



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Parents/Carers,

Open Evening

I would like to thank all student volunteers for their amazing support last week during our annual school Open Evening. We had the most effusive and warm feedback from all visitors regarding the brilliant tour guides, student leaders, prefects, and ambassadors who came out in force to share their pride in our school.

I wish to also pay a huge tribute to Sophia, Noah, Mei, and Shay for their inspirational speeches to a packed Main Hall full of prospective parents and Year 6 students. They each showed character, nerves of steel, and passion for our school. I was very proud to hear their speeches.

I must also thank all staff for bringing the curriculum to life and in particular, I must thank our student band, 'Soul Patrol' and Mr. Hughes (Head of Performing Arts) for their powerful performances including a rendition of 'Crazy in love' that has become my absolute favourite, a real joy!

We should all be so proud to see 1,000 visitors coming from across Harborough and the surrounding villages to see our school. This is a testament to our community, staff, students and parents.

State Funeral / Bank holiday – Monday 19th September

Over the weekend, the Department for Education communicated with all schools confirming that the State Funeral for the late Queen Elizabeth II, would take place on Monday 19th September and that this would be a bank holiday.

Schools are not expected to remain open on the bank holiday and as such, **the school will be closed on Monday 19th September**. We will reopen to all students on Tuesday 20th September.

Attendance

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.



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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.

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 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.

Punctuality

Arriving late to school and to lessons is not acceptable in our school. 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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The following table shows the amount of learning time that is missed due to poor school attendance as measured across a school year:

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

If you would like to view the full Attendance and Punctuality Policy, it can be viewed on our website.

Final note regarding attendance

Sustaining good school attendance is absolutely a team effort.

I would like to thank our parent community for the outstanding job that you all do to ensure that your child is fabulously well dressed, punctual and attending on a regular basis. We know that our children have missed too much over the last two years, for reasons beyond our control locally so let's all come together and make sure that they get the benefit of every experience that they can this year.

Reminders

- Monday 19th September: **Year 7 baseline assessment fortnight (no preparation required)**
- Thursday 22nd September: **Year 11 Raising Achievement Evening (6-7pm)**
- Thursday 29th September: **Parent Forum (6-7pm)**
- Friday 30th September: **Teacher Training Day (closed to all students)**

- Monday 3rd October: **Year 11 and 13 in-class assessment weeks**
- Thursday 6th October: **Year 7 Parents Evening 4-6.30pm (remote via School Cloud)**
- Wednesday 12th October: **Year 11 Careers Day**
- Thursday 13th October: **Year 7 Parents Evening 4-6.30pm (remote via School Cloud)**
- Thursday 13th October: **Year 7 Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre visit**
- Friday 14th October: **Year 7 Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre visit**
- **Monday 17th – Friday 21st October: HALF-TERM**

I hope this is a helpful update and I wish you a positive week ahead.

Yours faithfully,

Dan Cleary
Principal



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