

BW/DT
11th June 2021

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Head Teacher:
Mr R S Samra B.A., M.A.

Dear Parent/Carer

Southam College is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all students and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will students be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Regular attendance in school is essential as it improves educational outcomes and qualifications, allows students to develop new skills, knowledge and understanding, helps students to develop and maintain friendships and enables them to participate in a range of memorable experiences. At Southam College we aim to support students to strive for 100% attendance, and aim for a minimum of 96% attendance.

This academic year has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and students' learning time in school has been affected as a result. However, the online learning experienced by our students this year has considerably lessened the impact on academic achievement, and we are grateful for all of the support that you have given to your child, particularly during the period of remote learning in early 2021.

In order to support the partnership between school and home some key attendance reminders and updates are outlined below for the last half term of this school year.

Reporting Absence

It is essential that if your child is unable to attend school, their absence is reported that day. When letting us know about your child's absence, please always give a reason. If we are given no reason, absences will be unauthorised. Ways to report absence can be found at <https://www.southamcollege.com/parents/attendance>

Medical Appointments

Ideally medical appointments should be made outside of school times. However, if this is not possible, we request that appointments are made after 10am and your child comes in to school before and after the appointment, or that appointments are made for after 2pm, whenever possible.

COVID-19 Symptoms

If your child develops any of the following symptoms whilst at home please do not send them into school. Your whole household must isolate and your child must take a **PCR test**, which can be arranged via <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>, Lateral Flow Device tests cannot be used when there are symptoms as these are specifically for use by those who do not have COVID-19 symptoms. These symptoms are:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

If your child has none of the symptoms above but has a runny-nose or sore throat they may attend school if they feel well enough. If your child displays any of the above COVID-19 symptoms whilst in school you will be required to collect them (and any siblings that are in your household). We require all children that are sent home with symptoms of COVID-19 to have a **PCR test** as outlined above.

The school must be informed of the PCR test result: if negative your child can return to school immediately; if positive, your child must remain in isolation for 10 days, where Day 0 is the day they developed symptoms (or longer if they still have a temperature at day 10). If a test result is returned as unclear then a second test must be arranged.

Leave of Absence

With government restrictions easing in recent months, we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances arising in which you may need to request leave of absence for your child(ren). Leave can only be granted in circumstances deemed as exceptional by the headteacher, and can only be considered in advance of the absence. The application form for leave of absence can be found via <https://www.southamcollege.com/parents/attendance> and must be completed by the resident parent(s) in advance of the absence. Parents do not have legal entitlement to take their children on holiday and leave is unlikely to be granted for this purpose.

Celebrating Excellent Attendance

We aim to celebrate achievement, effort and attendance, and throughout the year you will have been aware of rewards and postcards to celebrate both outstanding attendance and improved attendance.

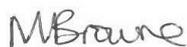
This half term, we will be running the Southam College Attendance Lottery. Each week, there will be a £5 voucher prize for one student in each year group. A student will be selected at random each week, if the selected student has achieved 100% attendance that week, they will receive the prize. If not, the prize will 'rollover' to the next week. We look forward to celebrating attendance this half term, regardless of previous attendance over the course of the academic year. As always, COVID isolation will not impact students' attendance for this reward.

End of Term Dates

Finally, please be reminded that term ends for the summer on Wednesday 21st July at 12.30pm.

If you have any queries regarding attendance or would like further support please do not hesitate to contact me via the college office.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs M Browne
Assistant Headteacher – Attendance Lead

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