



# Weekly Newsletter

## HEADTEACHER UPDATE

### Spotlight on... Attendance

Attendance since the pandemic has been a challenge for all schools. We have been working positively with parents and other agencies to help students get back into school life. You may be aware that we have expanded our attendance team and have staff available for you to talk to about any attendance concerns. Likewise, we also have more resources in our pastoral area to support students. We use a variety of different pathways aimed particularly at students on a case-by-case basis, ranging from positive reporting processes, to the use of workrooms, mentors and much more.

We know that, particularly at this time of year, students will be unwell with coughs and colds. It's important that students are resilient to come into school unless severely unwell; if you have concerns in regards to students being ill please phone in/email and make us aware. We will monitor the situation in school.

We do understand that students at times may have concerns about school or their home life that causes them anxiety. It's been hugely important for us to acknowledge particularly the impact of the pandemic and also students' concerns on a number of different issues. We really want to work closely with parents to ensure students come into school and for any parent who may have concerns about their child's attendance to get in touch with our dedicated attendance team.

You can contact us by calling 01795 542477 or by emailing [attendance@abbeychoolfaversham.co.uk](mailto:attendance@abbeychoolfaversham.co.uk)

#### Why is attendance so important?

- We believe it is vitally important to attend school regularly and on time
- This gives the best opportunity for each student to progress and achieve their full potential
- Regular school attendance keeps students safe
- Poor attendance decreases life chances and student outcomes
- A child is twice as likely to get 5 good GCSE's at Grade 5+ with an attendance of above 95%

#### Our Standards

The government expects **schools and local authorities** to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (students attending less than 90% of the time)
- Ensure every child has access to full time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of poor attendance
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age, who are registered at school, attend regularly and on time

The percentage attendance of a student may seem high at 90% (we would celebrate this in an exam), but this is **19 days off school**, nearly 4 weeks across a full year; even more scary is that this is **95 hours of lost learning**. This is why attendance impacts on pupil progress.

When students dip below 90% students are seen as **Persistently Absent** from school. We want to work with you on ensuring students are in school; this requires parents working with us closely which is why we have a dedicated attendance team.

Descriptor	Threshold Attendance	Actual Attendance	Whole Days Absent	Learning Hours Lost
Outstanding	100%	190 Days	0	0
	99%	188 Days	2	10
Impressive	98%	186 days	4	20
	97%	184 days	6	30
Good	96%	182.5 Days	7.5	37.5
Nearly there	95%	180.5 days	9.5	47.5
Needs to improve	94%	179 Days	11	55
	93%	177 Days	13	65
	92%	175 Days	15	75
	91%	173 Days	17	85
Concerns– Persistent Absence	90%	171 Days	19	95
	89%	169 Days	21	105
	88%	167 Days	23	115
	87%	165 Days	25	125
Serious Concerns – Persistent Absence	86%	161.5 Days	28.5	135
	85%	159.5 Days	30.5	142.5
	84%	158 Days	32	152.5
	83%	156 Days	34	160
	82%	154 Days	36	170
	81%	152 Days	38	180
	80%			190

#### Our duty of care in responding to unauthorised and persistent absence – possible consequences

We have a duty of care, shared with the Local Authority, to challenge poor attendance. Where attendance levels are low and where there are invalid reasons (judged by the Education Welfare Service, not the parent) for a pupil's frequent absence or where parents condone absence (e.g. by taking children out of school on unauthorised holidays) and fast track prosecution could commence.

#### Medical/Dental Appointments

It is generally better if these can be arranged outside school hours, but we know this is not always possible. Where children need to attend such appointments during the school day it is important that the child attends before and returns to school after the appointment.

Where the child is absent through illness or medical appointments, this will normally be counted as authorised. Where we have concerns over excessive absence patterns through illness we will need to discuss this with parents in order to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support – for example by involving the School Health Service.

#### Holidays

It is not our policy to authorise holidays in term time unless in exceptional circumstances which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis using the facts presented. Where authorisation is not granted then subsequent term time holiday absence may be reported as a matter of concern to the Education Welfare Service; we are under a duty to do this.

# STARS OF THE WEEK

Well done to our Stars of the Week for w/c 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023



Zeki  
Altun  
Y8  
55 House Points



Maisie Carnell-Holdaway  
Hunter Evans  
Y7  
32 House Points



RowanTurner  
Ethan Kingswood  
Y7  
35 House Points



Sullivan  
King  
Y7  
79 House Points

## STAGGERED DISMISSAL TIMES for w/c 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Day	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Tues, Wed, Fri	3.30pm	3.25pm	3.20m	3.15pm	3.10pm	3.30pm	3.30pm
Thursday only	2.30pm	2.25pm	2.20pm	2.15pm	2.10pm	2.30pm	2.30pm

### Attendance: Meet the Team



Mr Ellis  
Attendance  
Manager



Mrs Gridley  
Attendance  
Officer



Miss Streatfield  
Attendance  
Data Administrator



Mrs Emery  
Attendance  
& Pastoral



Mrs Spring  
Assistant  
Headteacher

As a department we have a number of guidelines to follow up on pupil absence when the school hasn't been contacted by a parent/carer. I would like at this point to explain again what we have recently introduced: by using the Bromcom app on your mobile phone, you can send us a TEXT if your child is absent from school, outlining the reason. This is an additional medium available to you and us to safeguard your child on a school day. We won't reply by text, but your child will be marked absent accordingly. You can send us a text every day that your child is absent but you must use the mobile phone that is registered with us.

I have personally met parents of children who have not been attending school for a number of reasons and we then engage in open dialogue via text, on the telephone, or in person either in school or at home. It is my remit to open communication with parents and students alike who have attendance issues. In the short period I have been at The Abbey, I am increasingly confident in the many strands of support that the school can offer you if there are issues with attendance.

One of these strands of support is Project Salus. I have recently introduced a SALUS family support worker to the school and she will be working closely with families over the next 4 months supporting pupils to return to school. I have been running a Salus school support group since my arrival, for those students who find consistent attendance a challenge. This will continue.

### Recognising and Rewarding Attendance

As with many schools, we acknowledge there is much more we can do to improve attendance and we intend to increase and broaden the many strategies we use to engage students, parents and families and to ensure all see the value in good attendance. We regularly offer rewards for those students who work hard at maintaining high standards and this includes 100% and Outstanding Attendance certificates at our termly prize giving, and non-uniform days for the highest attending tutor group. You will also be familiar with the RAG letters that come through your doors. This is a tool we use so you can view your child's data and hope that this can be used to encourage and support consistent attendance.

100%

Last term, we awarded **Bronze** badges for students with 100% attendance. If they sustain this, we will be awarding **Silver** at Easter, followed by **Gold** at the end of the summer term.

We hope that these notes will help you to have a clear understanding about the school's attendance expectations.

Phil Ellis, Attendance Manager

### Upcoming Key Dates

Year 9 Digital Footprint Workshop  
Year 9 Digital Footprint Workshop  
KS5 Sport CCCU Trip  
Year 9 Consultation Evening  
HPV Dose 1 for Year 8  
Apprenticeship Information Assembly  
HPV Dose 2 for Year 9  
Apprenticeship Information Assembly  
Year 11, 12, 13 Mock Exam Week  
Year 7 Humanities Trip to Canterbury  
Swale Youth Forum Day  
Attendance Reward Non-Uniform Day  
KS5 Sport CCCU Trip  
H&S Care Careers Event  
Y7 Humanities Trip to Canterbury  
Year 10 Consultation Evening  
EKST Dance Workshop  
Year 10 Mock Exams  
Swale Youth Forum Day  
Year 8 Consultation Evening  
Year 7 Consultation Evening

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
w/c Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023  
Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023  
Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023  
Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023  
Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023  
Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023  
Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023  
Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023  
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**FAVERSHAM GEMS AWARDS 2023** for Faversham and surrounding communities has been launched again for this academic year

Who makes life sparkle?

Who will you nominate?

Nominate from 01 Jan - 28 Feb  
favershamgems.org

Celebrate children and young people who go extra miles and make life sparkle

A Faversham Children's and Youth Network initiative

Last March over 90 local children and young people were celebrated for *Going Extra Miles* and making life sparkle for others.

### Who will you nominate this year?

I am sure you know young individuals or groups (aged 5-19 with some connection to Faversham and surrounding communities) who give of themselves, their time, their energy, their talents etc. for the benefit of others.

- those who Go the Extra Mile to help others smile
- those who take the opportunity to build community
- those who listen to make life glisten
- those who raise self-esteem to make life gleam

Faversham Gems is all about children and young people going extra miles for others - [favershamgems.org](http://favershamgems.org)