



Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed ...
...to be the best 'me' I can be.

2nd March 2023

Dear Parents / Carers,

Re: Punctuality/Attendance

We are writing to all children's families to emphasise the importance of being in school on time as there have been numerous incidents of some families routinely arriving at school at 8.40 a.m. or later and collecting their children at 3.15 p.m. or later.

School starts at 8.40 a.m. every day- we have a flexi-start from 8.30am where the school gates are open for all children. Children need to be in their class by 8.45am so that they can start their lessons promptly.

Children who arrive late are greatly disadvantaged because they miss starting the day with their peers and the beginning of lessons. This means that they are often unsettled and can be confused about tasks. Sometimes their teacher will not always be able to re explain work as they are in the middle of a lesson which causes a disruption to your child's own learning and that of others.

It is also very important that children establish good routines and habits in preparation for the rest of their lives. Punctuality is a life skill that they need to develop whilst they are young.

We are required to monitor children's punctuality and attendance. On-going lateness (after the class register has been taken) is classified as an unauthorised absence and this is contrary to The Education Act. Please see the table below which indicates how much time is lost due to lateness.

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 mins	3.4 days
10 mins	6.9 days
15 mins	10.3 days
20 mins	13.8 days
30 mins	20.7 days

Children must be collected from their teachers at 3.00p.m. (YN) 3.05p.m. (YR) 3.10p.m. (Y1-Y4).

High levels of unauthorised absences or poor punctuality can result in a referral to the Educational Welfare Service or other agencies which have a duty to investigate further and could result in legal action being taken against you.

As a school our persistent absentee rate has grown significantly from 6.7% to 17.8%. As you can see this is a huge increase and we must do all we can to reduce this percentage and aim to be where we once were.

To keep you informed regarding your child's attendance we will be sending out a Marvellous Me Message every half term to inform you of your child's attendance. We have been informed by Attend (Education Welfare Officers) that they will be reviewing any child with an attendance lower than 92% for the period September to 31st March and this process will be repeated at the end of the year.

Further to this, children who are not collected at 3pm/3.05/3.10pm will be taken to club and a late charge will be put in place. Staff are delivering clubs after school and therefore; they do not have the capacity to mind children after dismissal. We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions, please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive.

Please keep in mind that Breakfast Club is available to children from 7.30a.m. and after school until 5.30pm if you wish to use this service please contact the school office and we will happily help.

If your child is having any difficulties that you wish to discuss, please contact me immediately. If you have other concerns about your child or other difficulties you would like support with, please contact the school and I may be able to assist in the form of an early help assessment.

Thank you for your continued support with your child's education, punctuality and attendance.

Yours sincerely

S Varricchione

Headteacher