

Research is clear that:

Statistics show that students who attend school regularly will gain better examination results.

Students who have missed lessons through absence struggle to catch up. This, naturally, has a serious impact on their learning and progress. Smithdon High School is committed to ensuring all Students achieve their full potential and, as such, we consider regular attendance as the starting point for all interventions.

The Law:

What this means for you, as parents/carers:

The Education Act 1996 requires that parents / carers of children who are of compulsory school age (5-18 years old) must ensure they attend school regularly. Parents / carers commit an offence if their children are absent from school without good reason.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Arriving at school after Registration has been completed (9 am) without legitimate reason
- Leaving school early with no legitimate reason
- Birthdays
- Shopping – even for school equipment/clothes
- Caring for relatives or younger children
- Family holidays, not deemed ‘for exceptional purposes’ by the Headteacher (please contact the school for information before booking a holiday)
- Any other absence which has not been agreed

Legal Actions

Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence.

In order to give students the best chance of achieving their potential the Government insists that all schools must aim for the highest possible attendance for all students.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Norfolk Local Authority runs a system where a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued where a Student meets the criteria for legal intervention due to unauthorised absence.

The criteria for legal intervention in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice is if a Student has:

- 10 consecutive unauthorised sessions (5 days)
- 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days) within a 10 school week period (excluding holidays)

A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) is a fine of £160 per parent/carer, per child (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days) for the first offence. Failure to pay this final amount within the timescale will lead to further legal action being taken.

For a second FPN within 3 years is a fine of £160.

For a third FPN within 3 years, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of prosecution.

How We Consider Attendance:

100% - Excellent

Students have every opportunity to succeed

96-99% - Good

Students who attend over 96% of the time are more successful in their lives

This means no more than 7.5 days off school in one year (but still missing 41 hours of learning)

90.1-95.9% - Below Expectations

91% attendance = missing an average of 17 days of school (93.5 hours of learning) in a year

This means results achieved at GCSE are likely to be at least one grade lower than they could have been and 17 hours of social time missed.

90% and below – Persistent Absence

Students with less than 90% attendance are classified as persistently absent. As a result, they are unlikely to gain 5 GCSEs.

If your child falls below 90% attendance and into this category, you will be contacted for intervention by the school and/or Local Authority in order to help improve their attendance.

Why else is school absence a worry?

Truancy/unsupervised absences can put students at risk. Persistently absent students are more likely to become teenage parents, unemployed, homeless, involved in crime, engaged in drug abuse.

You can help your child achieve their full potential, by:

- Ensuring their regular attendance is a priority
- Contacting Smithdon High School to report any absence and legitimate reasons for absence
- Providing the school (Attendance Officer) with any evidence you have to support the reason for your child's legitimate absence
- Ensuring your child returns to school following illness as soon as they are able
- Contacting the school if you are concerned that your child is struggling to attend or if you have any other concerns regarding their attendance and/or punctuality

How to report an absence:

If you need to inform the school that your child is/will be absent, please call or email the Attendance Officer before 8.30am each day, via email, phone or text (all 24/7, incl. phone line):

- Email: attendance@smithdonhigh.org.uk
- Call: 01485 536123
- Text: 07935 059774

Missing school = Missing out!



Smithdon High School

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Work hard – Be kind – Smile

www.smithdonhigh.org.uk

Attendance Matters

2025-2026

Information for Families

Punctual and regular school attendance is essential for Students to succeed in their learning and be settled in their wellbeing from the time a child starts school until their final day.



 West Norfolk
Academies Trust