



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Families,

Firstly, this is a brief note of thanks to all parents and carers for the immaculate standards of punctuality and uniform from students this week. The students have made a great start reflective of the ongoing aspirations of our fantastic parent community. We do not take this for granted and we thank you again for your support.

I have the privilege of speaking to all College groups in Expectations Assemblies next week and I am relishing this opportunity to further promote their hopes and aspirations for a productive term ahead. Next week, I will write to families to highlight the key messages that have been shared with students.

Attendance

As we look back at the halcyon summer months and with the colder weather now firmly upon us, we felt that it would be useful to remind families of the school's approach and procedures regarding absence management. The procedures remain unchanged.

Absences Procedure

If your child is ill and unable to attend school, a parent/carer must report this on the Online Absence Reporting Form on the website homepage ([here](#)) in the morning, and on every day of absence.

Please notify us of any infectious or contagious illness occurring in the household of a student by calling the school. In such cases, a student should not attend until the incubation period has passed or a medical certificate has been submitted indicating that they are permitted to return. Please provide a letter with the reason for absence on the first day the student returns following the illness.

Daily Absence Check

Each day registers will be checked and if a student is absent and no communication has been received from the parent/carer then a phone call will be made to ascertain the whereabouts of the student for that day. Please note all contact numbers that have been provided will be tried and a message will be left where necessary, or a text message will be sent. We request you return any calls as soon as possible.

Home visits

A member of our team may call at your home to discuss your child's absence if there is a concern regarding attendance or the reason given for absence is not acceptable. The visit may be carried out unannounced.

Leave of Absence

Medical

If a student needs to attend a medical appointment, a letter or appointment slip must be brought in from home and given to Student Services who will pass this onto Mrs DeVido (Attendance Administrator). In the case of text message appointments, a screen shot of the appointment will suffice. This should be shared with the Form Tutor, and Student Services. All students must sign out when leaving school, stating the reason for leaving. When a student returns from the appointment, they must report back immediately to Student Services to sign in. Students must be collected by a parent/carer from Student Services unless a letter giving specific permission to leave school unaccompanied is received.



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Religious Observations and Funerals

A leave of absence form, which can be obtained from Student Services, should be completed, and returned to Student Services who will pass this onto Mrs DeVido (Attendance Administrator). By completing the form, we will know where your child is and there will be no necessity to disturb your day.

Family Holiday

Leave will not be granted for family holidays during term time. Requests for leave of absence must be made on the Academy's official leave of absence form, which can be obtained from Student Services. When completed, the form should be returned to Student Services for it to be passed on to the Principal. You will be notified of the Principal's response in writing. When leave of absence has not been authorised, a referral will be made on the Academy's official leave of absence form, which can be obtained from Student Services. When completed, the form should be returned to Student Services for it to be passed on to the Principal. You will be notified of the Principal's response in writing. When leave of absence has not been authorised, a referral will be made to County for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Persistent Absence

We review attendance and punctuality on a regular basis, whether it be authorised or unauthorised absence. If a student's attendance falls below 95%, we will begin to put standard interventions into place. These interventions are intended to support parents/carers and students to improve attendance. The interventions will include enhanced communication including letters, phone calls and meetings to address the concerns, to improve attendance. If these interventions fail and attendance continues to fall, we may have to refer the case to the Local Authority who may take legal action.

For context, this table provides an indication of the impact of student absence:

Attendance %	Missed days	Missed weeks	Missed lessons
95%	9 days	2 weeks	45 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	95 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	145 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	190 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	240 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	285 lessons
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	335 lessons

Punctuality

Arriving late to school and to lessons is not acceptable. Students register from 8.45am in their Form Tutor base. **Students should arrive no later than 8.40am** so they have ample time to get to their base.

If, for whatever reason, your child will be arriving late please call the school to inform us. A student arriving late to school must sign in at Student Services. If a student arrives late without a satisfactory reason, they will be given a sanction in accordance with the Behaviour and Discipline policy. Normally, this will mean a warning on the first occasion and a subsequent 30-minute after school detention on any occasion following this, to be served on the same day as that instance of lateness.



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Household Support Fund

Leicestershire County Council recognises that all households may potentially be suffering hardship and seeks to provide support from the Household Support Fund to any household that meets its criteria. Families that have received Free School Meal vouchers may also require support with food, fuel, or other utility costs. The Household Support Fund is provided by the Government to local authorities to support families with children and individuals most in need.

Support available:

- Food Vouchers
- Households with children - £20 per adult per week, £15 per child per week (for maximum of 2 weeks)
- Single households - £25 per week (for maximum of 2 weeks)
- Multiple adult households - £20 per adult per week (for maximum of 2 weeks)
- Fuel Vouchers (Family household - £98 / Single household - £56)

Applications must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- The applicant must be a resident of Leicestershire over 16 years old.
- A family/household with or without children who are experiencing financial hardship, which means that they are struggling to feed their family, to heat their home, or with other household/utility costs etc.

If you think that you are eligible, please contact **Jo Osborne** on **01858 440770** ext. **6547** or email **josborne@robertsmyth.tgacademy.org.uk** who will be able to make an application on your behalf. You will need to provide the following:

- A form of photo ID (confirming the lead claimant's identity) e.g., driving licence, passport, birth certificate, marriage certificate.
- Benefits letter, bank statement, utility bill, Council Tax bill that confirms proof of address.
- Evidence of financial hardship could include but is not limited to difficulties and/or arrears due to inflationary energy costs those who have been made redundant and have not yet received universal credit, or other loss of household income.
- Name of Gas and Electricity provider and how these bills are currently being paid.
- Letter or message from current Gas and Electricity provider stating that they are in arrears.



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Key Dates (after half-term)

- **Tuesday 31st October:** Sixth Form Politics Trip
- **Wednesday 1st – Friday 3rd November:** Year 9 Battlefields Trip – History Department
- **w/b Monday 6th November:** Year 11 Trial Exam week
- **Friday 10th November:** Whole School Remembrance Assembly
- **Monday 13th November:** Year 13 Exams Assembly
- **Wednesday 15th November:** PSHE Dropdown (Lesson 1) and Year 12 Health Day
- **Wednesday 15th November (evening):** Sixth Form Open Evening (6-8pm)
- **w/b Monday 20th November:** Year 7-10 in-class assessments
- **Wednesday 22nd November:** Sixth Form Open Morning
- **w/b Monday 27th November:** Year 12 in-class assessment week
- **Friday 1st December:** INSET Day – school closed to all students.
- **Tuesday 5th December:** Christmas Concert
- **Thursday 7th December:** PSHE Dropdown (Lesson 1) and Year 9 Careers Day and Workshops
- **Thursday 7th December (evening):** Year 11 Parents Evening 4-6.30pm (remote via School Cloud)
- **Wednesday 13th December (evening):** Year 11 Parents Evening 4-6.30pm (remote via School Cloud)
- **w/b Monday 18th December:** Year 13 Trial Exam week
- **w/b Monday 18th December:** Year 11 A-Level Taster Lessons
- **Friday 22nd December:** *Early finish at midday.*
- **Monday 25th December – Friday 5th January 2024:** CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

Parents' Evening Dates

- **Thursday 7th December:** Year 11 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Wednesday 13th December:** Year 11 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 18th January:** Year 13 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 25th January:** Year 12 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 1st February:** Year 9 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 8th February:** Year 9 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Tuesday 12th March:** Year 10 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 21st March:** Year 10 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 23rd May:** Year 8 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 6th June:** Year 8 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)

Teacher Training Days

- **Friday 1st December**
- **Monday 29th January**
- **Friday 28th June**

Thank you for reading this letter. I wish you a great weekend.

Yours sincerely,

D Cleary
Principal