

1 October 2019

Dear Parent / Carer,

Attendance Matters

In order that your children gain the greatest benefit from education, it is essential that they attend school regularly and punctually. Every day at Graham School we strive to ensure high quality learning experiences for all of our students. Whilst at school, students also benefit from spending time with their friends and engaging in a range of extra-curricular activities. If they are absent they are missing out, which could impact negatively on their learning and academic progress as well as their social and emotional well-being. We do not want any student at Graham School to be disadvantaged; please support us by ensuring your child attends school every day.

Research shows that there is a significant link between absence from school and attainment. There are only 190 school days in the year, which leaves 175 non-school days for non-school activity. If a child fails to attend school for one day every two weeks throughout secondary school, they will miss the equivalent of one full year of their school life. The table below clearly shows the impact of absence from school:

190 days in school	10 days absent	19 days absent (almost 4 weeks missed)	29 days absent (about half a term missed)	38 days absent (8 weeks missed)	47 days absent (Almost 10 weeks missed – over a quarter of the school year)
	180 days in school	171 days in school	161 days in school	152 days in school	143 days in school
100% attendance	95% attendance	90% attendance	85% attendance	80% attendance	75% attendance
Excellent record	Good record	Needs to improve	Cause for concern	Poor	Very poor
Gives the best possible opportunity for success! You are likely to achieve your potential and meet or exceed your targets! Well done!		Gives less chance of success. You are less likely to achieve your potential and meet your targets.		Much less chance of success. You are unlikely to achieve your potential and meet your targets.	

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In order to support your child in having good attendance at school, we ask that you organise non urgent medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. If that is not possible we ask that you send your child to school before or after an appointment. There are, of course, exceptions to this such as emergencies or if a child has a specific health concern.

Holidays during term time are not permitted. Holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. If a holiday is taken in term time, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and it may result in a Fixed Penalty Charge Notice, under section 44 of the Education Act 1996.

We value your support in sending your child to school every day and not keeping them at home, regardless of what the day holds for them. Birthdays and other special occasions do not warrant time away from school. If there are unavoidable reasons for absence we ask that you inform us, in advance if at all possible.

A good attendance record indicates a reliable and resilient person. Colleges and employers request attendance information when students are applying for courses or jobs. As well as ensuring the best grades, good attendance can also effect the level of course or job that is open to a student.

We recognise and celebrate high levels of attendance at Graham School. Every day your child attends school they receive stamps in their planner. We also reward good attendance with certificates and prizes at the end of each term. We are working hard every day to ensure the best possible experiences for your child. Please work with us to ensure your child achieves the best that they can, by sending them to school every day.

If you require any additional information, please contact either your child's Head of Year or Mrs Debbie Davis – Vice Principal: Behaviour and Attitudes.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Robins
Principal | Graham School