

Dear Parents

December 12, 2016

### **Lateness**

At John Cabot Academy, we are working very hard to improve student attendance and to reduce levels of lateness from students. In recent weeks, I have written to the parents of students with poor a.m. punctuality. In order to ensure that all parents and carers are aware of the action we are taking to improve this issue, I wanted to write to you so that you understand our approach and policy.

There is a very strong connection between excellent attendance and excellent learning. Experience shows that students who attend well and are punctual every day tend to do very well in school and go on to achieve well. Where attendance and punctuality is less good, students often find achieving good progress at school more challenging. We will continue to work hard to reiterate this message into the new year. In 2017, our policy will be to issue lunchtime detentions to every student who arrives to school more than one minute late. If a school bus is late, then students will not receive a detention for this. Lateness due to public transport or 'traffic' is not an acceptable reason to arrive late for school. This response mirrors that of the 'adult world' where lateness for work for these reasons would not be acceptable either.

Parents and students are advised to aim to arrive promptly at school for 8.30am. This gives each student plenty of time to cope with traffic or late buses. Our warning bell sounds at 8.38am and tutor time begins at 8.40am. Any student entering the classroom later than this time will be marked late in the register.

Reasons such as 'oversleeping', 'missing a bus', 'issues with uniform' or 'having to take other siblings to school' will not be accepted by the Academy. In order to ensure a calm morning at home, it is best if students organise uniform, equipment and other items on the evening before to avoid any problems which could delay the morning routine. If parents or students are having any difficulty with arriving on time, they are encouraged to contact the relevant tutor or head of community to discuss the matter.

### **Attendance**

In the winter months, coughs, colds and general illness are typically more frequent. We would strongly suggest that parents try to differentiate between minor coughs and colds and more severe viruses or illnesses when deciding whether or not to send their students into school. Please refer to the enclosed leaflet for more information about appropriate actions for illnesses. Under Section 444 of the Education Act (1996), parents must ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Academy is required to record reasons for absence accurately and request medical evidence for illnesses lasting longer than 5 days or reoccurring illnesses over a school year. Evidence could be an appointment card, photographs of medicine bottles or compliment or discharge slip from the GP or hospital. If your GP will not provide you with an appointment, they are obliged to provide you with evidence that you have tried and no appointments are available.

Below are some further tips on how to ensure good attendance:

- Make sure students arrive on time for morning and afternoon registration (during period 5). Arriving after 9.30am constitutes an absent mark, even if authorised by the Academy.

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**Principal: Simon White**

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- Wherever possible, book medical appointments outside of school day. If this is not possible, attendance will not be affected if a student gains a 'present' mark at school and leaves for appointments after morning registration and returns before afternoon registration.
- Don't take holidays during term time. Authorisation for term time holiday is granted rarely.
- Ensure good hygiene and follow a healthy lifestyle to minimise days off sick.
- It's ok to send students to school if they are feeling not feeling 100%. If parents/carers contact Tutors or Heads of Community early in the morning, they can make provisions for the student throughout the day to suit their needs. Students will not be penalised for arriving late during registration if they are feeling unwell and parents have contacted the Academy to explain.

We thank you for your help in supporting our students to sustain good attendance and punctuality.

Yours sincerely



**SIMON WHITE**  
**PRINCIPAL**

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