

26 April 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

School Attendance

Given the changing picture in relation to school attendance I am taking the opportunity to write to parents across the St Neots Learning Partnership to explain how our systems work.

A number of parents have received letters relating to school attendance for the first time and we realise that this can be worrying as the letters are quite formal. We are sending out these letters as good attendance is very important but added to this we have new guidelines as to what is an acceptable level of absence, as decided by HM Government. Young people whose attendance falls below 95% are likely to receive an initial letter from their school. Those who fall below 90% are classed as persistently absent from school and this is the point at which the Education Welfare Service become involved with a young person and their parents/carers.

The language used, especially after the first letter, is necessary because on rare occasions there is a consequence under law and we must ensure that anyone receiving further letters is fully aware of any further actions we will be taking and asking others to. Over the course of a school year, 95% attendance equates to almost 10 days of education being lost, or 50 lessons. Fulfilling our core purpose of securing the best possible learning, experience and outcomes for every student is only possible when students are in school regularly.

Once we have sent a letter to parents outlining our concerns, if attendance fails to improve, it is likely that a further letter will be sent. This letter is more formal, quotes the Act and section of law and the possible consequences should attendance levels not improve. Parents will also be invited into school at this stage. Please do attend any meeting which relates to attendance as this enables us to work together and for us to offer appropriate help and support to reduce your child's absence.

Further information about school attendance can be found at the following web address:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444/enacted>.

In the vast majority of cases where poor attendance has been identified we have been able to support parents and the outcomes have been positive. If you do have any concerns about your child's attendance or any letters which you may receive, please do get in touch with the relevant Academy to ensure that we can support you in ensuring regular attendance for your child(ren).

Yours faithfully



Mr J Bates
Attendance Manager – St Neots Learning Partnership