

School Attendance Matters!

A very important message for all parents

Dear Parents/Carers

Our school has a good attendance record and we value parents' support in achieving this target.

However, we do feel that attendance levels can be improved. Pupils with attendance below the national average are more likely to fall behind with their studies and find it difficult to catch up on work that they have missed. School is extremely important to your child's social development and academic progress. 97% attendance means a student misses 6 days of important education in year. While we would classify this as good attendance, it is not excellent. We are a good school and students could achieve even more if we can improve attendance further.

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year:	Number of school days missed:	Approximately number of weeks absent:	Number of lessons missed:
97%	06 days	1 week + 1 day	30 Hours
95%	10 days	2 weeks	50 Hours
90%	20 days	4 weeks	100 Hours

Did you know?

Research shows us those children who do not attend school regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- are more likely to be involved in crime
- miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work

What is unauthorised absence?

You may find that we refer to unauthorised absence in letters that we send home. Unauthorised absence includes the following: parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying. If you think your child is being bullied or is refusing to go to school, please contact us immediately. We have staff that will support you with any problems you may have. At Stopsley High School we are committed to providing the best care, guidance and support for all our pupils. One of the ways we can do this is by ensuring regular attendance.

What do we do here in school if we are concerned about attendance?

If your child's attendance drops below 97%, the School Attendance Team will be involved and work with them to improve this. We will write to you to inform you of this. If their attendance drops below this, then our Pastoral Care Manager and Education Welfare Officer will contact you for a meeting. We will, of course, be sensitive to

students with medical need, but may wish to talk to you about how to minimise the educational impact of your child's attendance.

You may also be contacted by the schools Education Welfare Officer, Mrs Ghazala Khan at any point in the school academic year following register inspection.

Can legal action be taken?

The answer to this question is yes. The Government are determined that every pupil should have a good education and therefore fines and legal action are possible, if there is unauthorised absence. The Local Authority has produced the summary below of the legal action that can be used:

- **Issuing penalty notices:** Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. So, if there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £480. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.
- **Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence:** Magistrates can fine each parent up to £1000 per child, add costs and impose Parenting Orders. For an aggravated offence the Magistrates can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and/or impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Advice to support good attendance

- **Ensure your child attends school on time for 08.35am every day that it is open. Please be aware your child will get a late mark if they arrive after registration closes. You child will receive an unauthorised absence mark if they arrive after 9.10am.**
- Contact the school by 9.00am on the first day of the absence stating the reason for the absence and the likely return date.
- Take your child to the doctor if they are unwell and provide the school with: a medical appointment card with one appointment entered, a letter from a professional, a doctor's note, medication prescribed by the doctor, a copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence. The Headteacher will not authorise medical absence without this. Please be aware that if your child's attendance is of serious concern, telephone calls and hand written notes from a parent/carer are not acceptable as medical evidence.
- Talk to your child about their school day, look at planners and books and encourage your child to keep up with homework.
- Consider rewarding your child for good attendance. Rewards can be small, agree them in advance so your child has a goal to work towards.

Help us to aim high

We are delighted to have your support in our aim to raise our attendance levels and ensuring that your child is always at school.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs K Johns
Headteacher



Mrs G Khan
Education Welfare Officer