



The Firs

Lower School

Date 27/2/23

Improving Attendance

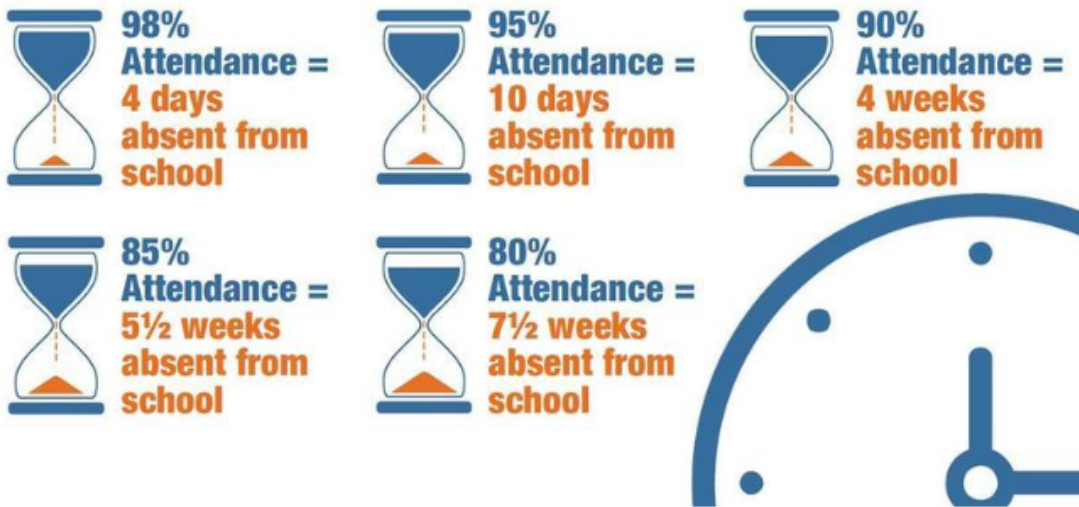
Dear Parents/carers,

Our approach to attendance

We aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time, to ensure that they are able to make the most of the educational experiences offered at The Firs. We also aim to raise an awareness of the importance of attendance with our families and so to improve the level and profile of attendance.

Why is attendance at school important?

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Our aim is to work in partnership with you, to make education a success for your child(ren) and to ensure they have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.



As a school, we aim to encourage all our parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves the maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted upon promptly.

Adam J.G Campbell (Headteacher)

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Why are we writing to you now?

Like many schools, we have found that our attendance levels have dropped markedly since Covid and we want to do everything we can to improve this situation.

Holidays in term time

We have seen a big increase in parents / carers taking holidays in term time. This, like any absence, disrupts children's learning. We realise the financial inducement to do this, especially in these challenging times, but we have to think about the considerable and **proven** impact on learning and strongly urge you to try to avoid this.

Absence and First Day Call

If your child is unable to attend school – select option 1 for the absence line. You should inform us on the first day of absence before 8.30am leaving a message. You will need to state your child's name and your relationship to them i.e. parent / carer etc. and the reason for the absence and this needs to be more specific than 'my child is ill' please, as we are required to give more information.

Medical/Dental Appointments

It is better if appointments can be arranged outside school hours. Where it is unavoidable to book a medical appointment outside of the school day, we ask that they be made late in the afternoon, so that children have the opportunity to access as much of the school day as possible without disruption to their learning. Where morning appointments are necessary however, you will need to notify school in advance if your child will be returning for the midday meal. We will need to be notified about the appointment in advance, this can be done via the absence line (see above). Medical and dental appointments count as authorised absences. When you collect or bring your child back, please show us some evidence e.g. a letter or an appointment notification on your phone - thank you.

Punctuality

Please ensure that your child arrives at school so that they are present and ready for registration; this starts at 8.45am each day and children should be in school by 8:55 at the latest. Meeting and exchanging news with friends before school is important for a child's social development and the teachers use this time for additional learning tasks too.

Encouraging Good Attendance

We want to raise the profile of the importance of good attendance at The Firs and so we are introducing a new Attendance Trophy competition. We will publish the average attendance figures for each class across the school and half termly, the Attendance Trophy will be presented in assembly, to the class with the highest % attendance figure. The class % figures will be published in our newsletters and on our website weekly, so children and parents / carers can see who is in the lead!

Yours sincerely,



Adam J.G. Campbell
Headteacher