



JACK HUNT SCHOOL (TRUST)

A Specialist Language and Sports College

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AME/CCE/SJS/Office/ParLet/Attendance/Year10 Year11

January 2020

Dear Parent

I write to introduce myself as the new Attendance Officer appointed by Jack Hunt School to oversee the attendance of students in the school. The School is obliged by law to take any necessary steps to improve attendance where it falls below a certain level: our target is 95% or above for all students on roll.

Full school attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. Some key factors are reproduced below:

Higher overall absence leads to lower attainment at KS4

The Department for Education (DfE) published research in 2016 which found that:

- The higher the overall absence rate across Key Stage 4, the lower the likely level of attainment at the end KS4.
- Pupils with **no absence** are 1.3 times more likely to achieve level 4 or above, and 3.1 times more likely to achieve level 5 or above, than pupils that missed 10-15% of all sessions.
- Pupils with **no absence** are 2.2 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A*- C (level 4 – 9) or equivalent including English and Mathematics than pupils that missed 15-20% of KS4 lessons.

There is a clear link between poor attendance and lower academic achievement

DfE research (2012) on improving school attendance found that:

- Of pupils with **absence over 50%**, only 3% manage to achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C (level 4 – 9) including Maths and English.
- 73% of pupils who have **over 95% attendance** achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C (level 4 – 9).

Pupils with persistent absence are less likely to stay in education

Advice from the National Strategies (hosted on the National Archives) says that:

- The links between attendance and achievement are strong.
- Pupils with persistent absence are less likely to attain at school and stay in education after the age of 16 years.



Our Head Prefect Team: 2019 - 2020



These factors are relevant to all pupils in school, but of particular relevance for a student undertaking his/her preparation for external examinations which take place in May/June of the final term in Year 11. Work in readiness for those exams begins at the very beginning of Year 9 and throughout Year 11, and includes core material work, revision, written work and practicals, regular lessons with teaching, development of skills in subjects and independent homework which passes from student to teacher for analysis, guidance, correction to refine and establish understanding, together with PPE/mock exams and the live examination period itself. Time is tight to cover all the necessary work, and your child simply cannot justify missing any term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

On review of attendance for Years 10 and 11 so far there are patterns of absence which cause some concern.

For further detail, please refer to the full Attendance Policy on the school website.

I set out below some important factors to consider when a student is absent.

- 1 Any doctors/other medical/dentist appointments should be taken outside of school hours. Where necessary the GP Hub service in Peterborough can be used to obtain urgent appointments. To book an appointment, speak to the receptionist at your own registered surgery, or use the online booking form which can be found on the website <https://greaterpeterboroughgps.nhs.uk/gp-hub/>
- 2 If a doctors/other medical/dentist appointment takes place unavoidably in school hours, **that absence should only be for the duration of the appointment itself**: the child should come to school before and after the appointment and **not take a whole or half day based on that appointment**. We do require **evidence** of an appointment such as a copy of the appointment notice; this should be provided when you inform us of the appointment.
- 3 Holidays in term time are not authorised, therefore any request for a holiday absence in term time is **likely to be refused**. Where a holiday is taken without permission, the student's attendance record is marked as 'unauthorised' and consideration will be taken regarding the issue of a request to the Local Authority for a **penalty notice** to be issued to **both parents** in respect of **each child**.
- 4 Where a child is unwell, it is reasonable to allow that child some time at home to recover. However, we expect a child to return to classes as soon as he/she is well enough to attend lessons. That may be later in the day or on the day following the absence. If the child remains absent from school, **a daily call to the Absence line will be required** to keep us updated on the current circumstances of the student's absence. **Medical evidence** will also be required if the absence exceeds the expected recovery time.

- 5 Lateness to school is unacceptable. Classes begin at 8.40am and each student is required to be ready to learn, in the classroom, by that time. Where the beginning of a class is missed, the student will miss the crucial introduction to the lesson and fail to manage the learning that follows from that introduction. **Lateness** after the legal registration has closed is recorded as an 'absence' and will **add to the student's record of attendance in a negative way.**

The School has approved procedures for taking steps where attendance is missed. We will write to you alerting you to the problem and offer the opportunity for you to provide an explanation. Where an absence is planned the school require notification by the completion of a **leave of absence request form** giving details of the proposed absence and a response will be provided once the request has been considered. It is not acceptable to simply inform the school of a planned absence, this **must** be requested.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter or the specific attendance issues of a student, please contact the Attendance Officer or your child's Student Support Office at the School on 01733 263526.

Our primary purpose is to provide a good education for your child. There is clear evidence that good attendance is directly linked to good achievement in school and we are determined to ensure every student has the best chance to reach his/her potential at Jack Hunt School.

Yours faithfully



Ms C Clarke
Attendance Officer