



HUNTINGTON SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mr M Smith

26th August 2025

Dear parents and carers,

We hope you have all had a restful summer and enjoyed time together as a family. As we look ahead to the forthcoming year I am writing to you to provide some key information around attendance – some reminders but also some key updates.

The importance of punctuality and a great start to the school day!

Punctuality is a crucial life skill that sets the tone for a productive day. At our school, the day officially **begins at 8:30am though we welcome students through the green gate from 8:15am**. We kindly request that all students are on site by 8:30am, and they will be marked as **late from 8:35am** onwards.

We appreciate your support in ensuring students are prepared with their full uniform and equipment. However, if any items are forgotten, our staff at the welcome gate will be on hand to help students get ready for the day.

We're also excited to announce that our **free toast and jam breakfast trial will continue into the autumn term!** We strongly encourage all students to take advantage of this offer and enjoy a good start to their day.

The power of presence: understanding and achieving excellent attendance

At our school, and supported by extensive research, we consistently observe that **strong attendance directly correlates with academic achievement and overall student well-being**. Students with good attendance not only perform better academically but also report a greater sense of belonging, cultivate strong friendships, and build respectful, trusting relationships with school staff. These are all vital components of a positive and enriching school experience that we are dedicated to fostering.

What constitutes 'excellent attendance'?

While we believe **100% attendance is excellent**, we understand that occasional illness can prevent students from attending. Therefore, over a typical half-term of 6-7 weeks, we consider **97% attendance (missing approximately 1 to 1.5 days)** to be **excellent**.

It is also important to be aware of national classifications:

- The Department for Education defines anyone with **90% attendance or below** as '**persistently absent**.'
- Students with **50% attendance or below** are classified as '**severely absent**.'

Our commitment to communication and support

We are committed to working in partnership with families to ensure the best possible attendance for every student. We will proactively **communicate with families when a student reaches certain 'trigger' points** regarding their attendance.

We kindly request that families **communicate with us any reasons for absence or any concerns that you believe may be impacting your son's or daughter's ability to attend school.**

The easiest and most efficient way to do this is via the **ClassCharts app**. Alternatively, you can reach us by phone at **01904 752165** or by email at absence@huntington-ed.org.uk. Your open communication helps us provide the best support for your child's success.

School attendance: prioritising learning and addressing parental concerns

Government guidance emphasises the importance of planning holidays during school breaks to avoid disrupting a child's education. Huntington School firmly believes that **regular school attendance is fundamental** to a student's ability to maximise their educational opportunities, realise their potential, and contribute positively to their community.

However, we have listened to parental feedback regarding fixed penalty notices. For the **academic year 2025-26, we will recommend to the local authority that these notices not be issued if a student has an attendance record of 97% or above on the first day of absence.** For any leave taken during the autumn term, attendance for the previous academic year will be considered. This approach aims to balance the critical importance of consistent school attendance with an understanding of individual circumstances, reflecting our commitment to both student success and supportive parental partnerships.

If you have any queries about attendance, then please contact me at k.townsend@huntington-ed.org.uk. We look forward to seeing you all this week for an exciting new year ahead!

K Townsend

Ms K Townsend
Strategic Attendance Leader