



Herne Bay High School

Specialist Sports College

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to inform you of forthcoming changes to the school attendance persistent absence threshold.

From 01 September 2015, the government is reducing the threshold from 15% to 10%. This will now class a student with attendance below 90% as a persistent absentee, compared with the previous figure of 85%, regardless of whether the school has authorised or unauthorised the absence. This equates to 19 days of absence across the school year.

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to fulfil their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure that regular attendance is maintained. The Department for Education has published data on their website that clearly shows the link between attendance and attainment. This highlights the fact that there will be an impact on your child's education and exam results if their attendance is not consistently above 95% throughout their schooling.

Minor ailments, such as headache or slight cold, are not acceptable reasons for failing to attend school. Repeated absences may require the school to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery as recommended by the Government. Local surgeries are aware that we will request this information if necessary. In cases where the attendance of a student does not improve despite attempts to do so, we will consider referrals to external Kent County Council intervention teams including the Attendance Service.

I would also like to remind you that the current law does not give any entitlement to parents to remove their child from school during term time for a leave of absence for holiday. Headteacher's may only grant a leave of absence where an application has been made in advance and where it is considered there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

We are confident that you will be keen to work with us to ensure that your child meets the new threshold requirements since it is clear that this will have a positive effect on their learning. Details of your child's attendance figure can be found on reports that are sent home and is also available via your child's Mini Community support officer or the main school office.

Yours sincerely,

Mr C Harris
Senior Vice Principal