

## Attendance Success

Over the past eight years, Shirebrook Academy has prided itself on strong attendance outcomes- beating the national average year on year! Last year was no exception, as can be seen below:-

	National Average 2016-17	Shirebrook Academy 2017-18
<b>Whole School Attendance</b>	<b>94.6%</b>	<b>95.4%</b>
-Pupil Premium	92.2%	94.0%
-SEN	92.3%	93.3%
<b>Persistent Absence (% of students with attendance under 90%)</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>
- Pupil Premium	22.8%	10.9%
- SEN	24.0%	11.1%

### Attendance at Shirebrook Academy

The reason we value attendance is that there is a significant link between attendance and student attainment. To enable every child attending Shirebrook Academy to reach their full potential it is imperative that they attend school each day on time. For this reason we are asking for your support in helping your children achieve the expected attendance level and we hope that you will take steps to ensure that they are present at every opportunity. Please avoid allowing them to stay at home unnecessarily or taking them out of school without authorisation.

As absence impacts on student attainment, we aim for 100% attendance for all our students. However we do appreciate that there are some occasions where absence is unavoidable, therefore Shirebrook Academy's attendance target for this year is 97% and above. Each half term we will also reward students who have had 100% attendance or high attendance and work with the students to make them realise the importance of good attendance for their futures.

The Government describes any absence below 90% as "persistent absence" and makes it clear to schools and Local Authorities that they have a responsibility to deal with persistent absentees. This is because it is statistically proven that children with this level of absence are less likely to achieve their educational potential and their friendships at school can suffer. Ultimately, it puts their future career plans at risk.

Therefore, with immediate effect, when a student has had three separate absences due to illness or unauthorised absence during an academic year (Sept-July), any subsequent absence will not be authorised unless medical evidence is provided. Medical evidence can be in the form of an appointment card, copy of a prescription or a note from a nurse/doctor (usually in the case of on-going medical conditions).

#### **Please see below for further clarification regarding absence from the academy:**

- If your child is to be absent, please contact the academy absence line EVERYDAY before 8.40am.
- If your child is absent and the visit a medical practitioner, please provided evidence of this (appointment card etc).
- If we have written to you to request that medical evidence is provided, no further absences will be authorised without it.

- A Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter may be issued when a student has unauthorised absences recorded in the register. If there is no significant improvement then a Penalty Notice fine will be requested.
- If attendance fails to improve after a Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued then the academy may seek prosecution in the Magistrates Court.
- If parents/carers remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a family holiday, without authorisation, a Penalty Notice will be requested.

**Information about Fixed Penalty Notices:**

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced legislation that gave Local Authorities the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to parents of students who have unauthorised absences from school. A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued in two situations; if a holiday is taken during term time without authorisation from the Principal or if a student has unauthorised absence and their parent/carer has failed to ensure that they attend regularly. Fixed Penalty Notices require that a sum of £120 is paid per parent, per child within a period of 28 days. This payment is reduced to £60 (per parent, per child) if it is paid within 21 days. Failure to pay within the specified time limit may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court under section 444 (1) or 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996.

**Education Act 1996**

Section 444 of the Education Act states that "a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, and fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent(s) is guilty of an offence".

If the reasons given for your child's irregular attendance at school are not satisfactory and they continue to accumulate unauthorised absences, then the academy may decide to proceed with legal action against you for failure to comply with the law. This may result in:

- Prosecution under s444(1) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to **£1000**.
- Prosecution under s444(1a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to **£2,500 and/or receive up to 3 months imprisonment**.

The message of this Government legislation makes it very clear how important it is that every child attends school for as many days as practically possible. It is the responsibility of every parent to ensure that their child does not take unnecessary time off school.

Shirebrook Academy will support both families and students in achieving improved attendance in any practical way we can. Please do not hesitate to contact the Education Welfare Officer or your child's Head of Year should you wish to discuss the matter further.

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