

## Great Attendance at Cowplain - We need your help!

Great attendance is essential to ensure that students benefit from the maximum number of learning opportunities. We know that students who attend regularly get more from their education, take part in a wider range of activities, achieve better examination results relative to their ability and find better employment than those who do not attend regularly.

Therefore, it is our joint responsibility as adults, to make sure that each child attends as often as possible. In addition, we must work to ensure that students arrive in school and at lessons on time and that all timetabled activities begin on time.

### Cowplain Attendance Threshold Chart

5 days absence	10 days absence	15 days absence	19 days absence or more
Concerning levels of absence.	Serious concerns regarding attendance.	Student is at serious risk of Persistent Absence. School progress likely to suffer.	The student is now considered as Persistently Absent.
Internal monitoring.	Stage 2 letter may be sent to parents.	Review current of support.	Persistent Absence (PA) is when a <u>students</u> overall absence equates to 10% or more of their possible sessions. At this stage, the student will remain PA for the remainder of the year.
Stage 1 letter may be sent to parents.	Explore barriers and create a support plan, where needed.	Formal intervention may now be considered with parenting contracts and fixed penalty notices.	Referrals to the Legal Intervention Team and Childrens Services may occur.
Offer of support.	Home visits may occur, with or without notice.	Home visits may occur, with or without notice.	Home visits may occur, with or without notice.
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We expect all students to miss less than 10 days of school each academic year. Data published by the Department for Education from 2019 shows that 84% of pupils who attended school every day achieved the expected progress standard, compared to 40% of pupils who were persistently absent. With great attendance comes great attainment.

When a student has poor attendance other issues can develop including a drop in self-confidence and sometimes barriers appear regarding return to school. At Cowplain, if a student is not in school and their attendance levels drop we have a legal responsibility to investigate to find out why and to help improve matters quickly. Please take the time to view the information contained in this document which explains the framework we operate within to manage attendance at The Cowplain School.

### How can parents/carers encourage good attendance?

- Expect your child to go to school every day and ensure that they know this.
- Ask your child about their day at school and talk about what they might be doing in the future.
- Approach the school sooner rather than later, if you have issues with attendance.
- Arrange routine appointments outside of the school day.

### Reasons for absence:

- **Illness** - Consider if your child is too unwell to attend school. Hampshire County Council guidance states that if your child has no temperature, but has a cough, cold, headache, earache, sore throat, then give them paracetamol and send them to school. If your child's condition worsens, we will be able to send them home. If your child is unwell and you are unsure if they should come to school, please refer to the NHS link below.
  - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>
- **Appointments** - Dentists and GP surgeries etc. are used to being asked for appointments outside of school hours. The school asks that parents / carers request appointments that do not clash with school time. If an appointment can only be made during school time, students should attend school whilst not at the appointment i.e. before / after as appropriate.
- **Weather** - On hot or wet days, especially if it is raining, it appears some students try to avoid a journey into school. If you suspect that this may apply to your child, please impress upon them that unless the weather is so bad that the school is shut, they should be making every effort to attend school. Please ensure your child is equipped for travelling to and from school even if the weather is not ideal.

The day after wet weather can also cause school to suffer reduced attendance. Some students do not take care to stay dry and do not attempt to dry their clothes / shoes when they get home. As a result their uniform is wet the next morning and they are delayed coming in or miss a whole day. Please advise your child on the importance of trying to stay dry and organising the drying out of wet clothes as soon as they get in from school. Advise your child that getting wet is not a reason to be off school.

- **Lack of sleep/tiredness** - If a child attends a school trip or other activity the day before, the child must attend school at the normal time the next day. It is not acceptable to miss or be late for school due to being tired.
- **Avoidance** - Parents / carers should be mindful of the possibility that their child may wish to avoid school for a reason other than being ill. It can be easier for a child to tell a parent / carer that they are too ill to go to school, rather than explain that they have fallen out with a friend, haven't done their homework etc. If parents / carers feel their child is experiencing something that is reducing their willingness to attend school, please contact school to share your concern. As long as school are aware of the problem, the problem can often be solved.

### **Who is responsible for attendance at The Cowplain School?**

At The Cowplain School, we strongly believe that great attendance leads to great attainment, as a result, we employ both an attendance manager and attendance assistant. We also have a team of heads of year and assistant heads of year who will challenge and celebrate attendance. The role of the tutor of the daily contact your child is also important, as is the role of individual class teachers, all of whom will raise concerns about attendance. For additional guidance on general school attendance management please visit the Hampshire County Council website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

### **Home visits**

When a student's attendance is low, no reason is given for absence, or we are repeatedly told they are unwell without details of medical evidence we will seek further clarification of these reasons. We may carry out home visits to do this. It could be conducted at any stage of an absence to help support a student come back into school. These may be arranged in advance or unannounced.

### **Absence for holiday**

School holidays are published well in advance on the school's website. Holidays in term time will not be authorised. Requests for absences may be authorised if there are exceptional circumstances.

<http://www.cowplainschool.co.uk/media/1066/leave-of-absence-request.pdf>

### **Reporting absence**

Please contact the school for any absence explaining the reason before 8:30am. Parents/carers should contact the school every day that their child is absent.

If there is not a reason for the absence provided the school will complete attendance phone calls to establish reasons. At this point of concern, we may also conduct home visits.

When leaving a message via the answer phone, please tell us the following information:

- The name of the student who will be absent or late.
- The students tutor group.
- The reason for absence. This needs to be a clear explanation. Simply reporting them as 'unwell', 'poorly' or 'sick' is not acceptable.

It may be necessary for us to request medical evidence\* advising that the student is unfit to attend. This evidence must also state how long this will be for.

*\* Please note that the Education Act 1996 places the responsibility on parent/carers to provide medical evidence when requested by the school. There is an 'Information Sharing Consent Form' available from GP practices where a parent can give consent for the GP to share information about their child.*