



Dear Parent/Carer,

Attendance Matters at Sutton Community Academy

You may have heard the latest government announcement on plans to improve school attendance, this includes the implementation of 'The Education Bill 2022' and the DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance. Both are lengthy documents but the expectations of the school are clear:

- **Expect** – Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents, build a culture where pupils want to be in school and are ready to learn.
- **Monitor** – Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.
- **Listen and understand** – When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents and listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
- **Facilitate support** – Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of a wider issue.
- **Formalise support** – Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.
- **Enforce** – Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Local Authorities have a duty to use their powers to promote regular school attendance and reduce absences.

Education is important in helping pupils to fulfil their potential. During school time, we believe pupils should be in class with their teachers and peers and enjoying all the benefits that brings.

School attendance has obviously been affected by the pandemic, but even before the pandemic there were issues that meant pupils who should be in school weren't attending as regularly as they should. This is why the government, and the academy, are setting out a series of measures to help support pupils and families overcome whatever obstacles they are facing.

Pupils who attend school regularly also feel more connected to their community, develop important social skills and friendships, and are significantly more likely to leave school with good qualifications, setting them up for a strong future. Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success, both in school and in life.

You can see your child's attendance by checking on the ClassCharts Parents' app. When you make school attendance a priority, you help your child get better grades, develop healthy life habits, avoid dangerous behaviour and have a better chance of achieving their full potential.

The Department for Education states "*improving attendance is everyone's business*". You can view our attendance policies and procedures via:

<https://www.suttonacademy.atrust.org.uk/parents/attendance/>

Yours sincerely

L Taylor

Mr L. Taylor
Assistant Principal