



King's School
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Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this email finds you well and that you had a good Bank Holiday.

I am writing to you regarding school attendance, to bring to your attention some current concerns. We are very aware that attendance can be an emotive subject; we understand that our students and their families have differing needs and that attendance is more challenging for some students.

You may be aware that Brighton and Hove secondary schools have some of the very lowest attendance in the country; among the bottom 5%. This is a significant concern for the LA. King's has always been something of an outlier in this local context in that our students' attendance is regularly within the top 20% nationally. This is one of the key reasons why GCSE outcomes in the school are so strong and why our students report high levels of well-being. As a community, we are all striving to achieve the very best for our young people and seeing them every day in school enables us to provide them with an excellent education.

Although we maintained very good attendance throughout the Autumn Term, we saw a marked decline in the Spring Term and this has continued into the Summer Term. Our attendance is currently **93.5%**. Whilst this is still above local and national averages, a 6.5% absence rate represents a significant amount of lost learning for our students. 90% attendance might sound positive but it means that a student is missing a day or fortnight of school and is therefore classified as 'persistently absent' by the government. All students at King's are set a target of 96% and many of them go on to meet or exceed this. We do appreciate that some young people with medical issues are not able to meet this target and appropriate adjustments and provisions are made in these cases.

There are many known factors which have led to falling attendance levels. One issue, which is widely reported in the media, is families taking term time holidays. Whilst we acknowledge that taking holidays in term time is significantly less expensive, schools are not permitted to authorise these absences and are expected to consistently refer for fixed penalty notices when the threshold is met. We would strongly discourage any parents from removing their child from school during term time; it is extremely disruptive to their learning and their school experience and will affect their education.

For the remainder of the Summer Term, please encourage your child to attend school every day, unless they are too unwell to learn. If there are any barriers to attending e.g. worries, friendship issues or additional needs etc, please be in touch with your child's Form Tutor or Head of Year and they will be able to offer support.

Thank you for your support with attendance; it really does make a huge difference to our students.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Chamberlain

Deputy Headteacher

