



December 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

### School attendance and absence: The facts

**Nationally**, the overall student absence rate is 4.5%, according to the latest figures from the Department for Education. One in 10 of those school children are classed as “persistently absent”.

A persistently absent child is one who misses school for at least 10% of the time.

According to the Department for Education’s latest statistics, sickness was the main reason for absence in the autumn 2016 and spring 2017 terms. Illness rates remained the same as the previous year at 2.7%. Unauthorised absences, however, rose, including unauthorised family holidays.

In view of this information, I felt it appropriate to remind you of Harrogate High School’s attendance expectations.

- All students (**including Sixth Form**) are expected to aim for 100% attendance. Minimum expectation is to achieve 97%.
- There are 190 school days in every year. 97% or higher means that a student has missed a maximum of 5 days.
- Be punctual – students are expected to be in school from 8:20 am to start VMG promptly at 8:30 am. Detentions will be issued for students regularly arriving late.
- Routine appointments should be made after school.
- Regular and punctual attendance is an essential part of academic achievement. Time off during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority are responsible for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised holidays.
- Parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child attends school. Persistent Absentee status can lead to potential legal action.
- Sixth Form students must be in school for all timetabled VMG, Study Periods, Volunteering and lessons.

Every day at school counts enormously for students but so does every consecutive day attended. Students need to be able to absorb new facts and knowledge, acquire new skills and consolidate those skills before building further and progressing. They simply cannot do that if their structured school terms are disrupted by too many preventable absences.

If your child is too ill to attend school, please contact the Attendance Office directly on 01423 554087 or email me via [cbe@harrogatehighschool.co.uk](mailto:cbe@harrogatehighschool.co.uk).

If you have any queries regarding attendance, please contact Mrs Clare Bennett, Attendance Manager via:

- Direct dial: 01423 554087 / Mobile: 07960597111
- Email: [cbe@harrogatehighschool.co.uk](mailto:cbe@harrogatehighschool.co.uk)

Yours faithfully

*Clare Bennett*

**Clare Bennett**  
Attendance Manager

