



Bellfield Primary School

“Believe, Persevere, Succeed”



12th October 2023

Attendance

Dear Parents and Carers,

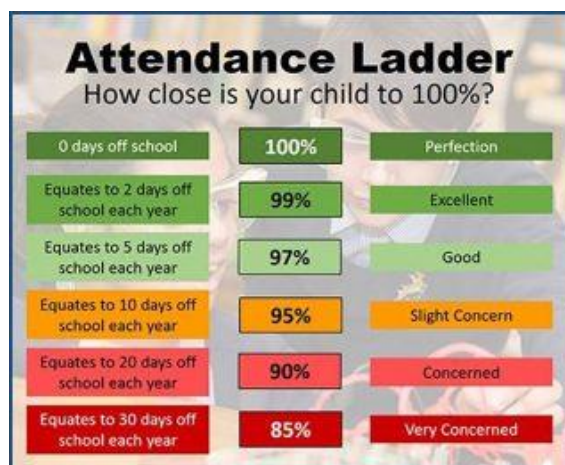
As we approach the end of our first half term, it is the perfect time to highlight again the importance of good attendance at school. Already this half term we have seen many children away from school due to holidays. This massively affects their attendance, work, confidence and friendship groups. This now means we already have a large number of pupils with lower than 90% attendance, therefore classed as a persistent absentee.

You will continue to see a section on attendance in all newsletters – this will give a breakdown of the overall school attendance and attendance for each class.

We will be sending out letters to parents of children who fell into the ‘Persistent Absentee’ group. This means the child’s attendance is 90% or lower and is therefore a concern. If you receive a letter, please do not panic, we want to work with you to ensure your child has excellent attendance. As a school, we will ring and write to parents if a child’s attendance starts to become a concern and we will work with you to ensure attendance improves.

Why is attendance important in primary school?

Pupils with good attendance records generally achieve higher grades and enjoy school more. Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life. Regular school attendance patterns encourage the development of other responsible patterns of behaviour.



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The image above shows a breakdown of how days off from school equate to pupil attendance. When your child's attendance starts to be 95% or below then we will be concerned and the 'Attendance Team' will contact you to talk about how we can help. Lost days learning mean that your child starts to have gaps in their knowledge and this impacts on their ability to complete work; it can also affect confidence and friendship groups.

Therefore, if you are planning on taking a family holiday in school time, please expect a phone call from our attendance team to see how we can work together to keep your child's attendance on track. Since returning to school, I have already had over 20 holiday form requests, just for this term. Please note that we do not authorise any holidays, unless they meet one of the following criteria. All holidays of 10 or more sessions (5 days) will be referred to the local authority, who may issue a fine.

Holidays will be authorised if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time (*employees refused leave during school holiday, may not be referred for a fine*)
- Acute crisis within the family and the family needs to spend time together to support each other
- Court order/formal agreement where parents have separated and have allocated dates for contact

**The school will need to see proof of the above criteria to make the decision to not refer for a fine.*

The attendance team will continue to meet on a regular basis and look at children/families that need support. Please do not worry if our attendance team, (Miss Parkinson/Mrs Anscombe/Mrs Lomax), contacts you – they are here to help.

We will also be continuing to meet with the children in school whose attendance has dropped below 96% - the attendance team meet with this group of pupils half-termly to talk to them about the support they need.

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Rewards

As a school, we want to reward good attendance and there are many incentives that we offer throughout the year.

This year we will:

- hold attendance raffles
- classes will accumulate time over each term to be used as ‘Golden Time’ at the end of a term
- highest weekly class attendance in KS1/KS2 will also be given a sweet treat on a Friday
- give out termly sweet treats and certificates for attendance
- enjoy afternoon tea/bowling or a picnic in the park with children who have 100% attendance for the year
- provide alarm clocks for some of our older children, who are able to get up and get themselves to school without parents needing to help them
- pupils will be given certificates on a sliding scale for attendance (please see below table)

	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum
Attendance %	97% - 97.9%	98% - 98.9%	99% - 99.9%	100%

We understand that attendance is a shared family responsibility and therefore we like to work with the whole family.

Punctuality

Please remember, if your child arrives after 8.45am the register is closed and children are classed as not in attendance for that session. Children hate being late to school. Imagine attending a party where everyone is already there, chatting, getting on and having a good time and then you arrive alone. It is a horrible feeling to enter a room that is already in full swing and try to catch up with what has been happening – this is how children feel when they are late to school and have to enter the classroom after everyone else. When children start school at 8.30am, they are provided with ‘morning work’, which consists of spellings and handwriting – both vital skills for pupils to develop.

Although it may seem like they are only missing 5 minutes each day, over the year this equates to 3 full days of lost learning. (Please see the table below which indicates how being late affects learning time)

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The image above shows how missed minutes equates to lost days learning. Therefore, if your child is 5 minutes late to school each day, as some of our children are, then this will equate to 3 whole days of lost learning time across the school year. We start our lessons at 8.40am; this is the main reason for the gate opening at 8.30am so that all children can be in school, and ready to start their first lesson at 8.40am. The start of the day is when we do our spelling and handwriting/ phonics and reading – please ensure your child is here on time and ready for these vital lessons.

We do understand that on occasions something happens at home in a morning that will mean your child will be late – if this is the case, please contact the school office to inform us. We all have mornings where everything goes wrong!



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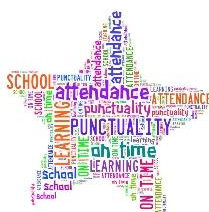
Common illnesses

We do understand that children catch common illnesses whilst being at school. Please see the table below for a list of common illnesses and the time that they need to be off school. If in doubt, please ring the school office.

Diarrhoea and/or vomiting	48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting	
Chickenpox	Five days from the onset of rash	
Cold sores	None	
German measles/rubella	Six days from onset of rash	
Hand, foot and mouth	None	
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed or 48 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment	Antibiotic treatment speeds up healing and reduces the infectious period
Measles	Four days from onset of rash	
Ringworm	None	
Threadworm	None	Treatment is recommended for the child and household
Scabies	Child can return after first treatment	Household and close contacts require treatment
Scarlet Fever	Child can return 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Antibiotic treatment highly recommended
Slapped cheek	None	
Conjunctivitis	None	
Head lice	None	Treatment is highly recommended
Tonsillitis	None	

Thank you for your continued support

Miss Howard



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