



Colton Hills Community School

Many Minds, One Mission

Headteacher - Ms J Hunter

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JHU/THO

26th January 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you regarding school absence and the national (and local) crisis schools have faced since the pandemic.

Last week, in the second week back after a 2-week holiday, 9% of our students were absent from school. 12% of Year 11 students, those in the most important examinations year of their lives, were absent.

We have become used to these statistics and sadly, these patterns of absence are now considered normal in schools. Indeed, our attendance is higher than the national and local averages.

Totals and averages mean little other than to illustrate the problem we face in school. What matters most is your own child's attendance.

Missing two weeks for a family holiday taken in term time will mean that your child has missed 50 hours of learning new things which they will never be taught again but will face questions on in an exam in the future. Having broken attendance (a day off every week or fortnight, on random days) means that students will miss five hours of new learning each time but will struggle to understand the work they do the following week because lessons are taught in sequences which rely on prior knowledge.

We have spoken previously about the significant correlation between absence and exam results. Put simply, students who miss school regularly, reduce their lifetime earning potential because they achieve worse exam results than their peers and develop poor habits to take into the workplace where high levels of absence, poor punctuality, or an indifferent attitude to responsibility can result in dismissal.

You may think that I am over-dramatising, but my experience tells me that this is a real concern, and the Government agrees because they have highlighted the issue in recent weeks. Please can I ask that if your child is absent from school regularly (students should have full attendance most weeks) you seek to address this and ask us for support if you are struggling with your child.

For parents of students in Year 11 and Year 13 with poor attendance, this is an urgent situation which needs to be rectified immediately.

Yours faithfully,

Ms J Hunter
Headteacher