



Attendance Matters!



At Portland Academy, we expect all students to attend regularly to take full advantage of the educational and social opportunities available to them. We recognise that regular attendance at school is essential for good learning and continual progress and ensures that students get the best possible outcomes. All school staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually.

We expect all of our students to aspire to 100% attendance and appreciate the full support of parents and carers in encouraging this.



The attendance target for 2018 – 19 for this school is 95% attendance.

Authorised Absences

These are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments that unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Some students attending Portland Academy are more vulnerable and have greater needs than the majority of their mainstream counterparts. Wherever possible, we strongly advise medical appointments are made out of school hours; **just 2 medical appointments can lower an attendance figure by almost 3%!**

Absence can be authorised if:

- A student is absent with permission granted by the Head teacher
- A student is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong
- There is a family bereavement
- A student is attending an interview with a prospective employer, or in connection with an application for a place at a post school provider, or for a place at another school
- A student is excluded
- A student is involved in an exceptional special occasion

Unauthorised Absences

It is our responsibility as educators to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent school attendance. Where the Academy does not consider the absence as reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given it will be recorded as 'unauthorised' absence. This type of absence may lead to the Academy using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Absence is unauthorised if:

- parents/carers keep the student off school unnecessarily
- absences have never been properly explained or the school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- student arrives at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays are taken in term time which have not been agreed
- a student fails to return after the period of time agreed by the school for a family holiday
- medical evidence is not provided where requested. Examples of medical evidence could be, doctor's certificate, medical appointment slips, or medical prescription

Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the students.

Persistent Absence (PA):

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when **10%** or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason has occurred. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need parental support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the 'persistent absence' mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority.

Illness during the School Day

Should a student become unwell during a lesson, trained staff will assess the illness and make a decision (through the Head teacher or leadership team) about whether parents need to be informed and whether a student will be sent home or collected by parents.

Table of Attendance

96 – 100 % attendance Outstanding Attendance
94 – 95.99% attendance Good attendance
90.99 – 93.99% attendance Concerning attendance
84 – 90% attendance Persistent absence
Less than 83.99% attendance Excessive Persistent Absence

What You Can Do To Support Your Child

You can help prevent your child missing school by:

making sure they understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality;

taking an interest in their education - ask about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities;

discussing any problems they may have at school;

not letting them take time off school for minor ailments, particularly those which would not prevent you from going to work; and

arranging appointments and outings after school hours, at weekends or during school holidays will help to prevent disruption to your child's education and to the school.



What the Law States

As a parent/carer, you are legally responsible for making sure that your child attends school regularly unless you are home-educating. Parents/carers must ensure that a reason for absence is reported to school on the first day of absence, ideally before **9.20am**, and every day of absence.

A note confirming the reason for absence must be sent on your child's return to school.

Family Holidays in Term Time

Time lost by children and young people due to family holidays taken in term time can be disruptive to their education.

We advise that wherever possible, absence from school should be avoided as it can have a serious effect on your child's educational progress, and can create difficulties for them on their return to school. Many parents say that the time their child misses because of a holiday does not affect their school work. However, a child who has 10 days holiday each year of their school life will miss 24 weeks (nearly a full school year) of their formal education. This is in addition to absences – for instance, if your child is ill.

Requests for the following reasons are not considered to be **exceptional** circumstances;

Availability of cheap holidays

Availability of desired accommodation

Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods

Overlapping with beginning or end of term

Where children have unauthorized absences in term time, **legal action may be taken against each parent under the following legislation:**

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her child, being of compulsory school age, fails to attend regularly the school at which he or she is a registered pupil. Section 444A allows for a penalty notice to be issued to parents who commit such an offence.

Failure to pay may result in prosecution where on conviction you would be liable to a fine of up to £1000.

90% attendance is like having a day off every two weeks.

Parents and carers are by far the most important influence on children's lives and learning and it is parents and carers who are responsible for making sure their child is educated.

If your child's attendance is poor, the class teacher, member of the safeguarding or senior leadership team may contact you to offer advice.

Your child should be aiming for at least 95% attendance.



Medical

Hand Foot and Athletes Foot

Students can should be rooms.

Head Lice

There is no reason for students with head lice to be absent from school. Treatment can be obtained from any pharmacy and all family members should be treated

Whooping Cough

Diagnosed by GP. Students can return to school five days after starting antibiotics. Non-infectious coughing may last for many weeks.

Scabies

Diagnosed by GP. Students can return to school the day after treatment is complete. Others at home MUST also be treated even if they do not have any symptoms.

Coughs and Colds

Students should be given paracetamol, plenty of fluids to drink, and can be sent to school.

Flu and Swine Flu

Students should return to school once their temperature has returned to normal. 48 hours is the normal time span for this.

Sore Throat, Tonsillitis and Glandular Fever

Students should be given paracetamol, plenty of fluids to drink, and can be sent to school.

High Temperature

Give paracetamol and plenty to drink. After taking paracetamol, if your child is feeling better, bring them into school. If your child's high temperature continues for two days or more, seek medical advice.

Headache, Earache and Stomach Ache

Students with headache, earache or stomach ache can attend school. Give paracetamol and plenty of fluids to drink. Please inform their class teacher that they feel unwell. If the pain persists seek medical advice.

Sickness and Diarrhoea

Information and Guidance Mouth, Warts, Verrucae and

attend school. Verrucae covered in changing

Students should return to school 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.

Impetigo

Students return to school when their lesions are crusted or healed, or two days after starting antibiotics.

Threadworm

There is no reason to keep a child off school if they have threadworms. Seek medical treatment and ensure good personal hygiene is followed. Others at home MUST also be treated even if they do not have any symptoms.

German Measles

Diagnosed by GP. Students can return to school four days after the rash has developed. If your child has German Measles please let the school know as pregnant members of staff may be affected.

Measles

Diagnosed by GP. Students can return to school four days after the rash has started.

Chicken Pox

Diagnosed by GP. Students can return to school when the blisters have crusted over (usually about five to six days after the appearance of the rash).

Mumps

Diagnosed by GP. Students can return to school five days from the appearance of the swollen glands.

Conjunctivitis

Diagnosed by GP. Students can attend school with conjunctivitis. They should be encouraged to wash their hands regularly to prevent further spread of the infection.

Medication

Students taking prescribed medication can still attend school. Please ensure that it is contained in the bottle or box in which it was prescribed.