



3 May 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

## Re: Changes to Attendance Expectations

Attendance at The Hayesbrook School is above the national average and we work hard to maintain high standards in this important area. The more time students are with us, the more they can learn and consequently the more progress they make.

Last week we received notification from Kent County Council that the way attendance is managed will change with immediate effect and I am writing to ensure you are fully aware of the detail. As you may have seen in the recent national news on 6 April 2017, the Supreme Court made a ruling regarding the definition of regular attendance at school. In the ruling, the Supreme Court stated that the definition of "regular" in the context of school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school", in other words, any day that the school is open to pupils. It is not in relation to national benchmarks for attendance.

In response to the recent court case, Kent County Council have reviewed the Code of Conduct and made some changes to the wording in relation to the 10% Persistent Absence threshold and when schools and academies should consider the use of penalty notices in order to improve attendance. This will now be an option for schools where there are more than 10 sessions or 5 days unauthorised absence in a 50 day period. The 50 day period will be measured in a 12 month rolling period rather than during an academic year. At The Hayesbrook School we do not use fixed penalty notices lightly and we seek to support families and students in every way possible before resorting to the use of fines. We will of course continue to do so.

The academy is currently in the process of providing families with copies of attendance registration certificates so that you can see how your son's attendance has developed over the course of this academic year. If you wish to discuss your son's attendance then please contact your son's Team Leader in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

Steven Reader  
Assistant Principal