

4th July 2024

Dear Parents,

Re: Importance of School Attendance and Punctuality

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to emphasise the critical role parents play in ensuring the regular attendance of their children at Victory Park Academy. The Department of Education's strategy, implemented from September 2023, underscores the priority placed on attendance by both the government and Southend Local Authority.

At our academy, we are committed to providing every child with the right to education. As parents, your fundamental role in ensuring your child attends school consistently and punctually cannot be overstated. Education is the cornerstone of our pupils' development into successful adults.

We are dedicated to working collaboratively with families and offering support to overcome any potential barriers to education. However, this requires open and honest communication from parents. Please be aware that, in partnership with Southend Local Authority, we monitor the attendance of every child daily. If a pupil is late or absent, parents/carers will be contacted as part of our safeguarding procedures. It is important to note that we cannot authorise leave requests during the school term, as this hinders the continuity of education, we would also like to stress that children obtain over 10 weeks holiday per year to enable family holidays and other family commitments to take place.

Additionally, the academy will not authorise reported illnesses falling under the mild ailments scheme, which includes common conditions like coughs and colds. Consistent reports of medical unwellness may lead to referrals to our school health team for further guidance.

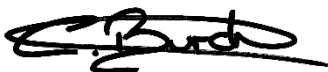
As advised where there are identified concerns of reported patterns of absences, we will seek advice from health and social care. We believe that, through a strong partnership between parents and the academy, we can work together to ensure every child thrives and reaches their full potential.

Your cooperation in prioritising school attendance is invaluable. We have invested in 'Studybugs', this is an app for Parents and Carers which is a better, safer way to report when your child is sick and off school.

With a few quick taps or clicks, you can give your child's school all they need to record absence due to illness. You can download the free mobile app or register online to use via your web browser (see attached for more information on 'Studybugs').

Thank you for your understanding and commitment to the education and well-being of your child.

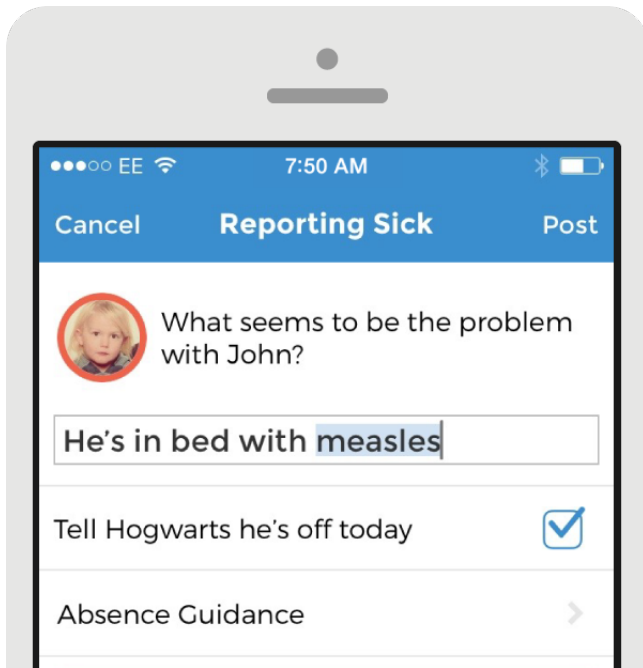
Yours sincerely



Mrs C Burch
Designated Safeguarding and Attendance Lead
Victory Park Academy



Why use Studybugs?



Helps safeguard your child by automating schools' processing of sick reports, so if any children are unaccounted for, they'll know right away. Also verifies that reports of your child's absence have really come from you.

Contributes to public health by collecting anonymised data on illnesses going around — to help schools, parents and public health organisations take preventative action as early as possible.

Saves you time — it takes seconds to give the school all they need, and know they've got the message even if you're reporting at 6am or 11pm the night before.

Guides you with official guidance from the UK Health Security Agency (formerly Public Health England) on the need to stay off school, based on the symptoms or illnesses you enter.

Confidential and secure. Your personal data is kept strictly confidential between you and your child's school. We never share your personal data with third parties. Your child's school cannot see your location. All shared illness data is first anonymised so your personal data is always kept confidential. You can also opt out of having your anonymised data shared.

Note: Studybugs does not provide medical advice or diagnosis — please consult your GP for this.