



11th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Attendance Matters: A Strong Start to the School Year

The first few days and weeks of the school year are critical in establishing habits, routines, and relationships that help young people thrive. Attendance patterns established in September often continue throughout the year, which is why a strong start is so important. We ask every family to join us in our commitment to excellent attendance by ensuring that children are in school, on time and ready to learn every day this term. Together, we can give every student the best possible foundation for success, wellbeing, and achievement.

Research consistently demonstrates a strong link between attendance and academic achievement. Recent analysis by the Department for Education found that higher attendance is associated with higher attainment across all pupil groups and backgrounds. The Department for Education also reports that children who miss between two and four weeks of school during Year 11 have around half the likelihood of achieving a Grade 5 in English and Mathematics compared with similar pupils who attend regularly.

Attendance habits established at the start of the year are particularly important because children are:

- Establishing routines and expectations for learning
- Building friendships and relationships with staff
- Developing confidence and a sense of belonging within their class
- Learning key concepts that provide the foundation for future lessons
- Forming attendance habits that often continue throughout the year

School attendance is about much more than academic outcomes. The Department for Education highlights that regular attendance supports children's wellbeing, social development, confidence, and sense of belonging. Being in school every day helps children remain connected to their peers, trusted adults, and the wider opportunities that school life provides.

At Gordano School, our aim is for every student to achieve at least 96% attendance. While we recognise that genuine illness cannot always be avoided, we encourage families to view every school day as important, as even small amounts of absence can add up over time. Good attendance is one of the strongest predictors of academic success, wellbeing, and future opportunities.

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We know that achieving excellent attendance is not always straightforward. Families may face challenges relating to illness, anxiety, transport, friendship issues, or other circumstances. Our priority is to work with families early to overcome barriers before attendance becomes a concern.

This guidance sheet from the NHS can support you in making decisions about whether your child is too unwell to attend school [NHS guidance sheet](#). We also recognise that some children may experience anxiety about returning to school. We encourage you to refer to the advice from Clinical Psychologist Dr Nihara Krause on managing back-to-school worries and supporting children to develop confidence and resilience [Dr Nihara Krause - managing back to school worries](#).

We are here to help. If you have any concerns about your child's attendance, wellbeing, or readiness for school, please contact us as early as possible so that we can work together to provide support.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to your child's education.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Mailey
Deputy Headteacher