

## What is expected?

- ◆ We hope that all students will be able to attend school every day but we know that sometimes students are too unwell to attend.
- ◆ To get a good education, students should target a minimum of 96 % attendance every year.
- ◆ At Highdown we reward and celebrate outstanding attendance.
- ◆ We know that attendance is very important and so we monitor every student closely. The Attendance Officer will work with the Head of Achievement and the Assistant Headteacher (Culture and Attitude) to support students who have any problems with attendance.
- ◆ Parents will be notified by phone call, email or letter when we are concerned by patterns of poor attendance (known as persistent absenteeism).
- ◆ Where we cannot resolve matters by phone or email, then parents and students will be invited to a meeting to put an action plan in place.
- ◆ On occasion, the Attendance Officer and one of the pastoral team may conduct a Home Visit to ensure that the student and family are fully supported in returning to good school attendance.
- ◆ As a very last resort, the school may have to contact the Education Welfare Service at Brighter Futures for Children (Reading Borough Council) to begin legal processes.

## Reporting an Absence

If your child is unwell, please contact the school **before 9.05 a.m.**, this can be by



### Phoning the absence line

**0118 9015823**

**leaving your child's full name, mentor group and reason for the absence.**



### Using the Reporting Absence function in the ParentMail App.

**Again, please leave your child's full name, mentor group and the reason for absence.**



Highdown School and  
Sixth Form Centre

Attendance  
Matters

***#weAREhighdown!***

## Why does attendance matter?

The Department of Education has conducted a study<sup>1</sup> to find out why attendance at school matters so much.

They found out that:

Students with 100 % attendance were **more than twice as likely** to attain 5 good GCSEs than those with 90 %.

Just think about it...

90 % attendance means that **only half a day** per week was missed but over a school year this equates to **20 days or 4 weeks of learning**.

Over the two year GCSE program this could mean that **2 WHOLE MONTHS** are missed—that's a big chunk of work!

<sup>1</sup> The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4 (Department for Education, 2016)

## When is absence authorised?

- ◆ Only the Headteacher or their representative can authorise absence.
- ◆ It is the parent's responsibility to provide evidence for illness or other reasons for absence.

## Absence is usually authorised for the following reasons

### Authorised but counted against attendance figures

- ◆ Illness and a reason is given
- ◆ Emergency medical or dental appointments
- ◆ Bereavement
- ◆ Caring for a sick or disabled family member
- ◆ Religious Observance

### Authorised but not counted against attendance figures

- ◆ Approved Educational Activity or Visit
- ◆ University or College interview
- ◆ Approved and planned work experience
- ◆ Approved sporting activity

## Good Habits



All students should aim to arrive at school no later than 8.30 a.m. in order that they can reach their mentor room and be organised by 8.40 a.m.



If a student is unwell, please contact us each day the student is absent. If you are provided with any medical notes, please forward a copy to the school office for the attention of the Attendance



If possible please book medical and dental appointments after the end of the school day or in the holidays.



Please do not take your child out of school for a holiday during term time.



Work with the Attendance Officer and the pastoral team if you notice any problems getting your child to school. If we catch an issue early, we will be able to put a successful and supportive plan in place.