



Dear parents/carers,

Sept 2024

**Please note:** there are changes to school attendance from September 2024 in response to the Department for Education releasing the updated document, 'Working together to improve school attendance: Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities'.

In order for children to achieve their full potential, it is essential that they attend school and college regularly. The expectation is that children will attend for at least 96% of the time, taking into account illness.

**In the event of absence, parents/carers are responsible for informing the school / College office before 9.30am on the first day of absence.** Where there are concerns about a pupil's attendance, families are expected to work with school and college staff and other services to address these concerns.

### Why is attendance important?

There is a clear link between pupil attendance and the educational outcomes on a daily basis and by the end of each Key Stage.

Children with high attendance will:

- Feel comfortable and happy with consistent routines and boundaries
- Access a full range of curricular teaching
- Feel like a valued member of the class and school
- Be ready for their next stage of education
- Further develop social skills, independence and preparation for adulthood

Poor attendance impacts:

- Self-esteem and confidence
- Opportunities for personal as well as academic development
- Ability to cope and manage in school

### School and College responsibilities for managing attendance

- **Academy Services will monitor whole school, College and individual attendance on a weekly basis.**
- School / College office will ring parents after 10am if no contact has been made.
- Children with attendance below 90% will receive a Letter of Concern. Hospital visits, genuine illness and emotional wellbeing will be taken into account.
- School / College will conduct home visits when unable to contact parents.
- School / College will work alongside families where issues arise and signpost to other professional support where appropriate.
- School / College will refer cases of persistent low attendance to Gateshead Local Authority Legal Intervention Team.

## Holidays

All absence requests, including for holidays, must be provided to the school / College in writing by completing the Leave of Absence form which is available from the office.

We will authorise **one holiday request of 5 days** per academic year, subject to school / College attendance being over 85%. Requests further to this **will not be authorised under any circumstances** and the local authority attendance process will be activated. We are also unable to authorise holiday requests for children with high absence rates.

We thank you for your cooperation in this important aspect of school and College life.

The Services Team.