

# ATTENDANCE MATTERS NEWSLETTER



"Your commitment to Attendance is an investment in your future"

April EDITION



## Why 97%+ Attendance Matters

Across our Priestley Academy Trust Schools, we set an aspirational attendance target of 97% for all students across the academic year.

### The Power of Being Present:

- **No Gaps:** Consistently attending ensures students do not miss vital classroom teaching. Missing even a small amount of time can create learning gaps that are difficult to close.
- **Full Opportunities:** Excellent attendance means students can access the full range of clubs, trips, and exciting rewards we offer, enriching their school experience.
- **Positive Connections:** Being in school every day helps students build strong peer relationships and feel a vital sense of belonging within the school community, which boosts happiness and engagement.

*We are partnering with you to achieve 97% or higher attendance. Let's make every day count!*

### Family Reflection: What would you do?

**The Scenario:** Your child has a spelling test today. They are visibly anxious and ask to stay home to avoid the embarrassment of it 'possibly' not going well. Would you allow them to stay home?

It is a natural instinct to want to shield our children from distress, but school challenges like exams and difficult lessons are often the "training ground" for adulthood. When we allow a child to stay home to avoid a stressful day, we provide immediate relief but may inadvertently teach them that avoidance is the best way to handle pressure.

To build a resilient child, we have to recognise when a child is simply feeling the urge to escape a difficult situation. If we always remove the obstacle, we accidentally teach them that they are not strong enough to handle it.

Instead, our goal should be to show them that discomfort is not a "stop sign", it is a hurdle they are capable of jumping over. By facing the exam or the tough lesson, they learn that they can feel nervous or unprepared and still come out okay on the other side.

### Attendance Celebrations

We are delighted to celebrate the dedication of our families! We have seen an improvement in attendance across all of our schools through the Spring term.

This achievement is a direct result of your constant support at home. We truly appreciate the partnership we have with our families, you are the reason our students are staying on track.

### The Spring Challenge:

During Spring Term 2, we had a unique opportunity to challenge ourselves and our attendance because the term had the fewest days at only 23!

Lots of schools launched a '5 to Thrive' Attendance Challenge, where throughout the five weeks they worked with families and students to ensure attendance throughout the 23 days, and were committed to ensuring excellent attendance. The Trust attendance picture rose by 3% when compared with last year – this is fantastic.

Thank you for your continued dedication to your child's education and for helping us start the year so strongly.

## Attendance is a Skill, Not an Obligation

We often treat attendance as a box to tick, but it is actually a sophisticated skill set. It requires:



**Organisation:** Preparing the night before.



**Time Management:** Mastering the "pre-game" routine.



**Prioritisation:** Choosing long-term success over short-term comfort (like an extra hour of sleep).

## The "Ronaldo Mentality": Training When No One is Watching

Cristiano Ronaldo is legendary not just for his talent, but for his obsessive consistency. There are countless stories from his teammates about him being the first to arrive at training and the last to leave.

*"Consistency is the most important thing. If someone is not more consistent than others and does not put in more effort, they will not reach the top."*

Cristiano Ronaldo

Even when he was tired, injured or "not in the mood", he showed up. He understood that greatness is not built on the days you feel 100%, it is built on the days you feel 50% but give 100% of what you have left.

Learning can be tough. There are days involving tests, a friendship fall out or some subjects you don't enjoy as much. This is where resilience comes in. The transition from school to a professional career is not just about what you know, but about the reliability you have trained into your character.



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Cristiano Ronaldo's career is a masterclass in this "professionalism" attribute, his greatness is not a result of occasional brilliance, but of a decade-long culture of being the first to arrive and the last to leave. By treating school attendance as a high-performance skill rather than a chore, you are essentially in "pre-season training" for your future career. Just as Ronaldo uses every training session, even the ones in the rain or when he is exhausted to refine his craft, your consistent presence in the classroom builds a "professional reputation" with yourself. Employers and universities look for this exact brand of determination and resilience, as it proves you are someone who can deliver results regardless of how you "feel" on a given morning. Ultimately, every day you show up when things are hard, you are "levelling up" the mental toughness and work ethic that will define your success in the professional world long after you leave school.



<b>Reliability</b>	His coaches never doubt his availability; they know he is at peak fitness for every "match day" because he manages his fitness 24/7.	Being in your seat, ready to learn, every single morning. You become the person teachers and peers can count on during group projects and in team tasks.	Employers promote those they can rely on during high-pressure deadlines. You are training to be the "clutch" player of the office.
<b>Grit</b>	He famously turns the "noise" of critics and the sting of a loss into "fuel" to train even harder the next morning.	Viewing a difficult test result or a tough day not as a reason to stay home, but as a reason to show up and ask for feedback or help. You use the "setback" to sharpen your focus.	The ability to take constructive feedback in a workplace and turn it into improved performance without losing momentum.
<b>Preparation</b>	His legendary focus on sleep, nutrition and recovery ensures he is never "off his game" when the whistle blows.	Mastering the "night-before" routine, packing the bag, organising equipment and getting enough rest so the morning is not a chaotic scramble.	You are mastering the organisational habits that prevent burnout and ensure you consistently produce high-quality work in any industry.
<b>Consistency</b>	Understanding that greatness is not found in one "viral" goal, but in the thousands of reps and drills performed when no one is watching.	Showing up on the "ordinary" days, the rainy Tuesdays or the periods between big events where the real foundation of learning is built.	In the professional world, "elite" status is rarely a fluke; it is earned by those who provide high value every single day, leading to rapid career progression.

# TOP TIPS FOR FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

## 1 NAME IT AND FRAME IT

*When your child says, "I can't go to school, I feel too nervous/sick," respond with:*



*"I hear you, you're feeling nervous. That's a sign your brain and body are getting ready to face something new and important. Feeling nervous is okay."*

## 2 VALIDATE THE HURDLE

*"Yes, exams/tough lessons are hard. It's tough, but you are tougher. Let's make a plan to just show up and give it a try. The hardest part is often just getting through the door."*



## 3 AFFIRM THEIR STRENGTH

*"Every time you face something scary and come out okay on the other side, you're building a mental muscle. Showing up today makes you stronger for tomorrow. I believe in you."*





## Need Attendance Support or Have Feedback?

Your child's attendance is a partnership and we are here to help!

If you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance, feel your family would benefit from additional support or if you simply want to provide general feedback on attendance matters, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We are ready to listen and work together.

**Speak to the school office team about it**



## What You Can Do As Families To Avoid Sporadic Absence

Here are some practical strategies you can implement at home to help ensure your child's consistent attendance:

- **Establish a Routine:** A consistent bedtime and wake-up routine, even on weekends, helps regulate your child's body clock. This makes it easier for them to get up on time and feel ready for school each morning. Consider setting a "wind-down" period before bed, free from screens, to promote better sleep.
- **Prioritise Sleep:** Children need between 10 and 12 hours of sleep per night. Ensure their bedroom is conducive to sleep – dark, quiet and cool. Limiting screen time before bed is also crucial, as the blue light emitted from devices can interfere with sleep patterns.
- **Prepare the Night Before:** Get school bags, uniforms and any packed lunches ready the evening before. This eliminates morning rush and reduces stress, making it easier to get out the door on time.
- **Communicate Early and Openly:** If your child is feeling unwell or if there is an unavoidable appointment, please contact the school as soon as possible. Open communication helps us understand the situation and offer support if needed. It also helps prevent unnecessary truancy marks.
- **Plan Appointments Outside School Hours:** Where possible, schedule dental check-ups, doctor's appointments, and other non-urgent appointments outside of school hours. If an appointment during school hours is unavoidable, please provide the school with evidence of the appointment.
- **Talk About School:** Regularly talk to your child about their school day, what they are learning and any challenges they might be facing. Showing genuine interest can increase their engagement and motivation to attend. If they express concerns about school, please let us know so we can work together to address them.
- **Celebrate Attendance:** Acknowledge and praise your child's consistent attendance. Positive reinforcement can be a powerful motivator.



By working together, we can ensure your child builds a strong educational foundation this half-term and continues to thrive throughout the academic year. If you have any concerns about your child's attendance, please don't hesitate to contact the school.