



September 2025

Dear Parents & Carers

### **Belonging at The Victory Academy**

As we approach the start of the term, I wanted to put in writing our approach towards school attendance. Every student who attends the school is a valued member of our community and we want all students to belong, thrive and learn well. However, we also acknowledge that for some students, there are challenges that can make good attendance more difficult.

Our approach has, and will continue be, one of partnership. As a school we have a large and experienced team of staff who work tirelessly to provide the support that students and families need. This is the right thing to do, and we will continue with this work. You can find out more about this team in this recent communication: [Start of Term Letter](#).

Wherever attendance is identified as a concern, we will reach out to work in partnership in the first instance. We would also encourage families to be proactive and to contact us should there be any particular barriers that you become aware of. I would also add that good attendance at the start of the academic year is essential in ensuring that attendance remains high throughout the year. I would therefore ask that, prior to the start of term, if there are any barriers, that you let us know in advance so we can work with you to support your child's transition back to school.

### **Excellent attendance enables children to learn more, do more, be more.**

It is nationally recognised that children are less likely to succeed in school if they do not regularly attend – and where attendance is low, this can directly affect exam results and pathways to further study. Improving school attendance is a central driver of improved outcomes, as well as a critical part of schools' safeguarding practise.

The Department for Education has made [Working together to improve school attendance](#) a statutory document (underpinned by law), underscoring the critical role of school attendance in ensuring success and the shared responsibility of everyone involved. The guidance outlines specific actions that **must** be followed by schools, local authorities, governing bodies, and parents.

### **You – as parents/carers:**

The guidance states that parents should:

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.



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We invest in people Standard

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- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention. We actively use, and recommend you also use, the NHS ‘is my child too ill for school’ guidance: [Is my child too ill for school?](#)

### **Us – as The Victory Academy**

As a school, we are required to:

- Expect high standards of attendance.
- Monitor attendance patterns.
- Listen and understand parents and children to identify the barriers to attendance.
- Facilitate support to ensure parents and children can improve attendance.
- Formalise support when voluntary support is not working.
- Enforce attendance through statutory intervention with support from Medway Council.

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with our updated attendance policy available on our website: [Attendance Policy](#). Here is the link for the statutory guidance [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

When all support offered has failed to impact on your child’s school attendance, we will follow statutory guidance and refer families to the Local Authority. This may result in a penalty notice:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular child will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days
- A second penalty notice to the same parent of the same child is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first. Alternative action will be taken, which can include the consideration of prosecution or other legal intervention

We kindly ask for your support in making school attendance a top priority for the coming year. A strong start and consistent presence throughout the school year will make a difference to your child’s academic growth and confidence.

Thank you once again for your partnership in your child’s education. Together, we can help ensure a successful and rewarding school year ahead.

If you have any further questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Wendy Reeve, Attendance Improvement Co-ordinator or any other member of the team.

Yours sincerely

Mr O Owen  
**Headteacher**