



March 2019

Dear Parents,

Is Your Child Missing Out? - Focus on Attendance and Punctuality

Research has shown that regular attendance and good punctuality are crucial factors in students achieving their full potential in education. At The Emmbrook School we always aim to work in partnership with parents and carers and so are seeking your full support in ensuring that your child attends school every day and on time. We are always keen to work together with parents/carers in resolving any difficulties and we are committed to improving attendance levels at the school.

We understand that at times students get serious illnesses or have ongoing medical issues which mean they cannot attend school. In these cases, we will do all that we can to help your son or daughter to continue their learning as well as possible at home. The focus here is on helping students to avoid more occasional absences which can, over time, add up and impact negatively on their learning.

Good attendance is inextricably linked to success at school. Our minimum expected/accepted attendance is **97%** and we are finding that some students are falling below this due to taking odd days off for minor ailments or fatigue. There will be times when your child is too unwell to attend, but having a minor ailment should not prevent them from coming to school.

We all find it hard to get up in the mornings especially when it's cold and dark but grit and determination are really important attributes and so please do help them develop these by insisting that they attend school. We are working with students on developing resilience as part of their tutor programme and if you would like any support in getting your child to school please do contact your child's Head of Year in the first instance. If you consider your child's non-attendance is due to problems with other children, or school work, or mental health issues, then you should contact myself and I will then follow up with other colleagues in school as appropriate.

The target attendance figure for students is a **minimum of 97%** attendance. Evidence suggests that an attendance of less than 97% brings with it increased risks of underachievement. We use the following 4 categories to help us to assess the degree of risk:

Band 1: **No Concerns** – Blue Group

The student attends for 97% - 100% of the time

Band 2: **Concern** – Green Group

The student attends for 94.9% - 96.9% of the time

Band 3: **Risk of Underachievement** – Amber Group

The student attends for 90% - 93.9% of the time

Band 4: **Severe Risk of Under Achievement** – Pink Group

The student attends for 89.9% - 0% of the time

Blue Band 97% - 100%
Green Band 94% - 96.9%
Amber Band 90% - 93.9%
Red Band 0% - 89.9%



We will inform you and your child which band they are in on a four weekly basis. We are monitoring students closely whose attendance is falling and will contact you if your child's attendance does not improve. It is important that parents/carers monitor single days of absence, as these days soon add up to weeks.

We also reward students who attend school each day and whose attendance is improving. Students are also rewarded for good punctuality.

What we are doing in school:

- Regular reminders in assembly about the importance of good attendance and strategies for personal wellbeing
- Individual conversations with tutors on a termly basis to share attendance data with students so they are aware of the potential impact on progress
- If areas for concern arise from the tutor conversations regarding attendance, strategies will be put in place to support students and their attendance
- We will reward students who have excellent attendance and those students who show significant improvement in attendance
- We encourage students to catch up on any missed work due to absence so they don't fall behind
- We encourage students to ask a friend to inform them of any homework set if they are absent, and to collect extra work sheets so they don't fall behind
- We can help and provide advice to parents who are having trouble getting their children into school
- We will ensure a careful reintegration programme is followed so students who have had long term absence so they are fully supported

What we are asking you to do:

As a parent/carer, there are important steps that we would ask you to take to support us in this focus on high levels of attendance:

- Ensure your child attends every day, on time, equipped and ready to learn. Tutor time begins at 8.25am and students should be in the building by 8.20am. Students arriving after registration may be marked absent and will require an explanatory note or the absence will remain unauthorised.
- Ensure the school has up to date addresses and telephone numbers. We will contact you if your child is absent and you have not contacted the school. This ensures that any absence is quickly identified.
- If your child is ill, please contact the school on each day of their absence.
- If you wish to check that your child has arrived at school contact the school reception on 01189 784406 and we will inform you if your child has been registered.
- If no contact is received regarding the absence, it is recorded as unauthorised. Ultimately the school is responsible for deciding if the absence is acceptable or not. Only genuine absence will be authorised. You will be asked to provide medical certificates if your child has a poor attendance record.
- Please ensure that medical appointments are made outside of school time, wherever possible



- Holidays should not be taken in school time. Any Leave of Absence can only be agreed by the Head Teacher and only agreed where there are exceptional circumstances.
- Respond to letters or telephone calls regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Contact your child's form tutor if you are experiencing difficulty in getting your child into school.

If you would like support and guidance with anything regarding attendance and punctuality, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Ruth Blyth
Attendance Lead