

## **Attendance FAQs - A Guide for Parents**

### **What time does school start?**

Students should aim to be on school site at 8.30am. Students are registered at the start of Lesson 1 which begins at 8:40am.

### **What happens if my child is late?**

All students are expected to be in school, on time. Students who are late must go to sign in at the ABI room. If there is no reasonable explanation for lateness, a consequence will be issued.

### **Do I need to provide a letter explaining my child's absence?**

- We expect parents/carers to contact the school on the first day of absence and on each day after. Contact should be by email on [absence@hemelschool.com](mailto:absence@hemelschool.com) or by phone on 01442 390103 (if email is unavailable). If we don't hear from you a text will be sent and may be followed up by a phone call.
- Staff will conduct a home visit for a student who is absent from school for 3 days or more without reason.
- If we are concerned about your child's attendance, we will contact you to request medical evidence in order to authorise ongoing absence. Poor patterns of attendance can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or a referral to the Hertfordshire Attendance Team.

### **Does my child need to stay off school whilst waiting for the result of a PCR test if they have no symptoms?**

No. They should only do so if they have one of the three main symptoms of Covid (a persistent cough, high temperature or loss of taste)

### **Other than Covid, how do I know if my child is too ill for school?**

Ask yourself the following:

- Is my child well enough to do school activities?
- Do they have something that teachers or other children could catch?
- Would I take a day off work if I had this illness?

If the answer is yes to any of these keep them at home. Some useful guidance can be found on the NHS website - Is my child too ill for school?

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

### **What reasons will the school accept for absence?**

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment. (Medical evidence is required; where possible please make routine appointments after school or during the school holidays. We do not expect a whole day's absence to be taken for a routine GP or dental appointment)
- Days of religious observance (for a limited period)
- Non-school based examinations or activities, for example: music exams, sporting events, theatre productions
- Family bereavement

Except in the case of illness or a routine appointment, you should request permission for a leave of absence in term time by emailing the Headteacher at [absence@hemelschool.com](mailto:absence@hemelschool.com) well in advance, giving full details.

**Can I take my child out of school on holiday?**

No. Family holidays must be taken during the school holidays. Absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Holidays, birthdays, day trips etc are not classed as exceptional.

**How can I support my child to have good attendance?**

- Show that you value your child's education by showing an interest in what they do at school
- Attend relevant parents/carers evenings and school events
- Ensure your child gets enough quality sleep and is well equipped for school

**What happens if my child needs support?**

Our priority is in ensuring that all students access regular, full-time education. There are a number of different reasons that can lead to students being reluctant to come to school, for example friendship issues, family difficulties or problems with school work and/or homework. Pastoral staff aim to work in partnership with families to break down barriers that may lead to poor attendance. If there is an issue, please contact the Attendance Team as soon as possible, being open and honest with staff so that together we can tackle the issues preventing your child from coming to school. As a Pastoral Team we have a range of options available to support students with specific needs in order to help them to attend school more regularly. Providing us with clear information and explaining the reason for any persistent absence as early as possible will help us to work together and allow the right support to be in place to ensure your child is in school and accessing their academic education and the wider opportunities that school offers.