Attendance MATTERS | HALF-TERMLY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026 | FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

This is your school. You matter here.

Welcome to Attendance Matters, our half-termly newsletter for parents and carers. Each issue will share practical seasonal advice, what we are noticing about attendance and punctuality in school, and ways we can help. We aim for 96%+ attendance while recognising that illness and individual circumstances can make this difficult.

What we noticed this half-term | Figures to 23 October 2026

97.7%

Year 7 attendance

A strong start to secondary school.

95.0%

Whole-school attendance

Our year-to-date figure; our ambition is 96%+.

93.8%

Final week before half-term

Down from 96.7% in early September.

What we're doing: Reviewing weekly patterns, supporting students where attendance is becoming harder and working with families when punctuality or absence begins to slip. After half-term, we will give students time to settle back into school routines before reviewing their attendance and punctuality. We will then share individual updates with families, including the number of times late to lessons and the total minutes of lesson lateness.

When your child cannot attend

THREE USEFUL STEPS

1 **Let us know each day**
Email absence@bishopluffa.org.uk or call 01243 832681 by 8.30am.
Include name, Year/House and the reason.

2 **Keep us informed**
If the absence may continue, please tell us.
We can discuss missed work and next steps.

3 **Make returning easier**
If coming back feels difficult, contact your child's tutor or Head of House to discuss a check-in or support.

Illness and appointments: a quick guide

WHEN TO STAY HOME / HELPFUL INFORMATION

High temperature (38°C+): Stay at home until it has gone and your child is well enough.

Vomiting or diarrhoea: Return 48 hours after the last episode.

Mild cough or cold: Children can usually attend if otherwise well and without a high temperature.

Medical / dental appointments: Book outside school time where possible. If an appointment has to happen in school time, letting us know in advance and providing evidence is helpful – for example, an NHS text screenshot or booking email. There is no need for a doctor's letter.

NHS advice: Is my child too ill for school?

A calm start to the day

By 8.00

Arrive in school

Helps the morning to start calmly.

8.05

Registration (8.05-8.25)

Students should be in tutor rooms or assembly, ready to register.

Late arrival or late to lessons:

Students arriving after the end of registration should sign in at **Reception**. We also expect students to move promptly between lessons.

Stockbridge Road delays

We wrote to all parents and carers earlier this month about the Stockbridge Road works and shared a Google Form to understand any impact on students' journeys. Thank you to those who have already responded. If your child is affected by the roadworks or diversions and you have not yet completed the form, you can do so here. We will take unavoidable delays into account when reviewing punctuality.

Report Stockbridge Road travel delays

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Four practical STEPs to support attendance

Small steps can make a real difference

If attendance is becoming difficult, tell your child's tutor or Head of House when things are hardest, what has helped and what support might make a difference. **STEP** is a simple way for families and school to agree a practical next step together.

S

Support routines

The night before, check the timetable, prepare equipment and plan the morning journey. Build back a regular wake-up time during the last few days of half-term.

T

Talk early

If mornings, friendships, particular lessons, anxiety or health needs are making attendance difficult, let the tutor or Head of House know. Tell us what has helped before.

E

Encourage attendance

When your child is well enough, focus on the next school day. If returning feels overwhelming, speak to us about a supported return and a point of contact in school.

P

Praise progress

Notice specific steps: getting up on time, coming back after illness, arriving promptly or settling into lessons. Improvement matters, even when it is gradual.

A supported return could look like this

A practical example: If a student is worried about coming back after illness, a parent or carer can email the tutor beforehand, explain the concern and ask who the student should speak to on arrival. School can then plan a check-in and prioritise what needs catching up.

Requesting absence during term time

Please speak to us in advance: If you need to request time away from school, contact us before making arrangements. Under the DfE's stricter attendance rules, requests for leave during term time are subject to strict criteria. Discretionary leave can normally only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, and we must follow these rules when considering requests.

Holidays and unauthorised absence: Family holidays and leisure trips are not normally considered exceptional and may lead to a penalty notice if leave is not authorised.

Questions or concerns? We are here to help

If attendance, punctuality or returning after an absence is becoming difficult, please get in touch with your child's tutor or Head of House. We can talk through what's happening and agree what support might help. Contact details for Form Tutors and Heads of House are included in the directory attached to this message.