

Parent/Carer of

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to keep you informed about your son/daughter's current attendance. Please find below the latest update:

**xxxx's attendance at present is ( )**

Good attendance of 96% or above is vital in ensuring that our students can achieve their potential and to guarantee they can get the most out of the education we provide. Having time off school is always going to disadvantage your child, for example the impact of having just one day off each half term equates to a loss of 36 hours of learning. As a school we have a right to pursue high expectations regarding attendance, as a parent and carer you have a legal responsibility to ensure good attendance, but together we have a duty to encourage and promote great attendance.

### **Persistent Absentees**

The current persistent absence threshold, of 10 per cent means that if your child's attendance falls below 90% without a medical reason or an exceptional circumstance you may be at risk of being referred to the Local Authority for a prosecution.

As a school we wish to avoid prosecuting parents and would like to work with you to improve your child's attendance. We can appreciate that there may have been good reasons why your child has had some time off school during the year, but at Nuast we strongly believe attendance has a direct link to achievement. We expect all our student's attendance to be above 96% in order for them to achieve good grades and achieve their highest potential from their education.

It is never too late to make improvements to your child's attendance and every day really does count. Here are a few ways to ensure your child's attendance can improve:

- Make medical appointments outside of school/college time
- If appointments cannot be made outside school/college time, send your son/daughter in before or after the appointment. They receive two attendance marks during the day and we will not authorise a full day off for a doctor, dentist or opticians appointment
- Do not take holidays or family visits during term time
- Contact school/college regarding any issues your son/daughter might have about attending sooner rather than later
- Never allow illness to become regular or patterned, i.e. spot patterns of poor attendance on particular days, there may be an underlying issue in school that we can help with
- If your child has not attended for 2 days or more and we have not heard from you, you may receive a home visit. So always contact the school between 8.00am and 9.00am and inform us when your child has not attended school

Together we can ensure your child receives the best possible start to their future career by stressing the importance of good attendance. Every parent, carer and student has a part to play in this. Securing good attendance and punctuality early on is very important and helps to embed these important attributes, which will enable your child to go on and achieve more.

### **Unauthorised Holidays**

We do not authorise holidays in term time. Time out of school will not be authorised and should your son/daughter's attendance be considered as failing to ensure regular attendance, the school will have no choice but to refer you to the Education Welfare Service who may issue you with a Penalty Notice or refer you to Court.

### **Punctuality**

For this current academic year students must be on site by 8:05 am and in tutor set by 8:10 am. Any student arriving after 8:30 am will be classed as late to school and will receive a 20 minute detention after school and an email/letter home to parents/carers.

Next academic year **September 2016–July 2017** students must be on site by 8.20 and in tutor set by 8.30. Please ensure your child is fully aware of these new timings and the consequences of being late to school.

### **Attendance Initiatives**

Below are some of **next terms** attendance initiatives:

Pizza Party for tutor groups, Students whose attendance is above 96% will placed in a lottery draw to win a prize.

Yours Sincerely

Caroline Smith

Vice Principal