



# Ringwood School

Dear parents/carers

At Ringwood School, we firmly believe that regular school attendance is essential for the educational progress and overall wellbeing of our students. We hope that the details below will help by providing you with some of the key aspects of our attendance policy which has been updated this academic year in line with new Government guidance.

## Why regular attendance matters

- Students in Year 11 who attended 100% of the time in their final year at Ringwood School achieved nearly a **whole grade** above their target grade in their GCSE exams, 2024. Students with less than 90% attendance were down a quarter of a grade, on average, across their GCSEs.
- Students will have the opportunity to develop strong relationships with adults and peers and develop valuable social skills
- Students will have a greater sense of belonging in a safe school community
- Through wider experiences like trips, sports and clubs, students will develop confidence and self-esteem

## Attendance support

We understand that some students may face challenges that impact their attendance. Our school's attendance team is here to provide support and guidance to students and families in such situations. If you encounter any difficulties related to attendance, please do reach out to child's tutor in the first instance, or Miss Dyson-McIlroy, Attendance Officer ([attendance@ringwood.hants.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@ringwood.hants.sch.uk))

## Acceptable reasons for absence

We recognise that there are circumstances where a student's absence can't be avoided. Acceptable reasons for being absent from school include:

- **Illness:** when your child is unwell, either physically or mentally, and unable to attend school
- **Medical appointments:** if your child has a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled outside school hours, please notify us in advance and provide relevant documentation (e.g. an appointment card)
- **Religious observance:** we respect the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of our students. If your child needs to be absent for religious observance, please submit a request to the Headteacher who will review it

- **Exceptional circumstances:** in exceptional situations, such as family emergencies or unforeseen events, please contact the school attendance officer immediately to discuss the absence.

### **How to report unplanned absences**

In the event of an unplanned absence, we ask that you follow these steps:

1. **Contact the school:** on the day of the absence, please call the school attendance line before 8.40am to inform us about your child's absence. You can do this by telephoning 01425 475000

(a voicemail can be left) or by emailing [attendance@ringwood.hants.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@ringwood.hants.sch.uk).

2. **Provide a reason for absence:** please provide a brief explanation for the absence, such as illness or family emergency, to help us maintain accurate records

3. **Each day of absence:** please contact the school on the morning of each subsequent day to report your child's absence and to provide an update on their return.

### **Term-time holidays**

Term-time holidays are generally not permitted during the school year. Absences due to term-time holidays are disruptive to learning and lead to missed opportunities in the classroom. The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a student during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#)

However, we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances that require a term-time holiday. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as 'rare, significant, or unavoidable', which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time and it would not be something that might occur every year.

In such rare cases, please submit a formal request to the headteacher at least 4 weeks in advance. The headteacher will carefully consider each request and, if deemed appropriate and in the best interest of the child, may grant permission for the term-time holiday. You will find the request form on the attendance page of the school website.

We emphasise that such instances will only be considered on a discretionary basis, and the decision will be made with the student's educational welfare as the utmost priority. We appreciate your co-operation and understanding regarding our approach to term-time holidays.

### **Sanctions for unauthorised absence**

The headteacher may issue a fine (known as a fixed-penalty notice) for unauthorised absence. If issued with a fine, you'll need to pay this directly to the local authority – £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days per child, per parent.

The decision whether to issue a fine will take into account whether the national threshold has been met. This currently is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. (10 sessions equates to 5 days of school)

Before a fine is issued, you may receive a notice to improve to give you a chance to engage with support as well as being invited to complete a Voluntary Parenting Contract with your child's Head of Year.

### **Rewards for good attendance**

We value and recognise good attendance at Ringwood School. Students who maintain excellent attendance throughout the academic year are eligible for special rewards and recognition. As a school we celebrate good attendance with a half termly celebration of 100% attendance and 98%+ attendance through assemblies and emails home. We also issue 3 house points each half term for students who achieve 98%+ attendance which adds to their total for the annual rewards trip.

### **My question hasn't been answered here**

Please get in touch with the Attendance Team by emailing [attendance@ringwood.hants.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@ringwood.hants.sch.uk) with any further questions, and we'll be happy to discuss them with you.

Thank you for your support in making sure your child receives the best possible educational experience.

Yours sincerely

Miss Clare Adams

Deputy Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)