

14<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian

I would like to take this opportunity to share some information about school attendance. Overall school attendance has dipped slightly this year and we are taking steps to improve this with individuals and families but I would like everyone to understand some of the things we are doing towards better attendance.

Last academic year students lost 410 attendance sessions due to going on a family holiday. Guidelines mean our Principal can only authorise a Leave of Absence if there are exceptional circumstances, none of the 410 sessions missed were authorised and as a result, were referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service. 80% of those families were issued a Fixed Penalty or £120 per parent, per child – a huge sum of money for a family of four. The school does not receive any of this money and students miss out on valuable lesson time.

We all believe that family time is important and precious but there are 170 days of school holidays every year, please don't let your child miss learning by booking holidays in term time.

**Our expectations are high. All students should aim for 100% attendance with a minimum of 98%.**

If your child's attendance is below expectations we will only authorise absence if you provide medical evidence. You can check their attendance by looking on the MyEd app, their latest progress report or by contacting the Attendance office. The medical evidence is not a letter from your GP but it can be an appointment card, the prescription or the empty medication packet showing the pharmacy label. We are happy for you to take a photo of this to email attendance to save you coming down to school.

For safeguarding reasons, if you have not called school to let us know your child is absent we will contact you to make sure you are aware of their absence. We may also come out to do a home visit if we've not heard from you or we believe your child could be truanting.

We will write to you if/when your child has unauthorised absence and invite you to attend a meeting with our attendance team or Principal. **With support in place, we would expect a good improvement but failure to secure a child's regular attendance at school may be a criminal offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 which makes it clear that it is parents responsibility to ensure their child's attendance at the school at which they are on roll. Failure to ensure attendance may result in a referral to the Warwickshire Attendance Service which could result in prosecution.**

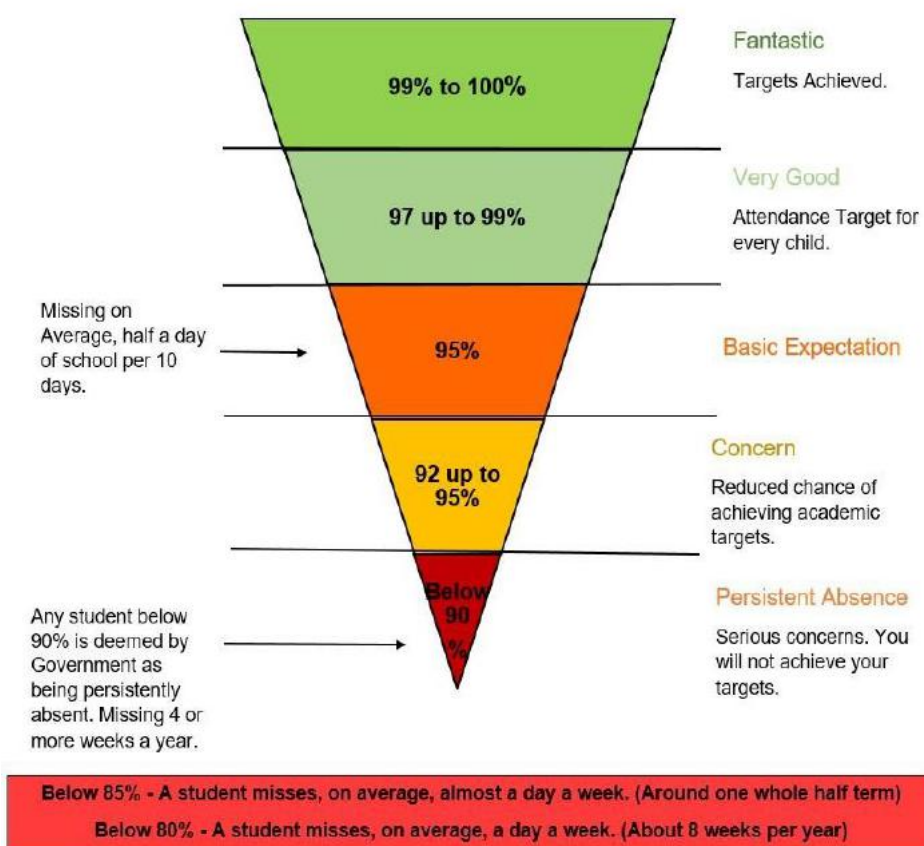
So what can we do to help if your child feels unable to attend?

- If a student is feeling a little under the weather in the morning, they may well improve during the day so it's best to send them in. We will support them and ensure they are sent home if they get any worse.
- We have well trained First Aid staff who can assess most conditions and will administer medication if you have given consent.

Continued overleaf

- We have access to a lift if students have a temporary mobility issue.
- We are also able to support students who have been absent due to sadness from a bereavement or other personal circumstance.
- Tutors and Achievement Coordinators are always willing to help students so if there are any issues or problems you should always get in touch with tutors in the first instance for support.

**We have a strong network of staff here at TQEA and I am sure you will agree that whatever problem your child may encounter, there is support available to help them which will in turn lead to regular attendance and improved academic performance.**



If you would like to discuss your child's attendance with us, or have any general concerns please get in touch via 01827 712477, or [info@tqea.org.uk](mailto:info@tqea.org.uk) and we will be happy to support you.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Watts  
Principal  
The Queen Elizabeth Academy