



SIR THOMAS BOTELER

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

THROUGH GOD, WE CARE

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JLE/CJO/ADMIN/ALLDEPTS/SLT/JLE/2425/SCHOOLATTENDANCEUPDATE

10th September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

As we start a new academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to write to all parents and carers with an update on how the school will strive to achieve the highest possible standards of attendance and punctuality. As we work in partnership to support all students, please engage with the information within this letter as it will advise of some changes we are making to the way in which we apply the expectation of good attendance for the forthcoming academic year. The target for individual students at Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School is 96% or above, with this accounting for the average amount of genuine illness.

The link between school attendance and academic outcomes is strong; this is evident from the outstanding achievements of the Class of 2024, achieving the school's best ever GCSE outcomes when performing significantly above national average attendance for a Year 11 cohort. It is regularly referred to that, since the pandemic, school attendance nationally has dropped considerably across the country, which can only be damaging for our students. To this end Professor Chris Whitty, last year, wrote to all school leaders to provide a clinical perspective on school absence. The letter can be read using the hyperlink below:

[Letter to school leaders on mild illness and school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/letter-to-school-leaders-on-mild-illness-and-school-attendance)

By working with you, and with our support first approach, we can step in early to help to prevent patterns of absence developing. We may identify other underlying issues that are making your child reluctant to attend school and be able to help you and your child. For this to be successful, we would ask you to support and work with the school.

We have recently advised of the importance of contacting school regarding all matters of attendance; you can be reminded of this by clicking this link below, where this will also stress the importance of good punctuality, as lateness after 09.00 will lead to a mark of unauthorised absence for the AM session:

<https://t.ly/lzg4n>

The main reasons for absence from school at Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School are outlined here, with specific guidance for parents outlined:



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Short term illness

From time-to-time students are unwell. If a student is so poorly that they cannot attend school, then parents/carers must call the school to advise of reasons for absence. Over the academic year, if a student has six periods of illness absent from school, then all further absence will be marked as unauthorised absence until a note is provided from a medical professional. For example, if a student has 5 days off with tonsillitis and then a further day off later in the year, this would count as 2 periods of illness. If a student has 6 separate days off, then this would count as 6 periods of illness and any further absences would be marked as unauthorised until a medical note was provided.

Long term illness

Unfortunately, some of our students must take extended time off school due to medical issues. Those students can submit a medical note supplied by the consultant or team that is overseeing their care. In these cases, the school can apply for medical tuition from the Local Authority to support those students with their education.

Holidays

The school does not approve any holidays during term time. If you do decide to take your child out of school for a holiday you must alert the school so we can amend the school register with a 'G', which is an unauthorised holiday during term time.

Medical appointments

The school year is 190 days long and we would encourage you to arrange non-urgent medical and dental appointments during the school holidays. On the rare occasion that this is not possible, please alert the school with the information relating to the medical appointment.

We appreciate that there is always a lot of communication regarding school attendance, however, as the Senior Attendance Champion, I want to reassure you that we are here to support. If your child is struggling at school and if you are worried about any aspect of your child's attendance, please speak with your child's form tutor, Head of Year or our Attendance Officer.

Yours faithfully



Mr J Leonard
Deputy Headteacher