

8 September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

It has become a serious national and school concern, that too many children are absent from school, too often. As such we are continuing to ensure that attendance remains one of the most significant priorities at Knole Academy.

This means we expect all students to be in school at least 96% of the time. The DfE (Department for Education) states:

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure your child gets a full time-education. Usually, that means going into school from the age of 5 to 16.

There are only a small number of circumstances where missing a school day is permitted. Your child must attend every day that the school is open, unless:

- Your child is too ill to attend.
- You have asked in advance and been given permission by the school for your child to be absent on a specific day due to exceptional circumstances.
- Your child cannot go to school on a specific day because they are observing a religious event.
- Your local authority is responsible for arranging your child's transport to school and it's not available or has not been provided yet.
- Your child does not have a permanent address, and you are required to travel for work. This exception only applies if your child attends their usual school or another school where you are staying as often as possible. This must be 200 half days or more a year if they are aged 6 or older.

Full details of the DfE expectations, including what they define as exceptional circumstances, are available here:

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/05/school-attendance-important-risks-missing-day/#:~:text=Parents%20and%20carers%20have%20a,are%20aged%206%20or%20older.>

If you are unsure of what warrants reasonable reasons for absence due to illness the NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance is available here:

[https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/#:~:text=You%20can%20still%20send%20your,2%20days%20\(48%20hours\).](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/#:~:text=You%20can%20still%20send%20your,2%20days%20(48%20hours).)


We also attach the Kent County Council Guide to Attendance for parents and carers.

The impact of absence on outcomes is dramatic. DfE analysis shows pupils with 95-100% attendance were 1.6 times more likely to achieve the expected outcome in reading, writing and maths than pupils with 90-95% attendance, and 2.4 times more likely than pupils with 85-90% attendance. Each day your child is absent means they lose almost 6 hours of teaching.

A child with under 80% attendance has lost two months of education; a day of absence here and there soon adds up.

We look forward to a successful year ahead. Excellent attendance is a key to success.

Yours faithfully



David Collins  
Headteacher