

To: Parents/Carers of Year 7 to 11 Pupils

Our Ref: 87591561

27 October 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

## Re: Attendance Rates

I am writing to express our thanks for your persistence and support in ensuring that your children maintain good attendance rates at South Hunsley School. We were very pleased to receive two nationally recognised certificates for our pupils' attendance rates last year, and we hope to continue with this in the future. Many children at South Hunsley School have excellent attendance (98% or better) and these high rates of attendance help to ensure that our pupils maximise their chances of doing well in school. We endeavour to ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning, and we are really pleased that children are happy and confident in their school environment and want to come to school each day.

As a consequence of last year's high attendance figure, we have continued to set an **ambitious target of 95% for whole school attendance**. We will be working together with you to try to reach this goal.

As we move further into the school year, we would like to remind everyone of the importance of good attendance for all pupils. Every day that a pupil is absent is potentially a lost opportunity for learning. Too many absences can not only affect achievement for the absent pupil but also can slow down learning for an entire class. **Attendance Matters.**

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school and themselves. Research shows that pupils who consistently miss school are at risk of lower academic achievement and can also miss out on engaging in pupil relationships and understanding social norms. We believe it is important that all pupils attend regularly so that they can get the best out of their education and maintain their mental health. The best place for a pupil to learn is in their classrooms with their teachers and peers.

## Everyday Counts

We have an attendance initiative called Everyday Counts to heighten awareness of the importance of attending school each day. The mantra is that if your child is healthy, they should be in school.

## Persistent Absentees

Most children miss a few days of school each year without long-term consequences. However, when they miss more days, the negative effects increase. The Government states that every pupil's attendance should be at least 95%. Any pupil with attendance lower than 92% is deemed to be a Persistent Absentee.

## What Can Families Do?

**Avoid scheduling holidays during term time.** They are considered unauthorised absences unless they meet our “Exceptional Circumstances” criteria.

**Avoid booking medical/dentist appointments during school hours where possible.** Evidence of any appointments within school hours is required to authorise the absence.

**Build regular routines** for bedtime and weekday mornings.

**Lay out school uniform, PE kit, cooking equipment and pack school bags** the night before.

**Talk about the importance of regular attendance** and about how your child feels about school.

**Don't permit missing school** unless your child is truly sick.

If your child seems anxious about going to school, **talk to teachers, Heads of Year/Assistant Heads of Year** for advice on how to make them feel comfortable and excited about learning.

**Develop back-up plans** to get to school if something comes up. Ask a family member or trusted friend for help.

## Absences from school

We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent without speaking to the school first to obtain prior approval.

Further information and an *Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Request Form* can be found on our website under the Key Documents and Policies tab.

Please note that the school day is **divided into two registration periods**; for example, if your child is absent for one day, this equals two sessions and a five day absence equals ten sessions.

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully



Jo Sprakes  
Assistant Headteacher



Luke Duerden  
Assistant Headteacher