

Attendance and absence

Regular attendance is vital because any absence has the potential to affect the quality of your daughter's learning and, at times, her social integration and interaction with her peers.

Your daughter will benefit most from the opportunities offered by NHSG by attending school in every session School is open and so the ideal is 100% attendance.

We monitor attendance closely, with Form Teachers and Heads of Year scrutinising the figures actively to look for patterns. The girls are informed of their attendance percentage at the end of each half-term, and the Head of Year may make a comment relating to it on the annual Full Report.

An average attendance figure of below 95% causes us concern as it is the equivalent to one session – either morning or afternoon – off school each fortnight; 90% represents one morning or afternoon off each week; and then every 5% drop in the figures represents the equivalent of another half-day off school each fortnight. In cases when attendance does drop, we follow a protocol in School which will usually begin with making contact with you to discuss the situation and next steps.

Unplanned absence

We understand that unplanned absence does occur, such as related to illness. Please see below for the procedure to follow should such an absence be necessary. We would ask you though to exercise judgement about whether your daughter needs to be off for minor ailments: although there are particular protocols to follow around illnesses connected to vomiting and diarrhoea – keep the child off school until 48 hours have elapsed since they have become symptom-free - otherwise most children will cope in school with most minor issues.

Planned absence

We would ask that planned absence be kept to a minimum, with medical and other appointments arranged around the school day if possible, to reduce the amount of time off school which might be needed.

Term-time leave of absence or holidays

Similarly, it is our expectation that parents will not take their daughters out of School for holidays which fall within our published term-dates.

We are required to follow the Department for Education's 'School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' (September 2018), which states that 'Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances'. Term-time holiday would not normally be regarded as 'exceptional

circumstances'. We have been gradually tightening up on our approach to term-time leave of absence and from September 2019 we intend to comply fully with the government guidance. Therefore it will be unlikely that the School would be able to authorise requests for term-time holiday from this point onwards, other than in truly exceptional circumstances.

Term dates for the following academic year are normally set and published by the end of November of the preceding academic year. Parents are asked to note these dates and share them with partners and relatives who may be booking holidays on their behalf so that bookings during term-time may be avoided.

All requests for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the Head for girls in Years 7-13 and to the Head of Juniors for girls in Nursery to Year 6. All requests should be made in advance and in good time for the Head or Head of Juniors to make a considered response. Requests for term-time holiday which are received less than 3 days before departure or after departure are unlikely to be authorised.

Should a pupil have leave of absence from School, whether authorised or unauthorised, teachers will not normally set personalised work but the pupil will need to take the initiative to obtain work and to catch up.

Absence procedures

Unplanned absence

If your daughter is not well enough to come to School in the morning (including days when she is due to go out on a school trip or visit), it is helpful if you can notify the School before 9.00 by telephoning Reception. If a girl is absent on a given morning without explanation and no information has been received, parents will be contacted by Reception, on the morning of the first day of absence, and subsequent days if notice of absence has not been provided by parents.

When your daughter returns to School after the period of absence, the Form Teacher, may request an additional letter/email or telephone call confirming details about the absence to supplement information provided over the telephone.

At other times of the day, information relating to absence may be sent directly to your daughter's Form Teacher or Head of Year by email if that is more convenient, or you can speak to her/him by phone.

Planned Absence

If the absence is planned because of a medical, dental or other appointment, you should inform the Form Teacher in writing/by email/telephone in advance.

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