

Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success - both in school and in life. When you make school attendance a priority, you help your child get better grades, develop healthy life habits, avoid dangerous behaviour and have a better chance of succeeding at school.

When students are absent for fewer days, their grades and reading skills often improve—even among those students who are struggling in school. Students who attend school regularly also feel more connected to their community, develop important social skills and friendships, and are significantly more likely to be successful and happy.

But when children are absent for an average of just two days of school per month—even when the absences are excused— it can have a negative impact.

In order to ensure we can support students to attend school as often as possible and communicate with you as effectively as possible, we have made some adaptations to our attendance procedure.

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## REPORTING ABSENCES

**If a student is unable to attend school, parents should report this on Edulink before 8:00am or if Edulink is unavailable, a call must be made to 01795 424192 before 8.00am.**

If the school has not been notified for the reason of absence by 9.10am the absence will be unauthorised and will affect your child's attendance figures.

## FIRST DAY CONTACT

For all students missing from school we will make first day contact to establish the reason for absence, this is to safeguard student welfare. We apologise if you receive more than one call or an additional call where you have attempted to contact us.

If your child is off school due to illness medical evidence will be required for your child's absence.

## CONTINUOUS ABSENCE

If after 3 days of absence, your child has not been seen and contact has not been made with the school, we will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends and wider family. In the event of an absence of three or more days without contact from the family, a home visit will be made to ascertain the safety and well-being of the child and in addition to the reason for absence from school.

## TEN DAYS ABSENCE

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of being missing from education (CME). The Education Welfare Officer will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

## FREQUENT / PERSISTENT ABSENCE PROCEDURES

We want to avoid absence wherever possible. If there are any issues preventing attendance please communicate with us. When absence first becomes a concern we will invite you in for a meeting with the school to put an action plan in place to improve attendance.

If attendance does not improve we will involve the Bexley Education Welfare Service (information attached).

## ATTENDANCE FACTS

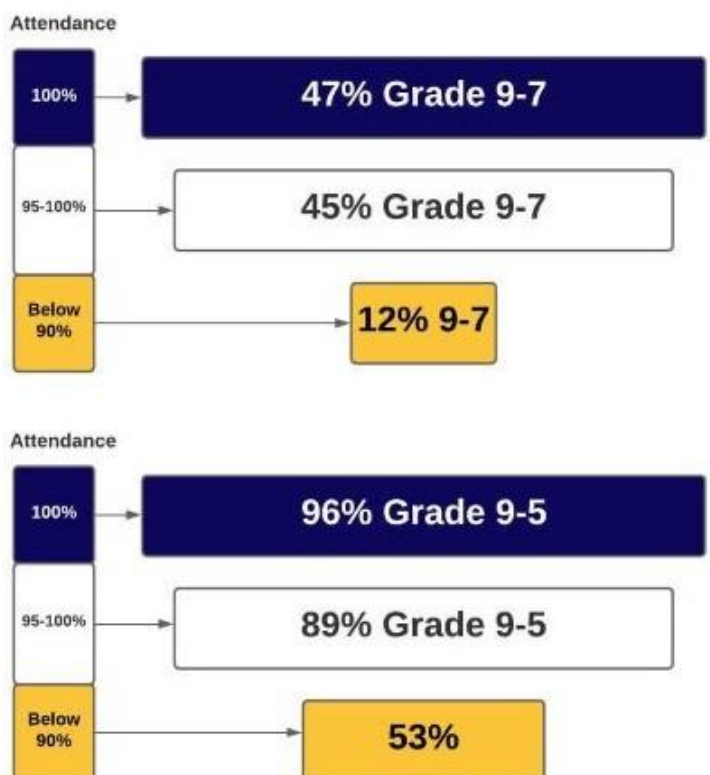
There are 190 days in a school year, which leaves 175 days to spend time with the family, shopping, dentist appointments and other things. At Borden Grammar School, our attendance target is to achieve higher than 95%. Frequent absence can add up to a lot of missed learning time and can seriously disadvantage your child in adult life. How does your child compare?

<b>Attendance (Academic Year)</b>	<b>Equals this many days absent</b>	<b>Equals this many weeks absent (approx.)</b>	<b>Equals this many lessons missed</b>
<b>95%</b>	<b>9 days</b>	<b>2 weeks</b>	<b>60 lessons</b>
<b>90%</b>	<b>19 days</b>	<b>4 weeks</b>	<b>120 lessons</b>
<b>85%</b>	<b>29 days</b>	<b>6 weeks</b>	<b>180 lessons</b>
<b>80%</b>	<b>38 days</b>	<b>8 weeks</b>	<b>240 lessons</b>
<b>70%</b>	<b>57 days</b>	<b>12 weeks</b>	<b>360 lessons</b>

Good attendance at school is essential for a child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. It has been proven by DfE studies that students who are absent from school do not reach their full potential when measured against their target grades and those that have a higher attendance percentage. Parents should bare this in mind when allowing their child to stay at home.

WHEN DOES IT BECOME A PROBLEM AND HOW DO WE HELP?

**Borden 2021 GCSE outcomes based on Attendance**



Percentage	School Action	Including
95-100%	Prevention	Assemblies, tutor time activities, displays
90-95%	Early Intervention	Monitoring by Head of Year, parental meetings, in-school intervention and external agencies
Less than 90%	Targeted	Monitoring by AHT Attendance and AHT Key Stage, attendance officer, external agencies (such as Local Authority School Liaison Officer, Pupil Referral Units, Inclusion and Attendance Service)

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Children should not be absent for:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons (medical evidence will need to be provided)
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays

## NHS Guidance: When To Keep Your Child Off School

The guidance below has been taken from the NHS website focused particularly around common illnesses when school has been missed. It is vital that all parents follow this as school will unauthorize your child's absence if they feel they are well enough to be in school.

- Coughs and Colds - It is fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes. A new, continuous cough could be Coronavirus (Covid-19) so in this instance please get your child tested.
- Sore throat - You can still send your child to school with a sore throat. But if they also have a fever, they should stay at home.
- Headache - You can still send your child to school with a headache. But if they also have a fever, they should stay at home.
- Vomiting and Diarrhoea - Child with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school for 2 days until their symptoms have gone.
- Ear Infection - If your child has an ear infection and a fever or severe headache, keep them off school until they are feeling better. Take them to the doctors.
- Conjunctivitis - You do not need to keep your child off school. Get advice from the pharmacist and encourage your child to not rub their eyes.

## Supporting Your Child

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine
- Lay out clothes and pack bags the night before
- Don't let your child stay at home unless they are truly sick- if they are; please take them to the pharmacy/GP. Keep in mind, complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- If your child seems anxious about coming to school, speak to teachers or school counsellors and take advice on how to make him/her feel comfortable and excited about learning, please do not keep your child at home for this reason.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbour or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips during the school day.

## Useful Vocabulary About Attendance

- **Persistent Absentee (PA)** - A student that has attendance below 90%. At this stage an EWO referral is completed.
- **Home Visit** - If we are unable to make contact with you regarding your child's absence a home visit will be completed.
- **Educational Welfare Officer** - This a member of local authority that works with the school to ensure every child is receiving a full-time education.
- **Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)** - If the attendance of your child does not improve with the support of the EWO a FPN is issued.
- **Punctuality** - Being on time to lessons or school.