

28th March 2011

KBO/MTC/Attend

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Penalty Notices coming in April 2011

Parents and Carers are responsible for their son/daughter's attendance and punctuality. The government expects all school students to achieve at least 95% attendance in a school year.

In the process of monitoring and raising standards the potential grades of all students are tracked. Research shows that achievement is linked to attendance and that 17 days absence equates to the loss of one GCSE grade, at the end of year 11. Loss of time in school, over the years, will therefore have a bigger impact on final examination grades. Attendance is therefore crucial to the achievement of potential for each student.

With this in mind, we will do everything we can to ensure our students attend regularly and do not miss significant time in school.

From Monday 18th April 2011, our Academy will participate in the procedures related to unauthorised absences from schools, as set out by Kent County Council, (KCC), together with many of our Primary feeder schools and most other Secondary schools.

Where a student misses 10 sessions (5 school days), during a single term, which have not been authorised by the Academy, the Academy can request that KCC Attendance and Behaviour Service issue a formal warning letter to parents, setting a period of 15 school days, within which the student must have no unauthorised absence. Should the same student have any unauthorised absence during this 15-day period, a Penalty Notice will be issued, by first class post, to each parent of the student. Payment of a Penalty Notice within 28 days will incur a fine of £50.00, but this will increase to £100.00 if paid between 28 and 42 days. Non-payment of a Penalty Notice could trigger a fast-track prosecution process under the provisions of Sec. 444, 1996 Education Act, which will be dealt with at the Magistrates Court. If a student takes 10 sessions unauthorised holiday a Penalty Notice will be requested, without any formal warning letter.

Other than in exceptional cases, please be advised that our Academy will not authorise any absence under the following circumstances:

1. Where attendance currently falls, or in the previous year was, below 95% (the Government's required figure for good attendance).
2. During the first month of any academic year (September).
3. During any internal or external examination period.

You will need to submit a letter in writing stating any reason for a prolonged absence so that we can decide whether it is to be approved.

Thank you for your support in ensuring your son/daughter reaches his/her potential.

Yours sincerely

Ms M Leah-Wilkinson
Principal
Da Vinci College

Mr P Finnegan
Principal
Chaucer College

Ms K Box
Acting Principal
Darwin College

Ms J Rowlands
Principal
Brunel College