



ORMISTON SIX VILLAGES ACADEMY



13th September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Please review the notices below carefully, especially this page relating to unauthorised absence. I have absolutely no wish to refer any of our parents or carers for penalty notices or for prosecution, but I must follow the law. It is my hope that parents of children who have accrued unauthorised absences in the past will reflect on the information below and do their utmost to avoid taking children out of school which impacts on their learning, progress and attainment.

Changes to the law regarding attendance

Attendance is a national priority. The Education Act 1996 places a legal responsibility upon parents to ensure their children attend school as required, and failure to do so is an offence. The offence is one of strict liability and this means there are only certain reasons accepted in law as to why a child can miss school and the onus is on the parent to be able to prove the presence of one of these to the satisfaction of a court. These reasons are as follows:

- The child was unfit to attend due to ill health – please note having a health issue doesn't automatically mean a child is unfit to attend.
- The child was engaged in a religious observance – this must be a day stipulated in the calendar of the religion as a day for observance.
- The child is in receipt of transport provided by the Local Authority, and this has failed.
- The child was prevented from attending due to an unavoidable cause – this is something akin to an emergency, for example the house burnt down.

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, came into effect on 19 August 2024. What do you need to know?

- 10 unauthorised sessions for any reason (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period will lead to a penalty notice being issued. **Unauthorised absence does not only apply to holidays; it includes any absence that has not been agreed by the principal such as truancy, arriving late after the register has closed at 8.50am and failing to provide reasons for absence.** This means unauthorised absence can be a **G code** (holiday during term time), a **U code** (unauthorised lateness to school after registers have closed) or **O code** (failure to provide a reason for absence, absence for a reason that the Principal cannot authorise).
- The new rules mean it is unlawful to take your child out of school for one week's holiday. If 10 unauthorised sessions are accrued, a penalty notice will be issued. A holiday shorter than 10 sessions is also unauthorised. Further unauthorised absences for any reason within the 10-week window will lead to a penalty notice.
- There is an increase in the penalty fine from £60 to £80 if paid in 21 days. If the fine is not paid by the first 21 days, it will rise to £160 if paid within 28 days of being issued.
- If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.
- The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Magistrate's fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to: "failure to safeguard a child's education"

Please note that student absences which are reported as illness, but are subsequently found to be due to holiday, will also be recorded as unauthorised and a referral for a WSCC Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) will be submitted if the criteria are met.

- Exceptional circumstances: you may consider your child's absence from school is necessary, legitimate or an exceptional circumstance; however, please note that headteachers have been directed by the Government not to authorise any absence from school unless there is an 'exceptional circumstance'. What a parent considers exceptional may be considered avoidable by me.
- Late arrival to school: Registers open at 8.20am for 30 minutes. If your child arrives at school after 8.50am, they will be allocated an unauthorised late absence code 'U'. A 'U' code counts as an unauthorised absence and therefore counts towards the criteria for referral for a penalty notice. This means that if your child arrives late to school (after registers close) 10 times in a 10-week period, you will be referred for a fixed penalty notice. If your child arrives late to school fewer than 10 times, but also accrues other unauthorised absences (G or O code), equalling 10 unauthorised sessions, you will be referred for a penalty notice.
- Please note that the 10-week rolling period now also spans school terms. For example, if your child has unauthorised absences in the last week of term in July 2025, these carry over to the autumn term 2025.

Open Evening

A reminder that students finish at 1.10pm on Tuesday 24th September, the day of our annual open evening. If your child would like to be a tour guide or to help in a department, please log into Parent Pay to give permission and to indicate how they will get home.

Students will be expected to be in full, smart academy uniform and will need to arrive back at the academy at 4.30pm. Please collect your child promptly at 8pm and ensure they have signed out before leaving.

Parent Governor

We have a vacancy for a parent governor. Please read the attached letter and if you would like to put your name forward, we would be delighted to receive your nomination form, which is also attached. On the form it asks for contact details of a proposer and seconder who are also parents or carers of registered students. We recognise that at secondary school parents don't always know other parents; therefore, it is possible to list referees rather than a proposer/seconder. Please send your completed nomination form to Mrs Canadas on ccs@ormistonsixvillages.org.uk. We will update on nominations received in the coming weeks.

Medication

Students are not permitted to carry medication (prescribed or non-prescribed) on their person. If your child needs to take medication during the school day, please bring it to reception. Medication must be provided in a secure and labelled container as originally dispensed. Medication will only be accepted if the academy has received a completed medication administration form.

The forms are available on the website: [Ormiston Six Villages Academy - Medical Consent Forms](#). We have a team of first aiders who will supervise the taking of medication. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs Hardman, our Lead First Aider on thn@ormistonsixvillages.org.uk.

Satchel

We have been experiencing some issues with the Satchel platform and app, which mean that, although you will have been able to see the positive points that your child has received since the beginning of term, you won't have been able to see any behaviour incidents or causes for concern.

Satchel have confirmed that they now have a fix for this, which will be applied over the weekend. When the fix is applied, you will immediately be able to see any issues that have been logged by members of staff since term started on 4th September. Please reach out to your child's tutor or Director of Learning if this new information creates any causes for concern.

Achievement Points

We are implementing a positive change this term. We have made the decision to award only positive achievement points to students. We will no longer be attaching a points value to any behaviour incidents or causes for concern. These will still be reported to you through Satchel, but they will no longer reduce a student's positive points total. This gives us (and hopefully you at home) a much better opportunity to celebrate the brilliant achievements that the positive points are there to highlight.

We are continuing to look at ways that we can raise the profile of these achievement points, hopefully through communication with you at home, and a variety of celebration events in school.

Whole School Detention

As you will be aware, school and future success starts with good attendance and punctuality.

- 5 minutes late every day equates to 15 hours of lost learning across the year.
- 10 minutes late every day equates to 30 hours of lost learning across the year.
- 15 minutes late every day equates to 50 hours of lost learning across the year.

This applies both to lateness to school in the morning and lateness to lessons.

With this in mind, and to encourage excellent habits, we are introducing a whole school detention to combat lesson truancy and lateness (a single occurrence or cumulative lateness of 10+ minutes).

Whole school detentions will take place on a Wednesday from 2.50pm-3.50pm.

The law is clear that parental permission is not required for detentions (Behaviour and discipline in schools, DfE July 2013). However, as you know, we are committed to developing excellent working relationships with all of our parents and so we will always provide 24 hours' notice if a whole school detention has been issued to your child.

We are here to provide a great education for your children, but we cannot do that if they're not here, not in school, or not in lessons. We are grateful to all you for your support with this new measure.

Parking

If you drop off or collect your child by car, please can you ensure that you park considerately and legally. We have received complaints from local residents that their driveways are at times blocked and they have been prevented from leaving their homes to go and collect their own children from school. Lime Avenue is very busy at each end of the school day and I would encourage parents to arrange pick up points a little further afield where you and your child can safely meet. If you do choose to park in Lime Avenue, please park in a way that does not inconvenience the residents of the road and which also ensures that an emergency vehicle can get through should the need arise. Your support with this would be greatly appreciated.

Flu Vaccines

The NHS Immunisation Service are coming into school on Monday 14th October to offer your child the Flu vaccination. Attached to this email is the Flu parent letter which contains information about the upcoming vaccination session and instructions on how to complete the online consent form. If you are unable to open the links within the attached document, please follow the links below:

For information about the Flu vaccine and frequently asked questions:

<https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/resources/patient-resources/flu-vaccinations>

To complete a consent form: <https://www.susseximmunisations.co.uk/Forms/Flu>

You will need the school code found within the attached parent letter to complete a consent form. If you have any questions, please contact the immunisation team on 01273 696011 x8100.

Tutee of the Week

7O	Indy W	8O	Ethan W	9O	Frazier G	10O	Kavya P	11O	Will A
7R	Austin S	8R	Demi S	9R	Niamh B-M	10R	Tyler H	11R	Robert H
7M	Edward S	8M	Lucas W	9M	Gideon L	10M	Eddie O	11S	Lilly B
7S	Izzy B	8S	Oscar T	9S	Elcie T-R	10S	Ashley H	11T	Liam W
7T	Blessings C	8T	Luka M	9T	Demi S	10T	Joseph L		

Exploring Autism for Parent Carers

Please see the poster at the foot of this letter relating to a programme exploring Autism.

Youth Mental Health Day

Youth Mental Health Day is on 19th September. This year the focus is #controlyourscroll and aims to equip young people with the simple digital hacks and mental health strategies needed for a positive and safe online experience.



Tennis opportunity for secondary school aged girls

Smash Tennis are offering a heavily discounted programme of coaching sessions on Tuesdays starting 24th September to secondary school aged females. If your child is interested in attending, please use the following link to sign up to the programme. <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/SmashtennisUK/Coaching/Junior>

Boys Fit Box Classes

We have received the poster at the foot of this letter advertising boys fix box classes in Barnham. Ormiston Six Villages Academy does not have any involvement in this, but I thought it may be of interest.

Key dates for this half term

Open Evening	Tuesday 24 th September, 5pm-8pm
Year 7 Settling in tutor meetings	Monday 21st October, 3.15pm-6.15pm
Year 7 & 8 Halloween Disco	Wednesday 23rd October
Year 10 & 11 Information evening & Futures fair	Thursday 3rd October, 6pm-7pm (parents to attend)
Flu vaccine (all years)	Monday 14th October

Yours sincerely

Paul Slaughter
Principal



**Autism and Social
Communication Team**

Exploring Autism for Parent Carers

**A programme offering up to date
thinking and links to evidence-based
research for parent carers of autistic
children and young people.**



For participants to fully benefit from this course we ask that they attend **all** sessions.

Topics covered by session:

Session 1: Autism Acceptance

Develop understanding of Autism, discuss experiences of getting a diagnosis and identify how Autism can affect families.

Session 2: Communication

Develop understanding of communication differences and strategies to develop communication and interaction.

Session 3: Sensory Needs

Consider how sensory information and experiences may be processed differently by those who are autistic and share strategies to help with sensory differences.

Session 4: Anxiety

Improve understanding of the signs of distress that autistic children and young people may display and consider approaches to support regulation.

Session 5: Social Thinking and Masking

Explore the differences autistic children and young people may have with socialising and developing relationships. Look at ways to develop social thinking, explore the idea and impact of masking.

Session 6: Adolescence and Independence

Consider ways to encourage independence and manage adolescence challenges including puberty, sensory impact, and social differences.

Sessions to explore Autism and strategies to support acceptance, empowerment, and relationships in family life.

Are you a parent carer of a child or young person, aged 8-16 years, who is autistic or on the social communication pathway and have not attended this course before?

This programme has been developed to ensure that it is current and up to date to provide information for those new to Autism or for those requiring a little more in-depth knowledge. The programme is free of charge to families of children in West Sussex maintained schools and academies.

Course aims:

- to give a broad and balanced and positive view of how autism and social communication differences may impact on the child or young person's life and their family.
- to explore key practical strategies that can support autistic children and young people.
- to provide a forum for families to share their experiences and expertise together.

Course outline:

The six sessions focus on both theoretical and practical aspects of Autism including strengths, needs, and challenges. These recorded sessions are viewable when convenient to the family, followed by a weekly one hour online meeting. This online meeting provides opportunity to participate in discussions and ask questions with other families and the advisory teachers. There is no pressure to contribute or have your camera on, and we welcome input via the chat function. We ask that parent carers attend each of these weekly online discussion groups.

Exploring Autism Welcome Video:

<https://youtu.be/JqGPImJH8Ms>

Dates:

Autumn 2: Every Tuesday 1-2pm from 5th November to the 10th December 2024.

Spring 1: Tuesday 6.30-7.30pm 7th January to the 11th February 2025.

Spring 2: Every Thursday 12-1pm from 27th February to the 3rd April 2025.

Summer 1: Every Wednesday 6.30-7.30pm from 30th April to the 11th June 2025 (excluding 28th May due to half term).

Summer 2: Every Thursday 1-2pm from 5th June – 10th July 2025.

Summer Holidays: 6.30-7.30pm Dates TBC

To be added to the waiting list please contact:

Email: ASCT@westsussex.gov.uk

Please note there are a limited number of places on this course.

FIT-4-FUN



**FREE for Boys
age 11-16**

LIMITED PLACES

trans & non-binary inc.

BOYS FIT BOX CLASSES

📅 **Tuesdays: 24th September -
22nd October**

🕒 **4pm-5pm**

📍 **At Barnham Community Hall,
Yapton Rd, Barnham, Bognor
Regis PO22 0AY**

✓ Professional &
Experienced Trainers:
Sean, Tina - Fit-4-Fun
and YPS Emotional
Support Worker Clara

✓ Confidence,
Resilience, New
Skills

✓ Fun, Friendship,
Support and after
club snacks!



BOOK NOW

email: contact@yps-south.org.uk, tel: 01243 839093
www.yps-south.org.uk
Young People's Shop, 29 South St, Chichester