

Preston Grange Primary School

Newsletter – November 8th 2021



Welcome back!

We hope that everyone has had lovely half term holiday. The staff and I have had a lovely relaxing break, getting ready for the busy half term leading up to Christmas.

Attendance

Following the recent 18 months of disruption to children's education at school, the department for Education and the Local Authority expect that schools monitor closely the attendance of all children and stress the importance of children being in school.

Each half term we monitor individual children's attendance across the half term and there are two trigger points:

- when a child's attendance falls below our school target attendance of 96.5%,
- or if a child's attendance falls below 90%, which then means that they are PA (a persistent absentee) by the DFE definition

If a child's attendance hits either of these trigger points, there are systems for school to follow and letters that we have a duty to send to parents. **Please note however, if your child has been off school isolating they are NOT penalised on the attendance register for this time.**

This week some parents may receive a letter if they your child's attendance is below either of the percentages. We will continue to monitor children's attendance each half term and report these to the Governors and the Local Authority.

2. Parents and carers will be expected to:

- 2.1. Provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address.
- 2.2. Notify the school, in person or by telephone, when their child is unable to attend, with a reason for absence, on the first day of the absence and every day that your child is off school.
- 2.3. Provide a letter/confirmation indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician etc. before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen.
- 2.4. Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.
- 2.5. Inform school if their child is going to be late.
- 2.6. Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child/children.

3. Absence procedures

3.1 How to inform us that your child is absent

Parent/carers are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of any absence.

How to tell us if your child is going to be off school: Telephone the school office on 0191 3009190 before 9am and speak to a member of staff; you must give a reason why your child is not able to attend school and tell us when you think they will be back.

We expect that you phone the school office every day that your child is off school.

3.2. A phone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.

3.3. The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure that proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter on the register.

3.4. In the case of Persistent Absence (PA), arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the HLTA for Wellbeing Guidance & Support or Headteacher.

3.5. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% and therefore become PA, we will not authorise any absences unless medical evidence is provided.

3.6. If pupil attendance drops below 90% with unauthorised absence, the local authority attendance and placement team will be informed and legal proceedings will begin. This includes Penalty Notice Warnings, Fines, and Education Orders and can lead to court cases.

If we don't hear from you

This is known as 'First Day Response'; we must be sure your child is safe and well and if we don't hear from you before 9am, we will call you to find out where they are; it's VERY IMPORTANT that you keep us up to date with telephone numbers for yourself and other people on your emergency contact list. If we can't get hold of anyone to check your child is safe and well, we may visit your home or in extreme cases inform the police.

5. Lateness

We believe that every minute in school is very important, at Preston Grange learning starts immediately as soon as the children enter school at 9am and begin Handwriting or Spelling sessions immediately. Children arriving late will miss this important learning.

- Children arriving late in school are often anxious about what they have missed and this may lead to them not wanting to come to school.
- The school day starts at 9am prompt and we need your child to be in class by then; arriving after this will result in a late mark.
- School closes the register at 9.05am. If your child arrives after this, they will be marked as having an unauthorised absence; a Penalty Notice fine can be given if your child is late regularly.

In addition to the above, it is worth highlighting to parents that there are some occasions where school may make a referral to the Authority Attendance & Placement Team. These include the following reasons:

- General poor attendance
- Unauthorised absence (holiday in term time)
- Persistent lateness

Finally, **if you are unsure if you should keep your child of school or if it's ok to send them back to school, check the following NHS document for advice:** www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/

Sleep helpline

We have received some information about the new National Sleep Helpline and felt it may be useful for some families. One in four children in the UK are not getting enough sleep, this has an impact on their behaviour and ability to learn, as well as their physical health.

The free helpline is run by trained sleep advisors who can talk to young people directly, or parents (they can also talk to parents about their own sleep issues). The helpline is open 5 nights a week, Sunday to Thursday, 7-9pm and the number is 03303 530 541.

Expectations of parents whilst on site

Unfortunately we have recent experience of some inappropriate behaviour by a parent on the school site. As with many of your own work places, visitors on site are expected to behave appropriately towards our staff in school at all times. There is a poster displayed on the office window which states that we do not tolerate abusive behaviour. Examples of inappropriate behaviour include: raised voices, finger wagging, arguing with or refusal to comply with school procedures.

It would also be pertinent at this moment in time to remind parents that our school site is covered by CCTV.

Arrangements for Christmas

Sadly as we are still running under our COVID risk assessment, we are unable to have our usual school Christmas performances for the second year in a row. This really disappoints us, but we are not able to have the 750 visitors into school over the 6 performances as normal due to the rising numbers in cases in the borough.

We will, as we did last year, upload class videos of the children singing to Google Classroom, although this year we will share 7 class videos so that it feels more like a performance for families.

Race for Life/Wear It Pink

Thank you to Miss Minto for organising the Race for Life Cancer run which took place for the children in school on the last day of half term. Thank you also to families for the generous donations - we raised £ in total, thank you!!

Whole school pantomime trip

Next week you will receive a letter (via pupil post, also on the website) with the arrangements for the whole school pantomime trip on Thursday 25th November. For those new to school this year, we will not return until approximately 5-5.30pm (dependent on traffic). If any parents would prefer to collect their child directly from the Theatre Royal instead, please contact the school office.

Staff

We are delighted that we have appointed a new caretaker, Mr Dixon who will be taking over post towards the end of November.

Mrs Jones has also returned to our school and will be working with some children for targeted catch up. We are thrilled to have her back!

Dates for your diary

Thurs 4th Nov - Netball (Year 5 & 6) 3.45pm @JSCHS

Fri 5th Nov - Sports leaders skipping training

Thurs 11th Nov - Individual & Sibling photograph day

Wed 17th Nov - Vision screening (Reception)

Thurs 18th Nov - Netball (Year 5 & 6) 3.45pm @JSCHS

Fri 19th Nov - Children in Need non-uniform day

Thurs 25th Nov - Whole school pantomime trip to Theatre Royal (pm)

Thurs 9th Dec - Netball (Year 5 & 6) 3.45pm @JSCHS

Tues 14th Dec - Nursery & Reception Christmas party AM, Year 1 & 2 Christmas party PM

Wed 15th Dec - Year 3 & 4 Christmas party PM

Thurs 16th Dec - Year 5 & 6 Christmas party PM

Thurs 16th Dec - Christmas videos uploaded to Google Classroom

Fri 17th Dec - Break up for Christmas

Wed 5th Jan - Children return to school