

Working Together to Improve Attendance

A is for Attendance!

Autumn term 2023-2024: Issue 2

Here is our 2nd newsletter of the year. At Malpas Alport, we know the impact regular attendance has on your child's learning and well-being; and that having good attendance is directly linked to raising achievement and develops skills for life and work. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups. Therefore, we ask that parents/ carers support the school by ensuring that your child attends school every day, on time and arrives ready to learn.

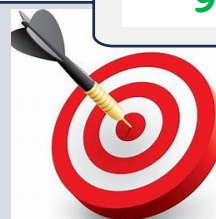
Whilst our current whole school attendance is just above 96%, persistence absence (below 90%) is a little higher than we would like. Unauthorised leave of absence and illness are often the main cause for a pupil's attendance to quickly drop below 90% so early on in the year. In order to help reduce this and make you aware, concern letters are issued when attendance falls below 93% and individual attendance is then monitored weekly, with the aim to see sustained improvement over a four-week period. Meetings may also be arranged to discuss matters further or if absence continues. Our escalation procedures can be found on the school website.

If your child's attendance is falling below 93% there are several things you can do to help prevent this from declining further:

- Avoid making appointments during term time or normal school hours. If this is unavoidable, then aim to return to school after the appointment
- Do not allow your child to stay off school unless it is unavoidable (please see guidance on illness on the school website)
- Provide medical evidence for appointments attended as requested by the school office
- Do not plan to take your child out of school for a holiday/days out during term time.
- Talk to school if you are concerned that their attendance is being affected by other matters.

Whole School Attendance for Autumn 1 was:

96.1%



Whole School attendance target for 2023-24: **97%**

Punctuality Matters!

We are very proud of the way that our pupils come into school in the morning. Almost all our pupils arrive on time. This is very important and encourages habits of good timekeeping and stops classroom disruptions.

- Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time and ready to learn.
- A pupil who arrives late after the register has closed, this will be marked as late. If they arrive after 9:30am this is then marked as (U) which counts as an unauthorised absence.

The gates are open from 8:30-8:45am. Your child will be marked in as late if they arrive after 8:50am.

Lateness means missed learning!

Minutes late per day	Number of days of learning lost over a year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days



Holidays and leave of absence during term time

Absence will not be authorised during term time except in exceptional circumstances. It is very important that all parents and carers understand that children with unauthorised absences, including holidays, and unexplained absences are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice from Cheshire West and Chester Council.

All leave of absence must be requested in writing. An 'Exceptional Leave of Absence' form is available from the school office and must be completed prior to the proposed absence. It should be noted that if any application is declined and absence occurs of a consecutive 5 or more unauthorised school days, then school may apply to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to be issued to each parent/carer. School will respond in writing to the request stating whether the absence will be authorised and whether a Fixed Penalty Notice will be applied for.

Year group overall attendance for Autumn 1:

Foundation Stage	94.7%
Year 1	95%
Year 2	97.9%
Year 3	95.7%
Year 4	95.8%
Year 5	96.2%
Year 6	97%

**103 Children had
100% attendance
last half term**

A big well done!!

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR CHILD

It is normal that every child at some point may experience a little bit of anxiety around coming to school and for lots of reasons. This can start at any age and it can be more common among children with additional or special educational needs (SEN) There can be many reasons why your child might experience school anxiety, but dealing with it can be stressful for you as a parent, as well as your child. Difficulties attending school can happen suddenly or build over time and are likely to be due to different factors such as:

- social and/or work pressures at school
- difficulties maintaining positive relationships with peers
- unmet needs (e.g.: additional needs or feeling unsafe)
- home and/or family factors
- sensory needs making the environment feel overwhelming

Some things you may spot in your child include:

- not wanting to get up, get ready or go to school
- anxiety and heightened emotions when getting ready to leave for school
- physical symptoms like headaches, stomach-ache or feeling sick
- a change in behaviour either by becoming more withdrawn or acting out more
- trouble sleeping or getting to sleep
- not doing schoolwork or performing worse at school

How to help:

It can be a worrying time for you as a parent. The most important thing is to listen to your child and to try and be calm, patient and show empathy. It's also important to look after yourself and seek support when you need it. Most importantly, come in as soon as possible and talk to your child's class teacher who will be able to listen and offer suggestions and advice. Also - have open conversations with school staff who monitor attendance. If your child is finding it hard to get into school, avoid arguing with them and be supportive of any small achievements they make, like putting their uniform on or walking to the school gates. There will always be a member of staff to help and reassure and there are lots of things we can put in place to help.

If you would like any support or advice on attendance or punctuality, please speak to your child's class teacher, Mrs. Williams (attendance lead) or Mrs. Wetton (Headteacher).