



HARROGATE  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

21 October 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

### Attendance expectations

We hope to set out in this letter how we will support students this academic year to have high rates of attendance and punctuality and make the most of their time in school. Our overall school attendance target is 97%.

### The impact of absence

For every 1% of absence across a school year, two school days are missed and up to 12 lessons lost. Students who do not attend school regularly may not be able to keep up with school work and this impacts upon overall performance. There is a proven correlation between attainment and absence. National research shows that:

- KS4 students not achieving a grade 9-4 in English and Maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8% compared to 5.2% among those achieving a grade 4.
- The overall absence rate of those not achieving a grade 9-4 was over twice as high as those achieving a grade 9-5.

### Expectations

Our expectations are:

- All students strive for at least 97% attendance.
- All students arrive at school on time for the start of registration at 8.50am.
- All students are on time for every lesson.

### Authorised Absence

If your child is too unwell to attend school, we ask you to notify the school by **9.30 am** on each day of absence by telephoning 01423 535635, or by emailing [hgsattendance@hgs.rklt.co.uk](mailto:hgsattendance@hgs.rklt.co.uk) (include a contact phone number for verification of email).

This will then be recorded as an **authorised** absence, if we are satisfied by the explanation given. Examples of other authorised absences include religious observance, medical or dental appointments, agreed sporting fixtures. If a student is attending a medical appointment during the school day, we would ask a medical note or proof of appointment is provided. However, we do need to be made aware of these in advance of the absence to authorise them.

If the absence goes beyond 3 days, we will contact you to see what support your child may need.

### Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is recorded for any unexplained absence. If we do not receive a message by 9.30am we will record your child's absence as unauthorised. Other unauthorised absence includes holidays during term time.

## Support

If your child's attendance falls below a certain level, we will make contact with you. This might be a phone call and/or email from your year manager or a meeting in school with year manager and/or senior leaders. The aim of these conversations is to establish the reasons for absence but also to work together to support your child into more regular attendance. The different interventions are listed below:

- Students Absence falls below **97%** - Parental email to draw awareness
- Students Absence falls below **95%** - Year Manager will phone the parent/carer to discuss any barriers to attendance and ways we can support.
- Student attendance falls below **93%** - Parents will be invited into school to meet with the Assistant Director of School and Year Manager and a 4-week monitoring programme will be agreed.

If your child's attendance continues to be an issue, they may become a Persistent Absentee. A Persistent Absentee is a student who has attendance of 90% or below. This is 19 days absence which equates to 110 lessons missed over a school year. Once a student is classed a persistent absentee you will receive contact from our Attendance and Well-being Support Worker, Samantha Dorward.

We recognise that some of our students have significant health issues which can be a barrier to school attendance. In these cases, we work with the student and family to find the best ways to support the child's education and will in some cases work with external agencies to put bespoke learning packages in place.

## Penalty Notice

[Penalty notices](#) will be issued in two instances. The first being if a student's attendance continues to be an issue after school intervention, we would begin the [Fast Track](#) procedure.

The second being if a parent/carer takes a student on holiday during term time. If the request for holiday is declined, a warning letter will be issued, and the student is absent during the requested period, each parent/carer could be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child taken out of school. This will rise to £120 if paid after the 21 days.

## Punctuality

As well as a focus on attendance we are also focusing on punctuality. It is an expectation that students arrive at school no later than 8.45am and that they are prompt to lessons.

- If students are recorded as late in a morning our Year Managers will be contacting home to make parents aware.
- If there is more than one instance of late in the week our Assistant Directors and Directors of school will follow this up with the student.

In order to better support parents in monitoring their child's attendance and punctuality, you now have full access to your child's attendance records through Arbor. This allows you to have a live view of their attendance to school and to lessons.

We very much value our partnership with you and the support you give in achieving an exceptional level of education for our young people. We would ask that you continue this support through our focus on attendance and punctuality through this year. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's Year Manager in the first instance should you have any concerns or require any further support.

Yours sincerely



**Mr N Mason**

Assistant Headteacher, Director of Upper School