



ASTLEY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

One of the Seaton Valley Federation of Schools

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Executive Headteacher: John Barnes

Head of School: Graham Scott

Our Ref : GS/Whole school attendance 2019

October 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

At Astley, we are always striving to achieve the very best for the students in our care, so that they can achieve success in the future. Unfortunately, our whole school attendance figure fell below 93% during the 2018-2019 academic year and this is very worrying for several reasons. In particular, it is difficult to raise the attainment and achievement levels of students if their attendance falls below our minimum expectation of 95%. All examination courses are now more difficult than ever and they become even more of a challenge if students have time off school.

This academic year, things haven't started much better, with attendance figures up to 11 October 2019 as follows:

Year 9	95.20 %
Year 10	91.38 %
Year 11	94.18 %
Overall	93.54 %

These figures are a real cause for concern, so I am writing to all parents to ask for your support in ensuring **all** students maintain a high standard of attendance throughout the year.

What we once perceived as an issue with a minority of students, is now undoubtedly a whole school issue. This can be seen from the figures below which show the number of students in each year group who have already had time off after only 5 ½ weeks in school:

Year 9	61 / 134	45.5%
Year 10	72 / 146	49.3%
Year 11	66 / 136	48.5%
Overall	199 / 416	47.8%

So, nearly half the lower school population have already had at least one day off school. My concern is that some parents/carers may think that the odd day off school here and there doesn't matter and it is only their child who is off school. This is not the case and the impact is massive on learning and attendance. In a potential OFSTED inspection year, I would not wish for all the really positive aspects of our students and school to be overshadowed by concerns over a poor whole school attendance figure.

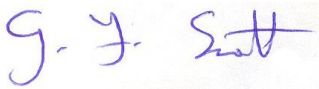
Research suggests that 17 days missed from school (approx. one half day each week), equates to a whole GCSE grade drop in attainment across all subjects.

Obviously, if your son/daughter is genuinely ill and is unable to attend school due to this then we would expect you to keep them off. However, a reminder that if you can send them into school and they are feeling unwell, we can always call you to inform you that they need to go home at some point during the day.

I would like to congratulate those students who continue to attend well and thank their parents/carers for your support in ensuring that this occurs.

I hope that you understand my need to write to all parents/carers and I would really appreciate everyone's support in improving attendance and ultimately attainment. This letter has been sent out to all parents/carers regardless of reasons for absence. We have taken this decision so that everyone is fully informed.

Yours Faithfully



G F Scott
Head of School