



Tuesday 3rd March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Update on Attendance and Engagement in Learning

As we go beyond the mid point of the academic year, we just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you as parents and carers for working so effectively with colleagues to support your child/ren in securing improved attendance and engagement in school. We would appreciate you taking the time to talk through the contents and importance of this letter with your child(ren) at home.

We are pleased that:

- Attendance for the whole school is currently 90.5%, higher than this point last year and the first week of this term was 90.8%.
- Students have received over 70,000 achievement points so far this academic year. Nearly 25,000 more than the same point in the last academic year.
- The number of students being removed from lessons has reduced compared to the same time period last year.

The majority of students continue to live out our values in being Responsible, Respectful and Resilient in their approach to their learning and their behaviour around school. We particularly enjoyed the activities which students and colleagues organised to mark Rare Diseases Day last week, which not only developed their awareness of rare diseases but developed their tolerances and empathy of those around them.

We had a Peer Review last week, conducted by colleagues from the River Learning Trust and they commented positively on the work that we have been doing this year around our curriculum and teaching and learning. Our curriculum and Teaching and Learning framework supports all of our young people to thrive and achieve in school because it is intentionally inclusive and is rooted in research and focused on routines and high expectations.

We know that the best thing for all of our young people is to be in lessons, working with their teachers, regardless of their starting points, and it is time in lessons that makes the biggest difference to student achievement and therefore to their life chances beyond school. We make no apology for having high expectations of students in lessons and are proud that the vast majority rise to this challenge on a daily basis.

Internal truancy

Unfortunately there continues to be a small minority of young people who choose to truant some lessons. At times, this can have a detrimental impact on the learning of others, creating a distraction in the corridors



and taking staff time away from supporting students to engage in their learning. As a school community, we cannot allow the decision to truant a lesson to impact the education of the majority who are doing the right thing. Therefore we are now going to be implementing the following approach:

If a child is truanting a lesson, colleagues in Student Support or on Duty will support them by checking what lesson they should be in and which room they should be in. They will then give them a specific time frame by which they are expected to be in their lesson. Staff will not engage in any kind of back and forth conversation, and will allow the student time to reflect and make the right choice. At the same time, a colleague in Student Support will phone you as the child's parent/carer to inform you of this, so that you are able to reinforce our shared expectations at home.

If the student refuses to follow that clear instruction or continues to truant, they will be suspended from school. A colleague will phone you and you will be asked to come and collect them. The reason for the suspension is that by continuing to truant, this is a clear refusal to follow the clear instructions from staff. By doing this, students are placing themselves at risk and beyond the verbal control of adults.

A reintegration meeting will be arranged, to be led by a member of our Senior Leadership Team, accompanied by a Head of Year. The reintegration meeting will focus on our graduated approach to ensure that the child is receiving the right support. Obviously your input is crucial to this process to support your child.

We recognise that this approach may feel firm. However, it is rooted in a simple belief based on local and national research and experience: students thrive, achieve, and feel more confident when they are in lessons, learning alongside their peers. Clear boundaries provide security, consistency, and the structure that young people need to flourish.

Whilst the information above is crucial for all year groups, if your child is in Year 11, please take a moment to remind them that a basic criteria to be able to attend our Year 11 School Prom in the summer is that students engage in all of their lessons when they are in school. Students in Year 11 who truant lessons will be declined a place at this event.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank you very much for your continued support as always, and we will no doubt see many of you at the New Build Plans, Phases and Progress meeting on Wednesday 11th March at 6pm. If you have any concerns or questions about the above, please feel free to make contact with your child's Head of Year in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel J. Sellars
Headteacher

Chris Bateman
Deputy Headteacher