



# **Attendance Policy**

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*Ambition · Pride · Success*

Haileybury Turnford believes that excellent attendance and good punctuality are essential to the further enhancement of the school vision and aims. We will work in partnership to ensure that all students have the opportunity, through challenge and support, to reach their full academic potential and enjoy maximum benefit from the wide range of educational experiences open to them throughout their school career. The link between high levels of attendance and maximising learning is undeniable. Students reaching the school targets for attendance and punctuality will have some measure of preparation for responsibilities and experiences of adult and working life. Attendance is a whole school issue. If learning and teaching are to take place successfully, it is essential to create circumstances that make it possible for all members of the Haileybury Turnford community to learn; attendance is therefore essential.

Each individual teacher, department, faculty can make a very significant contribution to the positive behaviour in school by:

### **OBJECTIVE**

- Encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- Recording and monitoring attendance and absenteeism by teachers registering students at the beginning at each lesson.
- Acknowledging and rewarding a successful record of attendance.
- Ensuring a consistent approach throughout the school.

### **AIMS**

- Consistently following the Code of Conduct (Being Ready, Respectful and Safe) and Behaviour Policy.
- Preparing lessons well, supporting and challenging all student needs; the better the quality of education the better the student's attendance.
- Taking a real interest in students' wellbeing, using attendance as a motivator demonstrating that data from the last Year 11 results shows those who did best were those with the highest attendance rates.
- Creating a mutual climate of respect, listening to students, asking why they are absent, do they have difficulties with one particular lesson, difficulties catching up, and possibly relationships?
- Attending school in the agreed uniform and arriving to school and lessons on time
- Teachers arriving on time and keeping an accurate register of who has attended.
- Teachers being consistent in their application of our values underpinning the Yellow and Red Card, and rewards system.

### **STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

The 1996 Education Act states that it is the parents' responsibility to ensure their child attends school. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that it is an offence to fail to secure the regular attendance at school of a registered student. The school is advised by law to respond to the local authority and government's agenda in relation to the setting of attendance targets. The statutory framework covers the responsibility

for all parties involved in a child's education (school, parents and student). The school is able to involve other key agencies, where necessary, in the fulfilment of its statutory duties (such as Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO), Police and Social services). Only the school and Local Authority representatives have the right to authorise the absence of students from school. Under Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act, a student is required to regularly attend the school where he/she is a registered student. The school is obliged by law to differentiate between **authorised and unauthorised** absence. A letter or telephone message from a Parent/Carer does not in itself necessarily authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by letter/message will the absence be authorised.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Improving attendance at Haileybury Turnford is the responsibility of everyone in the school community, including students, Parents/Carers and staff.

## **STUDENTS**

All students are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually. Students who experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and consistent support, from their Form Tutor, Year Achievement Coordinators, Faculty Leaders and Senior Leadership Team (SLT). At the end of each term, students whose attendance is either very good or improved will be presented with a range of awards and certificates.

## **PARENTS/CARERS**

Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school every day, punctually, organised, and ready to learn. If a child is prevented, for any reason, from attending, or is late, Parents/Carers are requested to notify the school by email [attendance@haileyburyturnford.com](mailto:attendance@haileyburyturnford.com) either in writing, or by telephone call before 8.30am. A student's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the Parents/Carers. Parents/Carers will be informed promptly of any concerns that may arise over a child's attendance. If possible, Parents/Carers should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality, liaising closely with Parents/Carers, and will promptly investigate all absenteeism. Staff will respond to absenteeism firmly and consistently.

## **BENEFITS FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE**

Improve the chance of good exam results, awards and rewards, the building of high self-esteem, good habits for life, good references, increasing the chances of access to Further Education/Employment.

## **PRINCIPLES**

- Haileybury Turnford recognises the importance of the register as a legal document and will develop procedures to ensure that class registers are maintained to a high standard.  
Parents/Carers will not be granted authorised absence for a child that is absent for more than four days without valid medical evidence from a GP.
- Parents/Carers have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school on a regular and full-time basis.
- The school will ensure that Parents/Carers and students are made fully aware of all matters involving attendance and punctuality.
- The school will have clearly-defined strategies to give due recognition to good attendance and punctuality, whilst also having strategies to address problems of poor attendance in the short, medium and longer-term.
- The Governors of the school will be kept fully informed of all developments involving attendance and punctuality and of the progress of the school towards its targets.
- A close liaison will be maintained by teaching staff. The Inclusion team with Primary feeder schools will ensure year 6 students are integrated with the necessary help, understanding and encouragement to make the transition from primary to secondary school as smooth as possible.
- There will be a close liaison with outside agencies, especially the Local Education Authority AIO who support schools working with poor attenders.
- The school will maintain accurate records of attendance and punctuality information about all students via SIMS.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Strategies for encouraging good Attendance**

- Encouragement and praise by form tutor and members of the whole school community.
- Information to Parents/Carers – texts, letters, interim and final reports.
- Assemblies.
- Certificates and awards/rewards each term and year.
- Certificates and awards/rewards for the good and improved attendance.
- Certificates and awards/rewards for improved attendance within all the bands.

### **Strategies for improving Attendance**

- Lesson Monitor used to record/monitor attendance and prompt intervention. Interim and final reports shared with all staff and Governors.
- Interview Year Achievement Coordinators, Faculty Leaders, Senior Leadership team with Parents/Carers for those students whose attendance falls below 93%.
- Telephone and written contact with parents/carers.
- Attendance monitoring forms/reports.

- School/Local Authority targeting of whole school/year group attendance issues.
- Creating targeted forms for students needing greater support to improve attendance.
- Weekly Attendance Inter-Form competitions.
- Weekly updated attendance data for individual students shared with form tutors. Form tutors will engage in dialogue and discussion with individual students, raising awareness of the importance of their attendance on a weekly basis.
- Half termly certificates for 98% above and most improved attendance.
- Fixed Penalty Notices issued for students who are absent for more than 15 sessions.

## **STATISTICS**

- Students, Year Achievement Coordinator and Form teachers and SLT, will be given information regarding their group's attendance at the end of each week and on a half termly cycle. Parents/Carers will be given information regarding their child's attendance via newsletters/website.
- Assemblies will be scheduled to focus on attendance/punctuality.
- Each week the Year Achievement Coordinator will announce the winner of the Attendance Cup/lottery.

## **POST-REGISTRATION TRUANCY**

- Staff will register classes in the first 10 minutes, all day registration will ensure those who are absent from their lesson can be tracked immediately by Year Achievement Coordinators, these students will have a 'pay back' with their Year Achievement Coordinator at break if they are late – early intervention and response, they will need to catch up work missed . **A paper register will be taken if electronic is unavailable in ALL lessons.** Any student who arrives after 9.00 am will be marked as unauthorised.

## **Attendance Local Authority (AIO)**

- Referral to the (AIO) Attendance Improvement Officer will be made by the appropriate referral criteria and may take place after the school has initially dealt with the matter and it is considered further support is necessary.
- The AIO Attendance Improvement Officer will meet the Attendance Officer regularly and for referral, consultation and feedback.
- The AIO Attendance Improvement Officer will normally become involved when a student's attendance drops to 90% or below.
- The AIO Attendance Improvement Officer, in consultation with the school, will have strategies to help, encourage and improve attendance.
- The decision to prosecute parents/carers will be taken by the AIO Attendance Improvement Officer; a designated member of the AIO Attendance Improvement Office team will pursue this action.

- Fixed Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence are issued by the Local Authority at the request of schools as an alternative to prosecution for non-school attendance. Penalty Notices comply with Hertfordshire's Code of Conduct.
- Parents are individually responsible for their child's attendance. Separate notices will be issued to each parent and each parent is liable to pay the penalty. If the offence relates to one child and two parents receive penalty notices, each is required to pay the penalty – e.g. £60 x 2 if paid within 21 days and £120 x 2 if paid after 21 days and within 28 days.

### **PEER MENTORS**

- Students will be identified and supported with a peer mentor where they could benefit from mentoring to help improve attendance.
- Students will be trained throughout the school to become Peer Mentors supporting attendance of students not meeting their individual targets.

### **YEAR ACHIEVEMENT COORDINATORS**

- Year Achievement Coordinator and Attendance Officer will work closely with feeder schools to identify and work with students who have attendance problems.
- The school will discuss with non-attendeers in Year 7 any problems or difficulties they may have in an attempt to solve their particular issues, preventative strategies explored, nurture groups, personalised curriculum, extra support Information and statistics will be produced for all new students.
- The Year Achievement Coordinator for Year 11 will ensure the arrival of all KS4 students for external examinations, taking remedial action where a student fails to arrive.
- Year Achievement Coordinators with form tutors will work to support and develop individual action plans and appropriate strategy to improve individual attendance.
- To identify and refer persistent post-registration or internal truants to Year Achievement Coordinators and Senior Leadership Team (SLT). To work with form tutors to integrate students back into school after long term absence.

### **FIRST –DAY CONTACT**

- This is regarded as an essential procedure to ensure students are safe, as well as to improve attendance.
- Parents/Carers of students who are going to be absent are asked to contact the school by telephone, on every morning of absence, giving details of the child's, reason for absence and expected date of return by emailing the Attendance Officer at [attendance@haileyburyturnford.com](mailto:attendance@haileyburyturnford.com).

- When no contact is received, the school Attendance Officer will ring/text the Parent/Carers on the first day of absence.
- In order for first day contact to be effective, it is essential that all form tutors keep students contact information up to date and that Parents/Carers inform school of any changes in contact details.
- Students should produce a note explaining his/her absence immediately upon their return to School.
- If there is no explanation for absence received within one week, then the absence will be recorded as “unauthorised”.
- If the problem persists, the Parents/Carers will be invited into school or the Education Attendance Team (AIO) will be asked to visit. A Governors’ Attendance Panel can, (dependent on risk) at that stage, be convened. If a student is persistently absent, then the parents/carers will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice fine up to £60 per child from Hertfordshire County Council Local Authority.

### **AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Absence is **authorised** if:

- Absence from school will normally be due to student illness.
- The student was absent with leave (defined as ‘leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body of the school’)
- The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious group to which the student’s Parents/Carers belongs
- There is a family bereavement.
- The student is attending an interview with either a prospective employer or in connection with an application for a place at an institute of further education or for a place at another school.
- The student is involved in an exceptional special occasion (e.g. if a student is attending the graduation of an older sibling).

Absence should be **unauthorised** if:

- No explanation is forthcoming, following reasonable efforts on the part of the academy to elicit one.
- The student stays at home to mind the house or to look after siblings (the guidance suggests that absence in such cases should only be granted in exceptional circumstances).
- The student is shopping during school hours.

### **LIAISON WITH PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

- Discussion with Primary School staff on student transfer by Transition Coordinator, to include attendance information, issues identified, strategies will be shared.

- Information on school expectations and systems will be given to future students and their Parents/Carers.

### **HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME**

Holidays in term time are not permitted.

### **RAISING THE STATUS OF ATTENDANCE**

Good school attendance is the concern and responsibility of all teachers and support staff. Form tutors can help raise their tutor group's awareness of the importance of good attendance by discussing with them:

- a) The previous cycle's attendance figures for the group.
- b) Ways of making the attendance figures better.
- c) Setting targets that are appropriate and challenging.

On a one-to-one basis, form tutors can discuss an individual's attendance. Parents/Carers and students will be made aware at induction of the importance of regular attendance. Individual students will be rewarded in assemblies. Attendance will be made competitive between individual tutor groups through the use of competitive League Tables/Attendance Lottery.

When students return to school after an absence it is important that staff give positive encouragement by:

- a) Giving assistance with work that has been missed via a catch up card which will offer a fixed time line and the opportunity to discuss missing work with all subject staff supported by Form Tutor and Year Achievement Coordinator.
- b) Not making negative comments.

### **PUNCTUALITY As stated in the Code of Practice –**

- Attend school in the agreed uniform and arrive to school and lessons on time.
- Haileybury Turnford expects students to arrive on time regularly. They will be regarded as late if they are not on school premises by **8:30am**
- Students are expected to arrive promptly for lessons and out of school activities.

### **Strategies for encouraging and rewarding good punctuality**

- Verbal encouragement from teachers.
- Attendance certificates and rewards programme.
- Assemblies.
- Achievement Points and Certificates.

## **Strategies for improving poor punctuality**

- A payback at break time on the day they were late/SLT payback from 3.00-4.00pm (daily).
- Spoken to by form tutor, subject teacher and Year Achievement Coordinator
- Parent/Carer contact through automated telephone/text system.

## **Truancy**

- Catch up work missed becoming a formalised process.
- Attendance report.
- Interview with Senior Leadership Team Inclusion.
- Interview with Parents/Carers and students.
- AIO Improvement Officer Contact.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES Parents/Carers**

- To ensure their child attends school punctually and every day.
- To notify the School if their child cannot attend for any reason – this is for the child's security as well as administrative reasons.
- If a student is taken ill during the school day and, after being assessed by Student Reception, is considered too unwell to remain in school the student must be collected by their parent/carers or other authorised adult.

## **Students**

- To attend school and individual lessons punctually every day, ready to learn.
- To pass on absence notes from Parents/Carers to their tutor/reception and to pass school correspondence to their Parents/Carers.
- To follow school procedures in relation to attendance and punctuality at all times.

## **Local Authority AIO**

- To assist the school in reviewing and revising its policy and procedures in line with most recent guidance.
- To meet regularly with staff having responsibility for Attendance.
- To respond to referrals from the school, making visits and working with individual families in order to improve attendance.
- To support the school in its reduction of Persistent Absenteeism.
- To institute legal proceedings against parents/carers who fail to ensure the regular attendance of their children: where absence is unauthorised and no improvement in attendance has been effected.

## **The Governing Body**

- To require termly reports from the Principal on overall attendance figures, Persistent Absenteeism and progress towards targets.
- To introduce a Governor Attendance Panel to meet with Parents/Carers and students, in an attempt to secure improved attendance.

## **Form Tutor is responsible for:**

- Completing the register and monitoring students' attendance in their bands in an attempt to identify irregular patterns of attendance, e.g. where a student's attendance is failing to meet their individual target or showing regular patterns to discuss / refer to Attendance Data Monitor / Attendance Officer so that Parents/Carers are contacted.
- Where a student is arriving late for registration on a regular basis to discussing with students any unexplained incidence of absence or lateness

## **The Attendance Officer is responsible for:**

Where a regular pattern of poor attendance has been identified

- Monitoring, along with the form tutor, the student's attendance and contacting the Parents/Carers and, where appropriate, issuing an attendance report discussing with students any increasing incidence of absence, truancy or regular lateness.
- Following up any reported truancy or pattern of regular lateness by contacting the student's Parents/Carers.
- Taking such remedial action as is necessary to correct the identified attendance problem.
- Organising support for students where long-term absence is authorised. Regularly updating and informing Year Achievement Coordinator/SLT of students who present attendance concerns and strategies adopted.
- Coordinating warning letters for students who have attendance beneath 93% and Fixed Penalty Notices for those students who have 15 or more unauthorised absences

Penalty notices may be issued in cases of unauthorised absence

The pupil has **15 sessions** (half days) unauthorised absence in the current and/or previous term

The Attendance Officer will ensure a formal warning is sent to the parent/carer prior to the Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

Penalty notices can be issued for pupils of compulsory school age, up to the end of the spring term of year 11.

### **Where no improvement occurs in the identified attendance problem:**

- Informing the Parent/Carer of the future involvement of Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Attendance with a view to involving of the academy's Local Authority AIO.
- Discussing future action with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Attendance and Year Achievement Coordinator.

### **The Senior Leadership Team (Assistant Principal) and Attendance Officer are responsible for:**

1. Having general oversight of the attendance data and monitoring these statistics on a regular basis, including comparing them to any locally-agreed and national attendance targets.
2. Producing attendance data reports to the governors in addition to reporting trends with regards to key minority groupings. We realise that certain students may be prone/vulnerable to poor attendance, with all of the academic difficulties which could ensue. Haileybury Turnford will therefore report on each of the following vulnerable groups to ensure that equal access and support is being monitored:
  - Free School Meals Pupil Premium CLA
  - EAL
  - Year/tutor group
  - Most Able Students
  - SEN
  - Ethnicity
  - Gender Subject/Department
3. Monitoring the smooth operation of the school registration system and bringing about any necessary changes to ensure its smooth and efficient operation.
4. Conducting unscheduled attendance checks as an effective way of monitoring post registration truancy.
5. Introducing remedial action to correct any identified problems of general school attendance.
6. Monitoring all attendance in conjunction with the Attendance Officer with a view to identifying students whose attendance is decreasing, and taking remedial action.
7. Meeting with students with the Attendance Officer with those whose attendance is falling below their individual target and identifying the causes of falling attendance and implementing intervention strategies.
8. Meeting regularly with the Local Authority AIO to discuss the school's general attendance statistics. Meet when an individual student's attendance is slipping below 90% and so giving concern which might warrant the Local Authority's involvement a student is officially on the

school role but transfer to the school has not taken place.

9. Contacting medical services or an Educational Psychologist where medical reasons or phobias, respectively, are possible reasons for poor attendance, having liaised with Special Educational Needs (SEND) staff and coordinator.

**The Attendance Officer is responsible specifically for:**

1. Contacting Parents/Carers of students to discuss Attendance if it falls below the agreed individual target band.
  - Inform them that their child's attendance continues to slip (90% and beneath) and inform them of pending Local Authority involvement.
  - Inform them that their child's attendance has slipped below (93% and beneath).
  - Arrange a meeting with the school's Local Authority Adviser to discuss attendance or to secure support where attendance is falling due to family illness.
2. Liaising with the Local Authority (LA) and local police regarding any local or national truancy initiatives.
3. Liaising with the form tutors/Attendance Officer / Year Achievement Coordinators' regarding student attendance.
4. Holidays taken during term time will NOT be authorised and therefore will count towards unauthorised absence for your son/daughter.

**Attendance Officer Specific duties include:**

- Follow procedures for First-day Absence.
- Inform form tutors of reasons for absence via a note in SIMS.
- Amend registers on receipt of authorisation of absence.
- Alert the Assistant Principal for Inclusion or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Attendance of any case of suspected truancy, internal or external.
- Produce reports, graphs, letters and certificates, as directed by Senior Leadership Team (SLT) attendance.
- Attendance below 96% a L1 Letter will be sent, attendance below 93% a L2 Medical Evidence letter will be sent to parents/carers – 1<sup>st</sup> unauthorised mark and attendance below 90% a Fixed Penalty Warning letter will be sent to parents/carers, holiday will result in a Fixed Penalty Warning. 15 unauthorised marks in previous and current term equals a fine. Fixed Penalty notice is issued to parent/carers.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ATTENDANCE

#### Frequently Asked Questions

**We at Haileybury Turnford are determined to get students into school, keep them here and celebrate their achievements!**

**We would welcome any feedback from you, suggestions to improve these FAQs and ideas to support our rewards for improving and good attendance.**

- We will celebrate with you on our website the best attending forms in each year each half term.
- We will celebrate with a range of rewards for the year group with the best attendance.
- There will be an Attendance lottery in each year group on a weekly basis.

- The students who improve their attendance and meet their individual attendance targets will celebrate their success in a variety of ways
- Students who have exceptional attendance will be recognised for their achievement and their success will be shared.

**Additionally our overall school attendance each month will be published in parent/carer newsletters.**



It is hoped that you will find the following pages and links on the web both interesting and informative. Should you think of anything that you feel would be beneficial, which has not been included, please let Mrs Dettmar (Attendance Officer) know. At Haileybury Turnford regular attendance is regarded as critical to student progress and in recent years a lot of time and effort has been invested into improving our students' attendance. One aspect considered important is good communication between home and school. We are

confident that this will prove to be a successful way of keeping you informed of your child's attendance progress.

### **Why is attendance important?**

Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life. If students do not attend regularly they will not achieve their full potential.

Young people, who miss school, even for a short period, are taking a risk because:

- They may miss vital work in school and have difficulty in catching up with others. It might even affect their coursework or exam results.
- If they hang around streets or town centres they might either become involved in crime or become a victim of crime themselves.
- They might learn bad habits and time keeping, which might affect their chances of getting a job after they leave school.
- They may be at risk of radicalisation or getting involved in other risk taking behaviours.

### **How will absences from school affect my child's progress?**

The following table clearly shows how absence affects the number of qualifications that students receive.

<b>Days Absent</b>	<b>Number of students achieving 5 A*-C out of 100</b>
Less than 7.5 days	90
7.5 – 10 days	72
10 – 12.5 days	60
12.5 – 15 days	50
15 – 17.5 days	43
17.5 – 20 days	39
20 days +	31

It demonstrates that every lesson in school matters and that children who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well at school, particularly as the average amount of absence per student increases.

### **Does my child have good attendance?**

- The school expects all students to aim for 100% attendance.

Regular updates are sent home to keep you up to date with your child's attendance.

### **What should I do if my child is ill?**

Each day school is attended by a number of students who feel under the weather and it is worth remembering that early

morning aches often pass and it is not recommended that a child be kept at home, “just in case”, when they could be learning in class. However, if you feel your child is too unwell to attend school you must ring to let us know, as soon as possible on the following number 01992 308333 choosing Option 1 or by emailing the Attendance Officer at [attendance@haileyburytunrofrd.com](mailto:attendance@haileyburytunrofrd.com)

On return to school your child should bring a letter explaining the reason for absence.

### **Injured / Longer Term Absences**

If your child sustains an injury, or has an illness, that you feel may result in a long term absence, you must contact the Attendance Officer immediately. The Attendance Officer will then arrange for the necessary steps to be put in place to ensure that your child misses as little education as possible. This may involve preparing work packs to be collected and completed at home or, if necessary, may require the involvement of our Special Educational Needs (SENCo).

Once your child is ready to return to school, you may wish to contact your son/daughter’s Year Achievement Coordinator to discuss any special arrangements, for example reduced timetable – exclusion from PE, ground floor classes, lift access, early exit passes.

Once your child has returned to school it is always a good idea, for your child, to check with form tutors to ensure that they have not missed any important information/letters that have been

handed out during his/her absence. They should also speak to subject teachers about catching up on any work missed.

### **What should I do if my child is late?**

School starts and registers are taken at **8:35am** prompt. Any arrivals after this time will receive a late mark. If you are aware that your child will be late to school, you may wish to call to advise us of the reason; you may also wish to put a note in your child’s planner. As a parent or carer, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child arrives in school on time.

We will keep your child in detention (payback) between 3.00– 4.00pm after school followed by a parent meeting for repeat offences as there needs to be a shared responsibility to ensure students are punctual.

For repeated lateness your child could be asked to attend a Saturday Payback.

### **What should I do if my child needs to attend a medical appointment during the school day?**

Wherever possible we would ask that medical appointments be made after 3.00pm. However, if it is necessary for a child to attend an appointment during the school day then we would ask you to follow these guidelines:

- If the appointment is after 9:30am then we would expect the child to attend school beforehand, unless, he/she is too

unwell to attend or lengthy travel is involved. The student should be given a note, preferably in their planner, clearly indicating the time he/she should sign out and whether or not the student is to be collected from school. The note must be taken to Main Reception at the time of signing out. If the child is returning to school then he/she **MUST**, for health and safety reasons, sign back in at Main Reception.

- If the child has received treatment that results in him/her being too unwell to return to school, then a phone call should be made to the Attendance Officer.
- It is worth noting that if an early morning appointment is attended and the child arrives in school before 8.45am then a present mark will be received by the student. If an afternoon appointment is attended and the child does not leave school until after 2:15pm, then a present mark will also be received.

A full day's absence for a routine dentist or doctor's appointment will normally be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

### **Can a student take holiday in term time?**

- Term time holidays and extended leave are not allowed and parents/carers are discouraged from arranging holidays or extended leave of absence during term time.

### **What are the consequences of taking holiday during term time?**

- Students can find it difficult to catch up, both academically and socially following a period of absence during term time. Particularly if this absence takes place at the start of a new school year or term.
- Should a request not be authorised, then the Education Welfare Service are informed of any unauthorised absences from school and may take appropriate action. This may include issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice to parents/carers or Court Action

### **What is an unauthorised absence?**

An unauthorised absence is an absence that has not been agreed by the school. Your child must not be kept away from school for example:

- To look after brothers, sisters, parents or carers

- To mind the house
- To visit relatives
- To go on holiday
- To go on shopping trips
- To take a whole day off school for a dentist or doctors appointment

Students do not automatically have the right to authorise absences from school. Any absence must be covered by a note and upon receipt the school will decide whether or not the absence is to be authorised.

**If my child has unauthorised absences, what can I expect to happen?**

- You may be contacted by school, either by telephone, letter and/or a visit to your home in order that the level of, and reasons for, your child's absence can be discussed with you.
- A plan of action will be compiled that is aimed at helping you improve your child's school attendance.
- A failure to comply with any such plan without valid reason will, if your child's school attendance does not improve, result in a referral being made to the Education Welfare Service, who will aim to support you in ensuring your child attends school regularly.

- Further poor school attendance by your child may result in legal action being taken against you by the local authority
- You may initially be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) after being given a written warning.

**What is an Education Penalty Notice?**

An Education Penalty Notice is a fine issued to parents or carers and can be either £60 per parent/carer, per child, (if the payment is made within 28 days of receipt) or £120 per parent/carer, per child (if paid after this, but within 42 days). Education Penalty Notices are issued by first class post to your home and will explain how and where to send your payment.

**Where can I find information, advice and assistance regarding my child's school attendance?**

You can call Mrs Dettmar, Attendance Officer on (01992-308333) who will be happy to discuss your child's attendance. Further support in school: form tutors in the first instance, AIO Improvement Officer, Year Achievement Coordinators, School Counsellor, School Nurse on an appointment basis, Senior Leadership Team (SLT)