

# Headteacher's Blog



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

Welcome to this weeks HT Blog which, as I write to you I am particularly proud of the fantastic attitude of our pupils. As, Headteacher I pop into classes throughout the week and across the term to monitor standards of education and pupils attitude to learning I believe our pupils behaviour and attitude to learning but it is also wonderful to hear validation from visitors into school.

We have recently formed links with a local dance company, Meta 4 Dance to help raise our standards in PE even further. (Platinum School Games Award is in our sights). Last Friday, the pupils in Year 5 and 6 had a day learning techniques of street dance to put into a performance last week (thank you to families who attended the impromptu show) and I would like to share with you an email I was sent from Charlie, the dance tutor afterwards:

'Firstly I want to say a massive thank you for having us for the workshop last week, I had such a good time with the class. They were exceptional, and had outstanding behaviour throughout the whole day! A really good balance of maturity and sense of humour. They were all very receptive to my teaching and facilitation. They had a really great enthusiasm for learning, openness to trying new and different things which was very refreshing for me as a dance facilitator.'

On Tuesday, once again there was some lovely feedback from parents about the Reception Reading and Phonics Stay and Play. Finally, on my trip with the reading challenge winners we were overwhelmed with comments from members of the public complementing our pupils on their behaviour! While I appreciate we always have things in which we can do better it is also lovely to celebrate the good things in school so that as a staff team we can work to develop them further so we would appreciate if you could complete Ofsted Parent view which can be found if you copy this link <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>

As always, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Mr Charlton on Gate Duty if you have any suggestions on how we can improve, concerns, queries or comments. Staff are also happy to talk to you at the end of each day during collection time.

Best wishes,

Belinda Athey - Headteacher.

## Our new library and intervention space

Thank you to Laura Brydon who helped me with the massive task of moving and sorting the contents of the old library space into our wonderful new space. The intervention space is being used by pupils and the library will be open for business on a fortnightly rota on Tuesday afternoons (once again, thank you Laura for giving up her time to do this). I am just waiting to hear back from Councillor Bridgett as he helped me with the planning process as to when we can open the space as a warm hub 2 afternoons per week and also have our 'grand opening' and I will be in touch as soon as I know.

## An ask for help

Now that we are gaining more space I am able to move all the reading books out of the hall. I would be very grateful if I could have some help moving the book shelves as they are rather heavy into the stone shed on the playground which has now been made watertight and damp proofed so I can use it for storage. Moving the excess furniture from the hall would mean that our PE lessons will have much more room and it will also really improve the whole look of the hall. If you are able to help with this, it would be greatly appreciated please email me directly [belinda.athey@whittingham.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:belinda.athey@whittingham.northumberland.sch.uk) or catch me on Gate Duty.

## Reminders

### Our School Day

Please remember that our school day for Reception to Year 6 starts at 8.45a.m. (Nursery children are welcome to come into school at this time too as a staggered start can be inconvenient for parents). Apologies, the weather has caused some buses to come in a little late this week therefore having a knock on affect on the children who are driven or walk to school getting into school on time. We will try and ensure that the buses are away from the car park by 8.40a.m. to enable this.

### Attendance

The end of term was extremely busy so the attendance letters did not go out. Mrs Kennedy and I will work on this as a priority on Monday. Our attendance target is set by DFE and is 96%. Any pupils whose attendance falls below this will receive a letter but following feedback from parents I will try and look at personalising letters, especially for those children whose attendance is around 95% or if attendance less than 96% is unusual. However, if you receive more than 2 consecutive letters or 3 letters across the school year about low attendance the Education Welfare Officer will be informed so that you can be supported further to enable your child to attend school well (attendance information is attached once more).

### What's On

Don't forget the easy way to keep up to date with all our events in school is to access our school website calendar <https://www.whittinghamprimaryschool.co.uk/website/calendar/213885>

## EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS



EQUALS

| 365 days in a year | 190 school days in total | Absence               |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 100% attendance    | 190 days attendance      | 0                     |
| 95% attendance     | 180 days attendance      | 2 weeks absence       |
| 90% attendance     | 171 days attendance      | 4 weeks absence       |
| 85% attendance     | 161 days attendance      | 6 weeks absence       |
| 80% attendance     | 152 days attendance      | More than half a term |
| 75% attendance     | 143 days attendance      | 9+ weeks absence      |



## EVERY MINUTE COUNTS



EQUALS



### **LATENESS = LOST LEARNING**

\*(Figures below are calculated over a school year)

5 mins late each day

3 days lost!

10 mins late each day

6.5 days lost!

15 mins late each day

10 days lost!

20 mins late each day

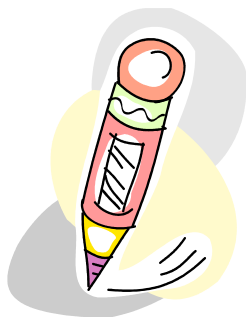
13 days lost!

30 mins late each day

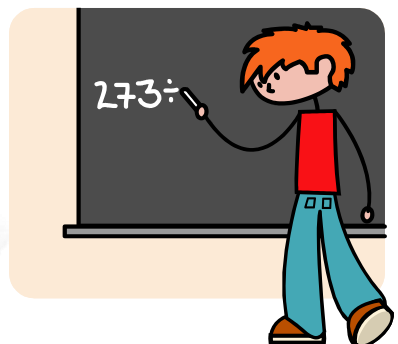
19 days lost!

**DANGER ZONE: AS FEW AS 19 MISSED DAYS** over the school year reduces your chances of success. **YOUR SAT or GCSE results could drop by one grade across all subjects!**





| HOW MUCH LEARNING I MISS WHEN I'M ABSENT |                      |                |
|--|----------------------|----------------|
| % ATTENDANCE                             | DAYS LEARNING MISSED | LESSONS MISSED |
| 100                                      | 0                    | 0              |
| 99                                       | 1.9                  | 11.4           |
| 98                                       | 3.8                  | 22.8           |
| 97                                       | 5.7                  | 34.2           |
| 96                                       | 7.6                  | 45.6           |
| 95                                       | 9.5                  | 57             |
| 94                                       | 11.4                 | 68.4           |
| 93                                       | 13.3                 | 79.8           |
| 92                                       | 15.2                 | 91.2           |
| 91                                       | 17.1                 | 102.6          |
| 90                                       | 19                   | 114            |





# Some facts about school attendance...

The Government regard **95%** as the minimum satisfactory attendance for a secondary school pupil.

Keeping children away from school for no good reason is a criminal offence.

Some parents have been given a prison sentence for continually failing to send their child/children to school.

80% attendance is the same as having a day off every week.

Looking after other children or shopping for new clothes are not good enough reasons to keep your child off school. The schools will not authorise absences without a good reason for your child being off.

Most children should routinely have attendance rates of **97%** or more. This is the equivalent of 6 days absence a year. **BUT 100%** is achieved by many pupils every year in both primary and secondary schools.

If you take a two week holiday in term time your child's attendance will automatically be reduced to less than 95%.

Remember the only legally accepted reasons for not being in school are illness, holiday approved by school or a day of religious observance.

90% attendance is like having a day off every two weeks.

It is the school and not parents who decide whether or not to authorise absences. The parent's note is necessary because the reasons given need to be considered by the school.

If your child does not go to school regularly and you fail to work with the school and the Education Welfare Service then you may be fined up to £2500 or be given a Parenting Order.

Keep an eye out for early signs of your child not wanting to go to school, such as moodiness, headaches, or stomach aches, especially at important times like the transition into year 7 or after the school holidays. Act upon these signs **early**, please don't be frightened to speak to someone in school or ring the Education Welfare Officer allocated to the school.

If you take a 2 week holiday every year in secondary school your child will have missed 10 weeks worth of education by the time they sit their GCSE's (assuming they haven't had a single day off for illness).  
If your child misses 10 weeks of school do you think it will affect their exam results?

A 2 week holiday each year in primary school means a total of 14 weeks teaching time missed— this could have a real impact on their basic literacy and numeracy skills.

The Government regard **95%** as the minimum satisfactory attendance for a primary school pupil.

Prolonged absence from school can lead to loneliness. It can make it harder for your child to get along with other children and make friends.

## 10 Tips to help you and your child make going to school easier

- 1 Help them get their school bag packed the night before
- 2 Make sure their uniform is ready especially after the holidays or weekend
- 3 Get them to bed at a reasonable time so they have a good nights sleep
- 4 Set the alarm clock early enough to allow plenty of time to get ready properly
- 5 Make sure they have some breakfast
- 6 Remind them to set off for the bus or start walking early enough so they won't be late: **punctuality is important**
- 7 Check to make they have everything they need — books, PE kit, bus fare, dinner money etc.
- 8 If your child is finding the work too hard speak to the teacher
- 9 Talk to your child about what they did in school today
- 10 If you or your child are unhappy about the way they are treated by staff or other pupils, contact the school straight away

- ◆ Every school in Northumberland has an allocated Education Welfare Officer who visits or contacts the school regularly.
- ◆ The school may refer your child to the Education Welfare Officer if their attendance or punctuality is causing concern. The Education Welfare Officer will then contact you either by phone, letter or with a home visit to discuss the school's concerns and how the attendance or punctuality can be improved.
- ◆ You can contact the Education Welfare Officer for your child's school via school.



## School Attendance Fact Sheet For Parents



Everyone wants  
the best start  
for their child