

July 2017

Dear Mrs Parent / Carer

Important Information for all Parents/Carers

I am writing to you with some key information regarding your child's attendance next year.

From September 2015, the Department for Education raised the attendance level below which a child is deemed persistently absent (PA). This now includes all students whose attendance is 90% or less. If your child's attendance falls below 90%, the local authority may issue a penalty notice or take legal action. This means that a child who misses 19 or more days over a full academic year will be classed as persistently absent.

A key element of achieving excellent attendance is parent support and involvement. Parents/carers play an essential role in supporting attendance and we are committed to keeping parents/carers up to date on the attendance of their children. Information is shared half termly through the Pupil Progress Reports and information about reporting your child's absences is included on our website and attendance policy as well as pupil planners.

We appreciate that the vast majority of parents/carers actively support us in managing student attendance and follow the home-school agreement. If issues do arise which impact on attendance, Levenshulme High School will endeavour to work closely with families to overcome this. It is therefore essential that parents/carers engage with offers of support and early interventions to prevent more serious patterns of absence escalating. By communicating regularly and sharing information, we can work together to ensure the best outcomes for our young people.

One of the simplest ways to prevent persistent absence is to ensure you do not book family holidays during term time or remove your child for leave of absence. We encourage parents/carers to plan ahead when booking holidays and make reference to our term dates, which are readily available on the school website or by request from Student Services. Any application for leave of absence during term time will only be considered by the headteacher if there are exceptional circumstances that warrant granting leave. All requests for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances must be made in writing to the headteacher who will consider each individual case. Only the headteacher can determine the number of school days a student can be absent from school if the leave of absence for exceptional circumstances is granted.

Parents may be liable for a penalty notice or prosecution in the Magistrates Court for taking their children on holiday during term time or for any other leave of absence without the consent of the headteacher, regardless of their attendance up to that point. A Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child. The Penalty Notice incurs a fine of £120 to be paid within 28 days, which is reduced to £60 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you. Other statutory action may also be considered under the Education Act 1996, which may result in you being prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court. If you are found guilty, you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or three months' imprisonment.

Yours sincerely



Dr J MacKinnon, PhD
Academy Headteacher

