

9 January 2017

Dear Parent / Carer,

I would like wish you all a Happy New Year and say thank you to both parents and students for what has been an amazing academic year so far at Outwood Academy Newbold. Students are working hard in lessons and are making the most of the wide range of enrichment opportunities.

We recognise that there is a significant link between attendance and student attainment. Full attendance maximises learning opportunities and parents/carers have a vital role in promoting good attitudes towards attendance. Days off school soon add up and missing lessons makes it hard to catch up resulting in students having to work harder when they come back even missing vital information that will prevent their progress.

There are 175 non-school days a year for holidays, cultural experiences and family time.

Above 97%	<b>Excellent attendance</b> Outwood Academy Newbold's attendance target for all students is 97% and above.
95%	<b>Good attendance</b> Less than 9 days absence in a year.
90%	<b>Below average / low attendance</b> 19 days absence over the year. Students with attendance 90% or below are persistently absent from school and parents of students with this level of attendance or below could be issued with a Penalty Notice.
85%	<b>Exceptionally low attendance</b> 29 days absences in a year.

Educational research has found;

- 1 day off each month equates to 2 weeks missed from school each year
- 17 days off each school year equates to 1 GCSE grade lower

We want our students to leave their educational journey with us with outstanding qualifications and with a positive outlook and attitude that prepares them for their future careers. Good attendance at school shows potential employers and establishments that a young person is reliable.

Each Praising Stars report will inform you of your son/ daughters current attendance. 100% attenders at are rewarded at each cycle with a certificate and are entered into a monthly draw for Love to Shop vouchers. We have also just hosted our first 95% attendance academy cinema afternoon for 95% and above attendees. VMG's compete weekly for a VMG attendance trophy and are reward as a group. We are also about to introduce a new VMG attendance tournament where VMG's compete weekly and over the course of the academic year.

The Government states that every child must achieve a minimum of 95% attendance and describes any absence below 90% as "persistent absence" and makes it clear to schools and Local Authorities that they have a responsibility to deal with persistent absence – if your child's attendance falls below 95%, an action plan will be put in place and contact will be made with parents, by way of letter or home visit.

We would ask that our students strive for 100% attendance!

For this reason we are asking for your support in helping your children achieve the expected attendance level and we hope that you will take steps to ensure that they are present at every opportunity.

If your son or daughter is absent,

- Please call the hotline on 01246 230550, Option 1 before 9.00am on each day of absence giving details for absence.
- If we do not hear from you, a truancy text message will be sent.
- If we still receive no response, an unauthorised mark will be entered in the register.
- We will authorise up to 2 consecutive day's illness without medical evidence
- If your child is absent for more than 2 days, medical evidence is required.
- If your child has been absent due to illness on three separate occasions within one academic year, illness will no longer be authorised unless you provide medical evidence (Doctor's appointment card or copy of prescription).
- Unauthorised marks could lead to a Penalty Notice (fine) being issued. If your son/daughter has an ongoing medical condition, evidence of this must be provided.
- A Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter may be issued when a student has unauthorised absences recorded in the register. If there is no significant improvement then a Penalty Notice fine will be requested.
- If attendance fails to improve after a Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued then the academy may seek prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

*Fixed Penalty Notices require that a sum of £120 is paid per parent, per child within a period of 28 days. This payment is reduced to £60 (per parent, per child) if it is paid within 21 days. Failure to pay within the specified time limit may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court under section 444 (1) or 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996.*

Evidence shows that students who attend school regularly make better progress both academically and socially and we as an academy are passionate about the development of the whole child along with their academic achievements in order to fully support their future life chances.

Students will weekly update their planners with their current attendance from September. Please make yourself aware of their current position and support us in relaying the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

The academy will support students and families in improving attendance because we value the importance of attending every day to improve our student's future life chances. Please contact your child's Learning Manager or our Education Welfare Officer if you have any questions or concerns regarding attendance.

Yours sincerely,



Mr S Roberts  
Principal