



Attendance Newsletter – Autumn Term

Our School Attendance target is 97%



Welcome

Welcome to the first attendance newsletter of the year! The aim is to promote the importance of attendance across The Willows Primary School community and get everyone involved to help children attend on time, every day.

We will shortly be reviewing the first four weeks of the school registers and parents will be informed with a letter if their child has missed 3 or more days so far this term. This letter can be concerning, as even a short absence so early in the year can appear to have a big impact. If you do have any wider concerns about attendance please contact me in the school office but normally attendance will just pick up as the year progresses and only a few pupils will need additional support.

We now share the number of days a child has missed rather than just a percentage. A test score of 90% sounds really quite good and it's easy to think that 90% attendance is also a good achievement – in reality this would be the same as four missed weeks of school by the end of the year which isn't that far off a typical half term. By putting it in terms of days missed we hope this is clearer for parents and better illustrates the time and progress which has been missed.

The Willows

Greatbatch Avenue, Penkhull, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 7JY



Primary School

Explore - Dream - Discover

Web: www.willowsprimary.com

Email: office@willowsprimary.com

Tel: (01782) 233280 Fax: (01782) 233282

Head Teacher: Mrs S Thursfield

Deputy Head: Mrs C Beltran

Assistant Head: Mrs A Ball

To Report Absence

Please inform the **School Office before 9.30am** by either;

- Calling 01782 233280, Option 1 to leave a message
- Message the Office via Class Dojo. **Please don't message the teacher in case they aren't able to pass the message to us or update the register before going into teaching**
- Email attendance@willowsprimary.com

Remember that children do not always have to miss school if they are unwell. There is advice on <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/> and often we are able to support children in school when they only have minor childhood illness. Parents can send medicine from home and of course we can get in touch if a child becomes unwell during the day.

Lateness

We appreciate that on occasions there may be unavoidable reasons why children arrive late to school. If this happens, please call or message school to pre-advise us that your child will be late. Children should not arrive late to school on a regular basis. Teaching will begin in all classes, including Early Years, straight away in the morning. Children may break into smaller teaching groups around school for phonics and if late may miss this teaching altogether and lose their morning mark for attendance. If there are barriers to arriving on time, please discuss these with school so that we can help offer support and solutions.

Our school target and progress

You will see our attendance target remains at 97% which is above the national average. After all, there is nothing average about our Willows family or the aspirations we all share for our pupils! After these four weeks we currently stand at





a whole school average of 96.4% - children have settled into new classes and routines beautifully and I hope you will agree they have had a fantastic start to the school year so far.

Working Together

We will be working with families to keep you updated on your child's attendance by sending out letters at key points and you may be invited into school to discuss ways we can help support attendance if it seems there are any issues emerging.

There have been lots of changes around attendance over the last few years so we now have a dedicated area on the school website to help answer any questions you may have. In particular, there is detailed guidance for Leave of Absence during term time and changes to penalties for unauthorised absence so full details on these can be found there in addition to the school Attendance Policy.

We do not want to make any referrals for term time absence so please try to book any holidays within the normal set holidays if possible. Leave can only be authorised in the most exceptional of circumstances and it is recommended that a form is submitted to the school office as far in advance as possible so that we can advise on the potential of a penalty or required evidence to support your application.

Finally.....

My role is to help support families as much as possible in order to close gaps and remove barriers to attendance and I am always approachable if you need help. If you have any questions or have any concerns about attendance please drop into the School Office or email me at arudge@willowsprimary.com.

Kind Regards

Mrs Rudge