

28 November 2022

Dear parent/carer

RE: Attendance update

As you may already be aware, in May 2022 the government released [new guidance](#) outlining the responsibilities placed upon schools, the local authority, and parents/carers regarding attending school. We have an updated attendance policy which will be ratified by governors on 8th December and will be available on our school website from the following day.

Our intention is to support parents in giving every child the best possible chance of achieving. We know that students who are in school, every day, have a better chance at making progress and reaching the grades they are capable of. When students miss school they fall behind. The table below shows our level indicator for attendance, identifying risk of underachievement. The figures are based on the Department for Education published [Research Report in March 2016*](#) which found that: pupils with no absence are 2.2 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A* - C or equivalent including English and Mathematics than pupils that missed 15-20% of KS4 lessons. For the purposes of our level indicator we have used 4 as the grade C equivalent.

Category	Level	% Attendance	Weeks per year	Days per year	Hours of lessons missed	% Chance of attaining 5 Grade 4-9 including English and Maths*
Perfect attendance: No risk of underachieving	Level 1	100	0 days	0 days missed	0	78.7
Excellent attendance: Little risk of underachieving	Level 2	98-99.99	3 days	½ to 3 days missed	Up to 15 hours missed	
Risk of underachieving	Level 3	97-97.99	1 week	3 ½ to 5 days missed	Up to 25 hours missed	69.1
	Level 4	95-96.99	1.5 weeks	5 ½ to 9 ½ days missed	Up to 47.5 hours missed	
Serious risk of underachieving	Level 5	93-94.99	2 weeks	9 ½ to 13 days missed	Up to 65 hours missed	Less than 52.8
Severe risk of underachieving	Level 6	90-92.99	3 weeks	13 ½ to 18 ½ days missed	More than 65 hours missed	
Extreme risk of underachieving	Level 7	89.99 and below	More than 3.5 weeks missed	19 or more days missed	More than 95 hours missed	Less than 35.6

Recent data analysis by the Department for Education ([May 2022](#)) found similar trends including:

- “Pupils who did not achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and maths GCSEs in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 8.8% over the key stage, compared with 5.2% among pupils who achieved a grade 4 and 3.7% among pupils who achieved grade 9 to 5 in both English and maths.”
- “Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS4, 83.7% achieved grades 9 to 4 in English and maths compared to 35.6% of pupils who were persistently absent.”

Indeed, for our school, our Summer 2022 results showed that those students with attendance of at least 97% achieved a Progress 8 figure of around +0.8. This means that 8 out of 10 of the grades achieved were higher than they would have been in the average school.



Please use the table above to identify which category your child currently falls into, regardless of whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The number of days absence are for a full academic year, between September and July, therefore if your child has already had 3 days absence, 1 more day between now and July will place them at “Risk of underachieving”:

- **Perfect attendance: No risk of underachieving – 0 days missed**
- **Excellent attendance: Little risk of underachieving – ½ to 3 days missed**
- **Risk of underachieving - 3 ½ to 9 days missed**
- **Serious risk of underachieving - 9 ½ to 13 days missed**
- **Severe risk of underachieving - 13 ½ to 18 ½ days missed**
- **Extreme risk of underachieving - 19 or more days missed**

We are proud of our overall attendance figures each year which are positive in comparison to national average. The most recent Inspection Data Summary Report places Cardinal Heenan in the top 20% of schools for attendance (Autumn 2020 and Summer 2021). This week, however, our attendance figure has fallen below 95% which is concerning and we believe we can do better. It is important that we maintain a culture of going to school unless there are extreme circumstances.

We ask parents/carers to only keep students off school when it is absolutely necessary. Most health problems can be managed within the school and there are rarely reasons why a child cannot come to school and enjoy all that Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School has to offer.

In the coming weeks we will begin sending out “nudge” letters to parents/carers when students are about to enter or have entered the next level indicator for attendance.

If you need to speak to a member of staff regarding removing barriers to attending school please contact your child’s Head of Year.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Mangan

Senior Assistant Headteacher: Pastoral, Behaviour and Safeguarding