



Health Futures UTC  
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## **Attendance Newsletter Autumn Term 2 2017**

Dear Parents/Carers,

As some of you are aware I recently joined the Health Futures team and have spent the last couple of weeks assessing the schools attendance data and identifying areas that need to be addressed. After talking to many parents over the last few weeks, I have become aware that not all of you are aware of our attendance procedures and how they can affect your child's overall attendance score. With that in mind I have put this newsletter together to help clarify things. If you have any questions then please contact me (afternoons preferably as I make a lot of outbound calls in the mornings). I work on the basis of supporting the student and family in order to maximise attendance. This works fantastically well as long as parents/carers are open to communication and are willing to support school with action plans.

My aim is for every student that attends Health Futures UTC to have an equal opportunity to maximise their education. This can only be fully achieved when a student's attendance is above 95%. Please find below some information that will help to achieve this.

### **Lateness**

All student should be arriving at school no later than **8.20am** in order to have time to reach their tutor groups by **8.30am**. If a student arrives late (after 8:30am) they **MUST** scan in electronically and will be prompted to enter a reason for their lateness. The student will then be electronically marked in on the school register with a "late" mark.

If your child arrives to school after registration has closed at 9:00am they will receive a 'U' code. **'U' codes are classed as unauthorised absence. They WILL affect your child's attendance score and can result in a fine.**

If a child is late 5 times or more during a term, a letter will be sent home to the parents asking for this matter to be addressed. If it continues then you will be asked to attend a meeting with myself to discuss any issues you may be having and put together a plan to address this.

**ALL students (including years 12, 13 & 14) should be attending morning registration at 8.30am. Failing to do so can affect their overall attendance score.**



## Illness

Students do get ill, we know and understand this. However a parent/carer must ensure they call school and let us know **before 9:30 on EACH DAY they are ill**. If you expect your child to be off for more than one day (e.g. Chickenpox) then please let us know otherwise we will expect a phone call for **every day that they are absent**. If you do not call, your child will be classed as missing from school and will receive an unauthorised absence 'O' code.

Having looked at the data I have serious concerns about the amount of children that are kept off for minor ailments including coughs, runny noses, headaches, stomach aches etc. These children are missing vital education and will end up falling behind in their work when they don't need to. If you are in any doubt about a child's health please speak to one of the staff at school and we will advise/support you. As a basic guideline think "Can my child perform the duties expected of them that day? If the answer is "Yes" then send them in. We must remember that as well as educating our students, we are also preparing them for life in the real world. If they get used to being absent for minor illnesses they are less likely to be able to sustain a successful career later in life. I'm sure you will all agree that building a child's resilience is key to their successes and achievements.

## Unauthorised Absence

If your child is not attending school that day (no matter what the reason is) you **MUST** call the office and give a reason why. I cannot emphasise how important this is. If you know your child will be off for a few days, again we need to know. Most people don't realise that for every day off a student has, they lose 2 marks!!! (One for morning registration and one for afternoon registration). That's why it's important for a student to attend school prior to or after a medical appointment and why medical appointments should be made as close to home time as possible.

If you don't inform the school as to why your child is absent, an 'O' code goes on their attendance record. **All 'O' codes are classed as unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absences can lead to parents receiving penalty notices/prosecutions so need to be avoided where possible.**

**This also applies to any religious holidays or observations. School MUST be informed prior to the absence otherwise the child will receive an "O" code.**

## Holidays or Leave during term time.

All holidays or leave during term time should be avoided at all costs. As a school we **WILL NOT** authorise leave unless it is in exceptional circumstances. This means that parents could be fined if they take their family on holiday during this time. However, should it become necessary for your child to be absent, parents must request and complete a "Leave in Term Time" application form at least 2 weeks PRIOR to any holiday absence. This form can be collected from me in the Pastoral Office.

You may ask, well why should I fill out an application form if it will be unauthorised anyway? The reason is that as a school we need to know the whereabouts of your children during **all of term time** so that we can ensure that they are safe and well. It is the parent's responsibility to provide us with that information. It also prevents any unnecessary phone calls being made or letters being sent home.



**Please be reminded that if your child is persistently late or absent from school and receives any of the above codes, you could receive a court fine. The fine currently stands at £60 per child, per parent. If this amount is not paid in 28 days the fine rises to £120 per child, per parent.**

### **KS5 students**

It has come to my attention that some KS5 students are under the impression that they can attend just for lessons and then leave. **THIS IS NOT THE CASE!**

All KS5 students (years 12/13/14) **MUST attend registration at 8.30am** in order to get their attendance mark. If they fail to do so their attendance **will** be affected.

If a KS5 student does not have a lesson directly before or after the after the PM tutorial then they can leave as soon as their last lesson finishes.

However, if they **DO** have a lesson directly before or after the PM tutorial then they are expected to attend form to get their attendance mark. If they fail to attend then once again their attendance mark will be affected.

As future employers and educational establishments check on every students attendance it is critical for all KS5 students to abide by this. If you have any questions please call me.

### **Attendance Incentives**

Going forward I will be looking at introducing **weekly, half termly and termly incentives and rewards for high attenders**. I will also be looking at **rewarding those students who demonstrate an improvement in their attendance**. We are at a point in the year where we can drastically improve attendance and increase individual student's overall attendance records but only if we all work together. I cannot stress how important it is for each and every parent to support me with this.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that supports Health Futures UTC by following our Attendance Procedures. I would also like to remind those parents that are struggling that we are here to help. Please pick up the phone, speak to either myself or a member of the pastoral team and we will endeavour to support you as much as possible. I look forward to working with you all to raise the attendance levels here at Health Futures UTC and in turn achieving academic results we can all be proud of!!!

Kind regards,

Mrs W Goodwin  
Attendance Officer

