST OPPORTUNITY



Did You Know... ?

If Your Child's Attendance During the School Year...	Your Child Would Have Lost Approximately...	or They Would Have Missed Approximately...
was 95%	9 Days from School	50 Lessons
was 90%	19 Days from School	100 Lessons
was 85%	29 Days from School	150 Lessons
was 80%	38 Days from School	200 Lessons
was 75%	48 Days from School	250 Lessons

Getting Your Child to School Really Matters

Student Absence

Parents/carers should advise the school by telephone or via ClassCharts on the first day of absence by 8:15am and provide the school with the reason for absence and an expected date of return. The school contact number is 01695 725635. If your child is absent without any notification from home you will be contacted by text message and/or by phone to ascertain the reason for absence. This is a legal requirement. At regular intervals during the school day we carry out home visits. If your child is absent from school during the week, you may be visited at home by a member of the Attendance Team whether you have notified us of the absence or not.

Illness

Parents / carers should send their child to school every day, unless they are too ill to attend, please refer to this link for further information when making a decision: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>. Parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence to allow the Headteacher to authorise absence where there has been a prolonged period of non-attendance. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical Appointments

For medical appointments, we require evidence confirming the date and time of your child's appointment. Unfortunately, a telephone call is not sufficient evidence. Medical evidence can take the form of an appointment card, a letter, or a text message. This can either be scanned and sent via email or a paper copy brought into school by your child.

Family Holidays and Extended Leave

School does not authorise term time leave unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please complete the absence request form, send it to the attendance team. It will then be passed to the Headteacher for approval. Parents/carers are strongly advised to not to take their children on holiday during term time. Parents/carers do not have an automatic right, in law, to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that they will receive a Penalty Notice Fines. If issued with one, each parent will need to pay this directly to the local authority – £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If there was a second period of unauthorised absence within a three-year period then a second penalty notice could be issued, and this would be at the higher rate of £160. Further periods of absence within three years, could mean that you are taken to court with no option of a penalty notice. These rules that came into force across the country on 19th August 2024 as part of the Department for Education's drive to improve school attendance

Late Arrival

Form time begins at 8.30am; students arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late (L). The register will close at 9.00am and students arriving after the close of register will be recorded as a (U). Please note, this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session. Students will also receive a detention. Same rules apply to U marks as absences – 10 or more will lead to the Local Authority issuing a penalty notice. If your child arrives late (after 8.30am but before 9.30am) they will be issued a same day 15-minute detention at lunchtime. On arrival after the close of register, students must immediately report to Student Services to ensure that we know that they have arrived at school and can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school. The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided.

Being late does not only affect just one student, it disrupts the other students in the class as well as the teacher delivering the lesson and creates gaps in learning.

Prosecution

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents/carers realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly, about returning children to education

Promoting Good Attendance

The school promotes good attendance in a number of ways:

- Rewards – Excellent pupil attendance is celebrated on a weekly and termly basis in assemblies.
- Students achieve positive ClassCharts points for Attendance each lesson: Be here, Be on time, Be ready
- Students also achieve ClassCharts points for attending school each day
- Form attendance is displayed in class each week
- Students get certificates for 100% attendance
- Students get positive letters home for good and improved attendance
- The school offers additional pastoral support for individual students who need bespoke help
- A Local Authority Attendance Officer works alongside staff to support and promote excellent school attendance

Support

If you need support, please get in touch with our Attendance Team:

Our Attendance Officer (day to day) is Mrs K. Scott k.scott@olqp.lancs.sch.uk

Our Attendance Improvement Worker is Mrs B. Hall: b.hall@olqp.lancs.sch.uk

I trust that this letter will give you a clear understanding of the expectations around attendance at our school. If you have any queries relating to the above, please feel free to contact the attendance team in school.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs M. Henshaw
Headteacher