



THE WENSLEYDALE SCHOOL  
& SIXTH FORM  
LEYBURN

30 November 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE – IMPORTANT NEW INFORMATION**

As you are all aware, attendance at school is vital to students' success. It has been well documented that attendance of just 90%, which is the equivalent to half a day off every week, means that students achieve at least one grade lower at GCSE than they should. Currently whole school attendance is hovering around 95% and I have set a target of 97% for the year.

Our Attendance Officer, Julie Wade, has significantly increased the attendance rate, through a range of interventions. However, I am keen for greater improvement. Therefore, from 1 January 2018, we will become a 'Fast Track' school for attendance. Attached are two documents that clearly outline the legal responsibilities of Parents/Carers and the new procedures we will be able to use. In summary, we will be able to issue penalty notices and additional measures to ensure student attendance improves overall.

As a school, we are committed to supporting students with career aspirations and will continue to authorise certain absences, if they directly involve future career plans. We will also continue to review all requests for holidays in term time on a case by case basis. Although be aware that we are not legally allowed to authorise holiday, unless it is exceptional circumstances and this is at the Headteacher's discretion.

I am not proposing draconian mass penalty fines, however we do need to instil in all young people the importance of coming to school and it is a legal requirement of Parents/Carers to ensure this happens: 'Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education' (section 7 of the Education Act 1996).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at [headteacher@wensleydaleschool.net](mailto:headteacher@wensleydaleschool.net) or via the school switchboard on 01969 622244.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Polley  
Headteacher

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HEADTEACHER Mrs Julia Polley

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