



# THE JOHN FISHER SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr P E McCullagh BSc (Hons), PGCE, MA, NPQH

Peaks Hill  
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Dear Parent/Carer,

How wonderful it was to see so many of you at all the events we have been organising for you this term as parents/carers. We welcomed all of your feedback which helps us constantly adapt our future plans. As we approach the summer term and examinations season your role as parents/carers will never be as important in the academic year than the weeks leading up to and the period during examinations. You will play a vital role at home in creating the right conditions for success.

Next term we will focus a lot on attendance and punctuality as we do not want any of our students to miss out on lesson time. We recognise the strong link between good attendance and good academic outcomes. 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 school.

The government reduced the threshold for Persistent Absence from 15% to 10%. This means 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 a level of above 96%.

The table below shows cumulative absence sessions threshold for 10%.

	<b>PA at 10%</b>
	<b>90% attendance or below</b>
<b>Half Term 1</b>	7+ sessions (3.5 days absence)
<b>Half Term 1-2 (Autumn Term)</b>	14+ sessions (7 days absence)
<b>Half Term 1-3</b>	20+ sessions (10 days absence)
<b>Half Term 1-4 (Autumn and Spring Term)</b>	25+ sessions ( 12.5 days absence)
<b>Half Term 1-5</b>	31+ sessions (15.5 days absence)
<b>Half term 1-6 (Full academic year)</b>	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 headache or slight cold, are not considered acceptable reasons for not attending school. When contacting The John Fisher School please be specific with the reason why your son will be absent. We realise that any child can suddenly fall ill and be unable to attend school 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 DfE and Local Authority.

Your son 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) and you may be asked to attend a meeting with your son's Director of Learning and a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The School has updated its Attendance Policy and procedures for dealing with Absences and Lateness. This will take effect from the beginning of next term. The table below shows our new Late and Punctuality procedures:

Number of Lates	Consequences
3 times within two weeks	Director of Learning Detention
4 times within two weeks	SLT Detention
5 times within two weeks	Saturday Detention
5+ times within two weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Panel meeting with Director of Learning</li> <li>b. Attendance contract</li> <li>c. Meeting with Borough Attendance Officer with the view of Penalty Notice or Prosecution</li> </ul>

Leave of absence from school can only be granted in *exceptional* circumstances. If you feel you need to remove your child from school for this reason, you must put your request in writing at least two weeks prior to the date requested.

Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation and support with these changes. We have no doubt that your efforts, at this time especially, will be rewarded when your son's receive his examination results. Finally, I want to thank all of you who have contributed to The John Fisher School this term. Please note that there is a staff training day taking place next term. This is on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June when we will also be inviting any new staff members to The John Fisher School from September in for their induction.

I wish you and your son a lovely Easter. The new term starts on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April.

Yours sincerely,

P E McCullagh - Headteacher