September 2013

Dear Parent/Carer

**Student Attendance**

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to a new academic year at Sackville and re-outline the schools attendance policy.

As part of Sackville’s Ofsted improvement plan and continued focus to improve learning and exam results we have set a 95% target for school attendance, which is in line with government expectations. However, I believe that everyone would accept that students come to school to learn and that if they are absent then learning is interrupted. This letter outlines the different responsibilities and gives some guidance to parents on the actions they should take.

**Parental Responsibility**: Parents are responsible for ‘ensuring that their children arrive on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn’. There are occasions when students need to be absent. It is a parental responsibility to request leave of absence or explain the reason if the absence was unexpected. Unexplained absence will be unauthorised and be liable to a fixed penalty notice (FPN).

**Holidays**: School holidays are extensive and provide the opportunity for a deserved break from school work. Sackville seeks to make full use of term time for all students. Holidays during term time are not permitted. There is no “right” to any period of holiday during term time. Unauthorised holidays can lead to prosecution or a FPN.

**School Responsibility**: It is the school’s responsibility to keep a record of attendance. It is also our responsibility to decide whether an absence is ‘authorised’ or ‘unauthorised’. Unauthorised absence will result in a FPN.

**Procedures** **for Reporting Absence**: We are committed to high levels of attendance. Should your child have time off school, please notify us by 10am on the first day by telephone and leave a message on our dedicated line. Three days or more illness should be covered with a medical certificate.

If you have telephoned or emailed the school and reported the absence, you still need to send a letter when your child returns to school.

If we do not hear from you by 10 am on the first day of absence, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and liable for a FPN. We are likely to contact you to confirm that your child is absent with your knowledge; this enables us to act quickly should a child be truanting.

If your child is likely to be absent for a longer period and is capable of completing school work, please make contact with the Pastoral Support Assistant for that year with a medical certificate who will endeavour to have suitable work sent home.

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Should you need to make a medical appointment for your child during the school day, please ensure they have either an appointment card or letter which must be signed by a tutor before she/he is allowed to sign out of school. Your cooperation in this will help your child to maintain an excellent attendance record.

Finally, by working together we believe we can ensure that your child makes the most of their time at Sackville and fully meets their potential. I wish you all a happy and successful year.

Yours sincerely



Mr P Street

**Assistant Headteacher**