

To: Parents/Carers of Pupils of Years 7-11

Our Ref: 87660192

6 February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Moments Matter, Attendance Counts

I would like to start this letter by thanking you for your continued support in our focus on attendance in school. Although attendance isn't back up to pre-covid levels, I am pleased to say we have the highest secondary school attendance in the East Riding, which is an amazing achievement by our pupils and their families, and one we hope to maintain.

You may be aware from the wider media that the government has recently launched a campaign to highlight the importance of school attendance, outlining the benefits that extend beyond attainment, including the nurturing of friendships and general wellbeing. The campaign is targeted at preventable odd days of absence, or "avoidable absence", which for example might be linked to coughs and colds and mild anxiety. It is not aimed at parents of children who face greater barriers to attendance, such as pupils with long-term medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities, who we continue to support with more a more specialised and individual approach.

At the heart of the educational experience is a simple truth: moments matter and attendance counts. This isn't just a slogan; it's a principle backed by evidence and the collective experience of educators across the world.

Why Every Moment Counts

Every day, every lesson presents a unique moment of opportunity for learning. It is a chance to engage with new ideas, to collaborate with peers, and to build upon and embed the knowledge gained in the lesson before. The cumulative effect of these moments is what shapes each pupil's academic journey. When a pupil is absent, the loss isn't just about the hours missed; it is about the moments of interaction, the shared experience and the collective inquiry that cannot be replicated outside the classroom walls. Research consistently shows that regular attendance is a critical factor in educational success. According to the Department for Education, pupils who frequently miss school are at a significant disadvantage academically.

A Shared Responsibility

We know that ensuring regular attendance is a shared responsibility. For most pupils, the best place to be during term-time is in school, surrounded by the support of their friends and teachers. This is important not just for your child's learning, but also for their overall wellbeing, wider development, and their mental health. School is a mini version of society; it's where young people learn to navigate social contexts, develop

resilience, and cultivate relationships. Absences can mean missing out on key social moments that cannot be recreated if learned from a textbook.

The Way Forward

As a parent, it can be difficult to know when to send your child into school if they are feeling unwell or are mildly anxious, and so we want you to know that there is support and information available to help you make the right decision for your child. We have recently launched our new Student Support Hub and a new Attendance Tab. Here you can find further details on the national campaign, NHS guidance on how to decide if your child is well enough to go to school, the attendance of our different year groups and much more: <https://southhunsley.org.uk/student-support-hub/>. As ever, if you have any questions after visiting our hub, please contact us through the school reception.

We hope we can continue to work together to make attendance at school a priority, because when it comes to education, every moment really does count.

Yours faithfully,



Mitch Trainor
Deputy Headteacher