

**Bohunt Horsham**

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Bohunt Horsham Headteacher: Ms G Ayling BA (Hons)

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Dear Families

I am writing to you about school absence and the national (and local) crisis schools have faced since the pandemic.

Today, as we near the end of the third week back after a two-week holiday, one in ten of our students is absent from school. Even in Year 11, the most important examination year of a child's secondary school career, 10% are absent from school. Perhaps more concerning, is that **almost 30% of Year 11 students are currently categorised as 'persistently absent'** which means they have school attendance of less than 90%. Students whose attendance is less than 90% will already have missed at least 50 lessons this academic year. None of which will be repeated.

Sadly these patterns of absence are now considered normal in schools. Indeed, our attendance is higher than the national average. Totals and averages mean little, other than to illustrate the problem we face. What matters most is your own child's opportunity to be successful.

Missing two weeks for a family holiday taken in term time will mean that your child has missed 65 hours of learning new things which they will not be taught again at school but may face questions on in an exam in the future. Having broken attendance (regular, single days off) means that students will struggle to understand the work they do the following week because lessons are taught in sequences that rely on prior knowledge.

I know our families are aware of the significant [correlation between absence and exam results](#). Put simply, students who miss school regularly reduce their lifetime earning potential because they achieve lower exam results than their peers and develop poor habits to take into the workplace where high levels of absence, poor punctuality, or an indifferent attitude to responsibility will hinder their ability to be successful in their future careers.

Except, of course, in circumstances where a child has serious ongoing medical conditions, and where support will already look different, I ask that if your child is absent from school regularly (students should have full attendance most weeks) you seek to address this. Do get in touch with your child's form tutor and ask us for support if you are struggling with your child's attendance.

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For families with students in Year 11 with poor attendance, this is an urgent situation which needs to be rectified immediately.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Ayling', written in a cursive style.

Ms G Ayling
Headteacher