

What is expected?

- School attendance is very important for learning, wellbeing and personal development: students should target a minimum of 96 % attendance annually.
- We expect that students will attend school every day, but we know that students can be too unwell to attend.

Where there are issues with persistent absenteeism:

- Parents will be notified by phone call, email and letter when we are concerned by patterns of poor attendance.
- The Attendance Officer will work with the Head of Achievement and the Senior Leader Attendance Champion (currently Dr Capaldi) to support students.
- The Attendance Officer will liaise with the Inclusion Teams in school and the School Attendance Support Team at Brighter Futures for Children.
- If the problem persists, then parents and students will be invited to a meeting to put an action plan in place.
- Where necessary, referrals can be made to Early Help and/or the Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) teams at Brighter Futures for Children.
- If a student is persistently absent, the Attendance Officer and one of the pastoral team may conduct a Home Visit Wellbeing Check.

Reporting an Absence

If your child is unwell, please report via the ClassCharts App as early as possible **and by 8:40 a.m.**



If you have any problems with the App, please telephone the absence line:



0118 9015823

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



**Highdown School and
Sixth Form Centre**

**Attendance
Matters**

2023-24

#weAREhighdown!

Why does attendance matter?

The Department of Education has conducted a study¹ 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!

¹ [The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4](#)

When is absence authorised?

- Only the Headteacher or her representative can authorise absence. ([Leave of Absence Request Form](#))
- It is the parent's responsibility to provide evidence² for illness or other reasons for absence.

Absence is usually authorised for the following reasons but please let us know as soon as possible:

- Illness ([NHS Advice - too ill for school](#))
- Emergency medical or dental appointments
- Bereavement
- Caring for a sick or disabled family member
- Religious Observance

Students may also be authorised to be away from school for the following:

- Approved Educational Activity or Visit
- Interviews for Sixth Form, university, college or apprenticeship.
- Approved and planned work experience.
- Approved participate in sporting or theatrical activity.

² Evidence can include appointment cards, prescriptions or notes from consultations including from the NHS App.

Good Habits



All students should aim to arrive at school no later than 8.30 a.m. so 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. Please forward any medical evidence to the Attendance Officer.



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.