



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

*Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong
Diocese of Plymouth*

2nd October 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to take the opportunity to update you on the life of the school this week. We are currently looking at the impact that absence and lateness can have on your child's education. Although certain situations cannot be avoided, it is interesting to note some of the following points:

A child with 90% attendance.

An attendance figure of 90% may sound reasonable. What harm can there be in missing only 10% of school time?

Well, research suggests that a 90% attendance rate is equal to a half day of missed education every week.

In fact, an attendance rate of 90% means that, over the course of an academic year, 4 whole weeks of lessons would be missed and this can be problematic in a number of ways which are not all immediately obvious:

- Firstly, children who are persistently absent will have gaps in their learning which can lead to issues of low self-esteem. This can then lead to further problems with attendance, creating a cycle of issues.
- Secondly, there may be issues with friendship groups changing while your child is absent. This can lead to unhappiness which may prevent learning.
- Finally, persistent truancy has been linked with lower employment prospects.

So what can we do together to help the children at St. Mary's with attendance?

At home you can model positive habits by setting a good example, establishing a settled bedtime routine, allowing plenty of time for the journey to school and praising your child for good or improved attendance.

At school we can offer the Breakfast Club, after school clubs and the support of our dedicated Pastoral Care Worker; Mrs. Wright. We can also help to signpost you to agencies which may be able to help with transport or other issues.

The Department for Education and Skills have published research that shows if a school can improve attendance by 1%, they may see a 5-6% improvement in attainment.

Please help us to keep your child's attendance above the school target of 96% so that they can be inspired to learn, in the light of Christ.

Thank you for your continued support,

R Howard

Mr. R. Howard.
Deputy Head.