



Evelyn Grace Academy

Mr Devon Hanson | **Principal**

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06 October 2016

Dear Parents/Carer

Re: New Persistent Absence Threshold

We recognise the strong link between good attendance and good academic outcomes at Evelyn Grace. Students learn best when regularly in lessons. We aim to work in partnership with families to ensure that every child reaches their potential by way of regular and punctual attendance at the Academy.

The government has reduced the threshold for Persistent Absence from 15% to 10% as from September 2015. This will mean a student with attendance below 90% (previously 85%) is now classified as a persistent absentee and applies regardless of whether the absence is 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. Having 10% absence is the same as missing 38 sessions or 19 days of absence across the year or 3½ days per half term. The government says that it expects every student to maintain an attendance level of above 95%.

The table below shows cumulative absence session thresholds for 10%.

	PA at 10% from Sep 2015
	90% attendance or below
Half Term 1	7+ sessions (3.5 days absence)
Half Term 1-2 (Autumn Term)	14+ sessions (7 days absence)
Half Term 1-3	20+ sessions (10 days absence)
Half Term 1-4 (Autumn and Spring Term)	25+ sessions (12.5 days absence)
Half Term 1-5	31+ sessions (15.5 days absence)
Half Term 1-6 (Full academic year)	38+ sessions (19 days absence)

The Department for Education (DfE) has published data on their website that clearly shows the link between attendance and attainment. This highlights the fact that there will be an impact on your child's education and exam results if their attendance is not consistently above 95% throughout their schooling.

Minor ailments, such as a headache or a slight cold, are not considered acceptable reasons for not attending the Academy. When contacting the Academy please be specific with the reason why your child will be absent. We realise that any child can suddenly fall ill and be unable to attend the Academy but repeated absences may require us to request medical evidence from your doctor's surgery as confirmation of these absences. This is in line with recommendations by both the DfE and Local Authority.

Your child will be made aware of their current attendance percentage and if they fall into this group. We will be focusing our attention on students with an attendance of less than 90% at the end of every Half Term (e.g. the October half term) any you may be asked to attend a meeting with; their Director of Learning and myself.

I need to remind you that the current law does not give any entitlement to parents to remove their child from the Academy during term-time for holidays, therefore such absence cannot be authorised. Leave of absence can only be granted in *exceptional* circumstances. If you feel you need to remove your child from the Academy for this reason, you must complete a Holiday Request Form and put your request in writing to the Principal in the first instance and at least two weeks prior to the date requested.

If you have any questions or queries about the change in this policy please do not hesitate to contact me on 020 7737 9520.

Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation and support with these changes.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D Foster', enclosed within a hand-drawn circular scribble.

D Foster
Attendance Manager