Patchway Community School

Hempton Lane,
Almondsbury, Bristol, BS32 4AJ
pcs-enquiries@olympustrust.co.uk
www.patchwaycs.org.uk
01454 862 020

17 November 2026

Dear parents / carers,

Subject: Attendance Update Including Policy Changes

We are writing to update you on some changes to our attendance procedures. We want to continue working in partnership with families to support every pupil to attend school regularly, feel a sense of belonging and make the most of their time with us.

Evidence continues to show a strong connection between **excellent attendance, positive GCSE outcomes, wellbeing and future opportunities**. We encourage all pupils to aim for attendance above **96%**, which is equivalent to **missing no more than 8 days of school across the academic year**. If, however, your child's attendance is below this figure it is not too late! We need to work together to build better attendance habits and ensure **every child is in school every day!**

We recognise that maintaining excellent attendance requires commitment from both pupils and families. Where appropriate, we encourage pupils to attend school with minor illnesses, in line with NHS guidance, provided they feel well enough to do so. Wherever possible, we also encourage families to minimise the amount of learning missed through appointments and other commitments.

Every day in school is an opportunity to learn, build confidence, maintain friendships and make progress.

Key attendance information

- **Reporting absence:** Please continue to report your child's absence through the **Studybugs app** as soon as possible.
- **Attendance Connect – keeping in touch and offering support:** We have introduced Attendance Connect to strengthen pupils' sense of belonging, help us better understand the reasons behind absence and identify any barriers to attending school.
    - Most pupils absent due to illness will receive a **supportive telephone call** from school. Even if you have already reported the absence, this gives us an opportunity to check that your child is okay, maintain contact and identify whether any support could help them return.
    - We will also carry out **routine Attendance Connect home visits** for some pupils who are absent. These visits are intended to check on pupil wellbeing, understand individual circumstances and explore how we can support a return to school. Visits will be limited to supportive conversations at the doorstep; we will not need to enter your home.

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- **Medical and dental appointments:** Please arrange non-urgent medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible. If this is not possible, your child should attend school before and/or after the appointment wherever appropriate. To authorise the absence, parents/carers are required to provide evidence of the appointment, such as an appointment letter, email or text message. This can be shown to Reception or emailed to **StudentAbsence@patchwaycs.org.uk**. If you have not received written confirmation, please contact the Attendance Team by email with the appointment details. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will consider the information provided when deciding whether the absence can be authorised.
- **Absence from an alternative address:** Please inform school if your child will be staying somewhere other than their usual home address during an absence. This information should be provided before 9.00 am on the day of absence, or as soon as the arrangements change. This helps us maintain accurate records and know where pupils are staying while absent. If we are not informed, we may be unable to authorise the absence and, where appropriate, it may be recorded as an unauthorised holiday.
- **Afternoon registration:** Our afternoon registration (PM roll call) will now take place during **Period 5**. This brings our arrangements more in line with other schools across the Trust.
- **Support is available:** If you have concerns about your child's attendance or would like help to support them in attending more regularly, please speak to their **Tutor or Head of Year or email StudentAbsence@patchwaycs.org.uk**.
- **Early conversations make a difference:** If there are barriers affecting your child's attendance, please contact us as early as possible. The sooner we understand the circumstances; the sooner we can work together to identify appropriate support.

Our approach reflects the Olympus Academy Trust's commitment to **inclusive attendance, strong starts, early intervention, understanding the reasons behind absence and working in partnership with families**.

The updated policy can be found on our website Patchway Community School - Policies

Thank you for your continued support. By working together, we can help every pupil make the most of every school day.

Kind regards,

Mr Harry Marson-Strutt
Assistant Headteacher