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Dear Parents / Carers,

Attendance and punctuality is one of our key priorities in this year's school development plan, so I would like to take this opportunity to keep you updated with the current picture. Below is the whole school overview as of 30/11/17, which shows you the percentage of children that fall into different bands. Children that fall below 90% are considered to be Persistent Absentees – this is part of the criteria used for the school to refer families to our Education Welfare Officer to help support improvements that need to be made.

Class Group	Percentage of children with less than 90% attendance	Percentage of children with less than 93% attendance	Percentage of children with greater than 95% attendance	Percentage of children with 100% attendance
F1	52.5%	57.5%	35.0%	17.5%
FS2P	11.5%	23.1%	65.4%	38.5%
FS2R	15.4%	23.1%	23.1%	19.2%
Yr 1	6.3%	18.8%	71.9%	34.4%
Yr2	9.1%	21.2%	72.7%	36.4%
Yr 3	3.1%	3.1%	78.1%	28.1%
Yr 4	6.3%	9.4%	87.5%	50.0%
Yr 5	3.2%	22.6%	71.0%	32.3%
Yr 6	12.1%	21.2%	75.8%	33.3%

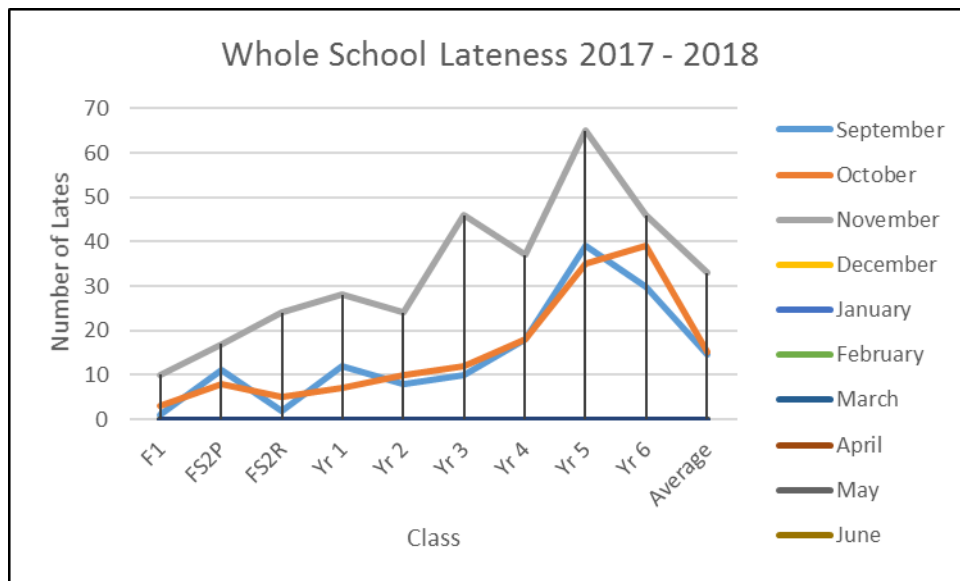
Although children in F1 are not statutory school age, it is vitally important that children and families develop good habits in relation to coming to school. I am particularly concerned that over half the children currently fall into the Persistent Absentee category and I will be working with the F1 team to look at how this can be improved.

Concerns are also generated where attendance falls below 93% or where there are many school weeks that are not completed in full. Research has shown that there is a strong link between attendance and achievement and I am keen to work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that every student has the opportunity to meet their potential. Whilst I understand that children will be ill from time to time, or attendance is not possible due to exceptional circumstances, it is crucial that children attend school every day they possibly can.

To aid this, can I remind parents that Medical and Dental appointments should be made outside of school hours unless specialist hospital appointments have to be kept or it is a medical/dental emergency.

May I also take this opportunity to remind you that it is your responsibility as a parent to make sure your children arrives at school on time and is in their classroom no later than 8:50am. Failure to do so means your child is not making a calm and positive start to the school day and may well be disrupting others by entering the classroom late.

So far this academic year, we have had a total of 565 lates. If these lates are on average 10 minutes, that would total up 5650 minutes which is equivalent to almost 3 full school days of learning missed already this year. This is an area where school and home can work together to achieve a really positive outcome for our children. Please see the overview of lateness for your children’s class:



Overall attendance has improved year on year in the last 3 years, so I would like to thank you for your efforts in helping us achieve this and look forward to your support in continuing our improvement with both attendance and punctuality.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Hickey
Headteacher
Highwood Primary School