

WE ARE A UNICEF GOLD RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

Children's rights are learned, understood and lived in this school.



An Attendance Journey

ONTHANK PRIMARY & JAMES HAMILTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

STEVEN SWAN – HOME LINK WORKER (PEF)





Steven Swan, Home Link Worker (PEF) OPS & JHPS

Respect Me
(Anti Bullying)

Restorative
Practice Pupil &
Staff Training

EA Clean Green

After School
Clubs &
Community
Engagement

Funding &
Fundraising

Pupil & Parent
Council
Development

Whole School
Community
Wellbeing &
Pastoral Care

CLPL – NME

School
Attendance



Attendance: Our Story

“Schools should have a clear vision and strategic plan to promote and manage attendance. This should include identified personnel and systems to support the tracking and monitoring of attendance.”





ONTHANK PS & JHPS SIP



Attendance underpins all aspects of life and learning experiences and outcomes.

Our established positive interventions are embedded in the daily operation of both schools.



Onthank Primary School
Attendance Policy 23/24



East Ayrshire Council champion a vision where all children and young people have an annual school attendance rate of **95% or above** to maximise life and learning experiences.

At Onthank Primary we support this vision by ensuring there are no barriers to attending school and offer Home Link/Walking Bus/Multi-Agency interventions when required, to allow our children to be healthy, happy and here.

Reporting Absence

We kindly request parents/carers inform the school of their child's absence **BEFORE 9.15am**. This can be done by calling us on **01563 525477** or using the **Safer Schools App**.

If you do not inform us by this time you will receive an attendance text message requesting you call the school.

Authorised Absence

Your child will be noted as having an '**authorised**' absence if/when you let us know **the reason for their absence**.

Unauthorised Absence

Your child will be noted as having an '**unauthorised**' absence if we **do not hear from you and no reason for absence** is provided.

This will impact your child's overall attendance % and continued unauthorised absences will lead to communication from Mr Swan (HLW) and the Senior Leadership Team. Unauthorised absences can be changed on your child's record when you have provided the reason for their absence.

Late Arrival

Any child who arrives **AFTER 9am** will be marked as late.

Mr Swan (HLW) will contact any families if we note a pattern of late arrivals to support prompt school arrival for your child. We have noted an instance where a child is arriving late, despite the parent believing they have left for school on time, therefore families will be informed of their child's late arrival via letter/phone call.

Attendance Policy 23/24



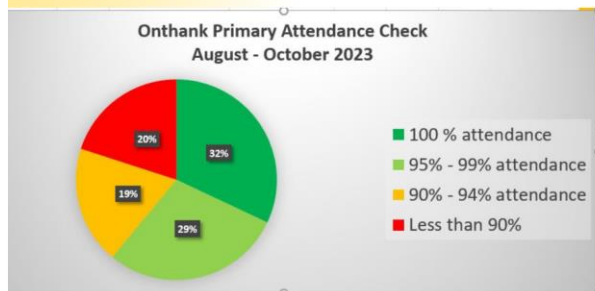


Supporting Attendance at Onthank PS and SLC



At Onthank we aim for all pupils to engage and participate in the life of our school. We want to work in partnership with you to encourage good attendance.

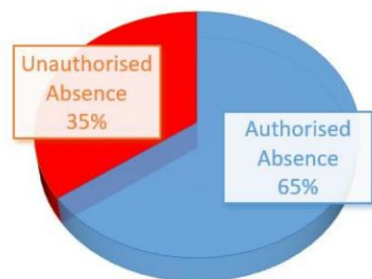
There can be many reasons for absence from school and we are keen to find out how we can help. Mr Swan is available to speak with parents and carers in our newly refurbished family room. He is in school every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.



The chart on the left shows pupil attendance at school from August to October 2023. We plan to support families where children's attendance rate drops below 90%.

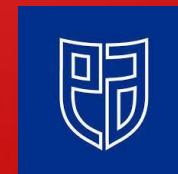
The chart on the right shows the proportion of authorised and unauthorised absences. Our unauthorised absences are Parental holidays or unexplained absences. Please inform us if your child is absent from school so we have no unexplained absences.

ABSENCES FROM AUGUST-OCTOBER 2023



If your child is going to be absent from school please contact us giving the reason for absence

Attendance Communication for Parents/Carers





Absence/Late Causes

- ▶ Unauthorised Parental Holiday (out with educational holidays)
- ▶ Cost of Living/Financial Opportunity
- ▶ Parent/Carer Physical or Mental Health
- ▶ Child Health (GP/School Nurse Support)
- ▶ Child Health (Intermittent)
- ▶ Parent/Carer Relationship Circumstances
- ▶ Community Circumstances



Causes of Absence

Physical health
Mental health
ASN (inc. ASD)
ACEs
Social factors (isolation, bullying etc)
Behavioural factors
Sense of self
Influences (peer, drugs, alcohol)
Lack of interest
Cultural issues

Individual Factors

Peer Factors

Peer pressure
Social Isolation
Poor relationship with peers

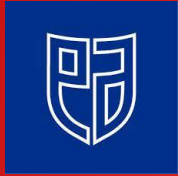
- Perceived lack of peer support
- Peer conflict
- Bullying (more prevalent in primary)

Low parental interest
Low belief in the value of education
Parents mental health
Family residential mobility
Migrant and immigration status
Multiple house moves
Domestic violence
Working patterns
Loss and bereavement
Financial stress

Family Factors

School Factors

- Poor teacher classroom management
- Perceived poor support from teacher
- Poor student/teacher relationship
- Lack of effort to prevent bullying
- Poor school climate
- Transition difficulties
- Lack of teacher/staff/peer understanding and knowledge of ASD
- Quality of teachers



Absence Codes VS Accurate Data

SEL (DD)
Authorised
Absence

UNA (UU)
Unauthorised
Absence

UNA (GG)
Parental
Holiday

Late (J)
Before Mid
Opening

Late (K)
After Mid
Opening

How are we ensuring accurate, consistent recording of attendance across Ayrshire?

HLW Attendance Process & Interventions



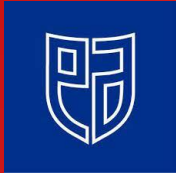
- HLW Monthly Attendance Audit
- HLW & SLT Audit Review
- HLW Phone Calls (Week 1)
- HLW Phone Calls & Letters (Week 2)
- SLT Communication (Week 3)
- Walking Bus
- TWTF - Multi-agency Support
- Increased Attendance



Onthank PS	Attendance Sept 23			
%	UNAUTHORISED	LATE		Action
76	10	1		Parent Holiday - No Action
76	12	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
76	12	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
72	2	6		SS - Late Letter
80	2	5		SS - Late Letter
80	2	5		SS - Late Letter
76	12	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
48	22	3		Parent Holiday - No Action
76	2	2		SEL - 1 unauthorised absence - monitor
72	14	1		Parent Holiday - No Action
36	30	5		SS Call/Meet Mum
86	6	11		T.W.T.F - mum attempting to give medication in mornings, affecting arrival - targets created at meeting
84	8	13		
				SS meeting mum 04.09.23
90	0	11		SS - Late Letter
56	10	1		RFA School Nurse - Continued Health related absences/concerns
64	8	2		SS - Unauthorised Absence Letter
64	18	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
100	0	19		Daily Late Arrival - Repeated pattern from P5 & P6 - SLT Action - Feedback Friday with Mrs Wright
72	12	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
78	2	1		SEL - No Action
72	8	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
72	11	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
64	2	0		SEL - No Action
48	22	1		T.W.T.F organised 06.10.23 - SS meeting family
48	24	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
76	12	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
92	0	13		Late - T.W.T.F took place - late arrival addressed - now medicated - monitoring next week
72	0	3		SEL - No Action
48	26	0		T.W.T.F to be organised - RFA Children & Families
80	10	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
68	2	0		SEL - Feedback Friday - once every two days
80	10	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
66	12	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
68	12	0		Parent Holiday - No Action
76	10	0		Parent Holiday - No Action

Attendance Data Audit & Review Sample Data





Attendance Data Tracker 23/24

Impact

- Individual Monitor & Tracking
- Support Need/Intervention Highlighted
- Success & Impact of Intervention Identified
- Ability to Identify Trends

Attendance	Session 2022/23												
% 21/22	% Week 3 New Term	% Sept 22	% Oct 22	% Nov 22	% Dec 22		% Jan 23	% Feb 23	% March 23	% April 23	% May 23	% June 23	% Improvement from 21/22 - 22/23
79.63	84	87.88	91.49	89.93	89.51			89.64	88.26			87.85	8.22%
69.58	96	89.38	79.79	84.56	83.95		83.16	82.88	84.85			79.1	9.52
67.2	84	78.13	74.47	67.57	69.75		70	74.32	70.83			63.56	
69.78	100	93.94	85.11	80.54	79.01		78.95	80.12	81.06			84.18	14.4
84.13	92	93.94	89.36	87.92	83.95		84.21	86.5	84.85			85.59	1.46
79.63	92	81.25	69.15	62.84	61.11		64.74	62.61	59.09			53.67	
79.37	92	84.38	82.98	75.68	75.31		72.63	72.97	74.05			80.23	0.6
70.9	100	90.91	89.36	82.55	81.48		77.89	77.48	78.03			81.36	10.46
66.4	64	51.56	60.64	66.89	64.81		65.79	68.02	71.37			68.08	1.68
75.66	92	96.97	97.87	97.32				89.19	84.3			76.27	0.61
73.02	100	84.85	89.36	70.27	68.52		68.95	71.17	72.52			58.19	
87.3	100	96.97	91.49	93.23				90.09	89.31			89.27	1.97
85.45	96	93.94	87.23	89.26			89.47	86.49	85.5			88.7	3.25
61.38	92	81.25	76.6	83.89	81.48		77.37	79.28	79.39			81.36	19.98
75.66	100	93.94	89.36	85.23	81.48		83.16	79.28	74.24			75.71	0.05
76.98	100	100	100	89.93	85.19		86.32	87.39	87.88			87.01	10.03
81.75	92	87.88	85.11	80.54	79.01		80	78.83	80.68			79.94	
85.45	100	96.97	90.43	80.54	79.63		77.37	77.48	77.86			74.58	
79.89	100	93.94	97.87	90.6	88.27			89.64	90.91			88.14	8.25
66.14	68	65.63	70.21	70.95	67.28		70	70.72	72.35			73.73	7.59
72.75	92	93.94	95.74	94.63				91.44	91.26			87.85	15.1
71.16	92	93.94	81.91	82.55	79.63		78.42	80.63	80.53			77.97	6.81

Sample Letters

- ▶ Friendly, Accessible Language
- ▶ Identify Specific Area of Concern
- ▶ Individual Attendance Summary Data
- ▶ Opportunity of Support
- ▶ Educational Recommendations



Attendance - We Need Your Help!

1 - P7B

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family are safe, well and enjoyed the long weekend.

I wanted to contact you with an update on your child's attendance after noticing 4 days of unauthorised absences on their record:

Current % rate - 88.73%

Authorised Absences - 6

Unauthorised Absences - 26

Late arrivals - 0

Our hope and aim across schools in East Ayrshire is for all young people to maintain an attendance rate of 95% or above to maximise learning opportunities and experiences, success and overall achievement.

I have enclosed a copy of your child's individual attendance summary. The good news is, any unauthorised absences can be updated if you call our school office and provide the reason for the absence. I would be grateful if you could call us before Friday to confirm these absences to allow us to update your child's record.

We will be closely monitoring attendance in the final term with the aim of children being in school promptly with no unauthorised absences.

Our school is always here to support our community - 01563 558505.

Safe wishes,

Steven Swan
Home Link Worker



Attendance - We Need Your Help!

Pupil X - P7A

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family are safe, well and enjoyed the long weekend.

Following our school monthly attendance audit, I have met with Mr Swan our Home Link Worker for an update on X attendance:

Current % rate - 58.10%

Authorised Absences - 45

Unauthorised Absences - 74

Late arrivals - 0

I have enclosed a copy of your child's individual attendance summary for your reference.

Our hope and aim across schools in East Ayrshire is for all young people to maintain an attendance rate of 95% or above to maximise learning opportunities and experiences, success and overall achievement.

I am aware from Mr Swan and Mrs Abercrombie previously scheduled TAC meetings were unfortunately missed, therefore I would like to invite you in for a meeting with me at your earliest convenience.

Please call our school office on 01563 558505 before the end of the week to schedule and I look forward to discussing the supports we have available to increase X's attendance.

Safe wishes,

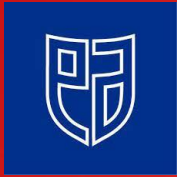
Lorraine Dougan
Head Teacher



3-5 Day Unauthorised Absence – What's Next?

- ▶ We ensure we have seen all children at least once a week if absences are consecutively **unauthorised** for between 3-5 days.
- ▶ HLW or SLT will complete home visit and support family where required.
- ▶ If home visit is unsuccessful, Social Work and/or Campus Cop are involved.
- ▶ Subsequently a TWtF is scheduled.
- ▶ Pupil is added to Attendance Tracker Log.





A Whole School Approach

be HAPPY,
be HEALTHY,
be HERE!

Regardless of circumstance, all young people and families at Onthank PS and JHPS are offered the **same** attendance support.

Additional support is offered to those living with a barrier to attendance and/or engagement.

Our community are encouraged to see past the HLW/agency title and accept intervention, knowing it is free from judgment and with belief.

School attendance is a lifelong support.



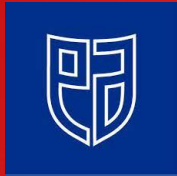
“Schools cannot be complacent about children and young people’s safety. If the school has been unable to establish contact with the parents, action must be taken to satisfy the school and the education authority that the child or young person is safe and well.”

OUR PROTOCOL

- **EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST**
- **HOME VISIT**
- **PARTNER AGENCIES**
- **CAMPUS COP**

Doing the right thing isn't always easy - in fact, sometimes it's real hard - but just remember that doing the right thing is always right.

— David Cottrell —



JHPS – Case Study Exemplar

Why?

- 39% Attendance Rate
- Average less than 2 days per week in school
- Not on track
- Home Circumstances – Gran Kinship (family arrangement)
- Parent Previous Substance Misuse
- Gran Age/Decreasing Health
- Minimal Relationships & Friendships

Action

- HLW relationship established with Gran
- Walking Bus Confirmed
- Social Work & Health Support for Gran
- Weekly Check ins Attempted
- Flexibility in Walking Bus Plan following setbacks
- Home Learning Packs Provided
- Attendance Policy Created for Learning Community

Impact

- 54% Current Attendance Rate
- Gran's Health Barrier to Attendance & Engagement
- Developed positive relationships with family to address concerns for current academic session
- Increased Home Visits
- Increased HEART agency interventions
- Encouraged Creative Thinking

Focused Attendance Intervention

- ▶ Care Experienced/LAAC
- ▶ ASN
- ▶ SEBN
- ▶ Neurodivergent
- ▶ Multi Agency Intervention

We specifically track and monitor the attendance of young people experiencing one/more of the above factors.

Wrap around family supports are put in place via TWTF meetings and effective partnership working.

Multi-agency observations and assessments are completed to ensure appropriate person-centred supports.

Relationships remain at the heart of successful intervention and empowered outcomes.



Family Attendance Improvement Opportunities

Session 22/23

- ▶ Walking Bus
- ▶ 1-2-1 HLW Pupil Check Ins
- ▶ 1-2-1 HLW Parent/Carer Check Ins
- ▶ Whole Family Relationship Modelling Sessions
- ▶ Structure, Consistency & Routine Modelling Sessions
- ▶ De-escalation & Regulation Workshops
- ▶ TWTF Multi-Agency Meetings

Session 23/24

- ▶ Family Focus Group
- ▶ Increased Community Events & Socialising Opportunities
- ▶ NME CLPL Staff Development

Sometimes, I just
need someone to
talk to.



Has session 22/23 attendance improved?

OPS

Pupil	Attendance 21/22 %	Attendance 22/23 %	% Increase
A	61.38	81.36	19.98
B	72.75	87.85	15.1
C	69.78	84.18	14.4
D	64.81	75.99	11.81
E	70.9	81.36	10.46
F	76.98	87.01	10.03

Sample Data

Late (Openings) Improvement

Sample Data

Overall Attendance % Improvement



Pupil	August - December Late Arrivals	January - May Late Arrivals	Impact
1	46	5	Intervention with parent. Walking bus. Child has not been late since Jan 23
2	19	8	Intervention with parent. Walking bus. Child has not been late since March 23
3	36	12	Intervention with parent. Walking bus. Child has not been late since Jan 23

Has session 22/23 attendance improved? JHPS

Pupil	Attendance 21/22 %	Attendance 22/23 %	% Increase
C	55.56	84.34	28.78
G	60.71	85.54	24.83
E	51.19	68.99	17.8
A	66.67	80.38	13.71
F	57.14	69.11	11.97
B	66.67	77.41	11.74
D	66.67	77.11	10.44

Sample Data

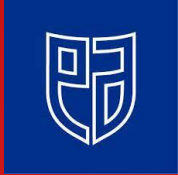
Late (Openings) Improvement

Sample Data

Overall Attendance % Improvement



Pupil	August - December Late Arrivals	January - May Late Arrivals	Impact
1	38	7	Intervention with parent. Walking bus. Child has not been late since Jan 23
2	21	7	Intervention with parent. Walking bus. Child has not been late since March 23
3	14	3	Intervention with parent. Walking bus. Child has not been late since Jan 23



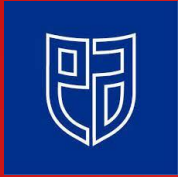
JHPS Attendance Statistics

Session 21/22 to Session 22/23

	Session 21/22	Session 22/23	Improvement
Attendance SIMD 1/2	87%	91%	4%
Attendance All Pupils	89%	90%	1%
Unauthorised Absences SIMD 1/2	5%	4%	1% Reduction
Unauthorised Absences SIMD 3/10	4%	4%	Stayed the Same
Excluded Pupils	1	0	0 Exclusions

Improvement visible across whole school community.

SIMD 1/2 pupils now at **same** unauthorised absence rate as SIMD 3-10 pupils demonstrating engagement and improvement from perceived harder to reach families.



OPS Attendance Statistics

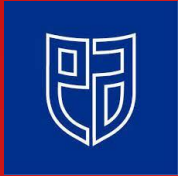
Session 21/22 to Session 22/23

	Session 21/22	Session 22/23	Improvement
Attendance SIMD 1/2	89%	88%	1% Decrease
Attendance All Pupils	91%	91%	0%
Unauthorised Absences SIMD 1/2	5%	4%	1% Reduction
Unauthorised Absences SIMD 3/10	3%	2%	1% Reduction
Excluded Pupils	1	4	3 Exclusions

Visible improvement in unauthorised absences for all.

Whole school attendance maintaining **91%** overall attendance.

Exclusion increase – linked to community anti-social behaviour & high levels of dysregulation.



HLW Support Pupil Voice

- ▶ *“It give me exercise. It saves my mum time to do work and spend time with my baby brother. I like it because it helps me get up in the morning and I’m first in school now. 10/10”.*
P2 Walking Bus Pupil
- ▶ *“I can’t get to school early but when Mr Swan came, I got to school on time. I now feel alright coming to school myself and I like being on time. The walking bus helped me and my family a lot.*
P4 Walking Bus Pupil
- ▶ *“I feel just spending time with Mr Swan helps. We talk about being kind and respectful and it makes me feel better for the day. Talking about my worries makes me feel better.”*
P5 Pupil – Wellbeing Support

Case Study 7: James Hamilton Primary School, East Ayrshire Council

James Hamilton Primary School is in Kilmarnock. The school roll is currently 348 children and 29% of learners reside in quintile one.

The headteacher and newly appointed home-link worker utilised the available data to recognise and identify that there had been a four-year trend of declining attendance for both the overall cohort and for those residing in quintile one.

A number of actions and approaches have been adopted to support an improvement in overall attendance and the attendance of those residing in quintile one. Approaches included:

- monthly attendance audit with home link worker (HLW) and HT
- when required communication with parents:
 - Week 1: Home-link worker calls
 - Week 2: Home-link worker calls and letters (bespoke letters)
 - Week 3: Senior leadership team contacts family
- walking bus
- multiagency support
- extensive tracking and monitoring of data and supports
- revised school attendance policy
- 1 2 1 HLW pupil check-ins
- 1 2 1 HLW parent/carer check-ins
- whole family relationship modelling sessions
structure, consistency & routine modelling sessions
- de-escalation & regulation workshops

Regardless of the approach the key successes have been regularly reviewing the data and the impact of any supports provided. This is underpinned by the positive working relationships that have been built between the school, in particular the home-link worker, and families within the school community.

Following a four-year negative trend in attendance for both overall and quintile one learners, there has now been an increase in attendance of both cohorts. Quintile one learners have increased by 4 percentage points to 91%. This is 1% higher than the overall cohort who improved by 1 percentage point. The school firmly believes that the time and effort spent on developing positive relationships with targeted groups of children continues to have an impact on attendance and attainment, as well as enhancing trust with families across the community.



FINDINGS

Education Scotland, Deep Dive Evaluation

Improving Attendance: Understanding the Issue
Nov 2023

“...emerging and effective practice...”



Attendance Journey: Next Steps

“Education authority quality assurance processes should enable key senior managers to develop an overview of attendance across their schools and support schools to develop good practice in promoting attendance and responding effectively to absence.”

- ▶ How are we **sharing** good practice?
- ▶ How are we ensuring staff deliver a **consistent approach**?
- ▶ Who is going to **manage, lead and deliver** the attendance commitment in your school?
- ▶ Can you adapt the Home Link/Family Support role to cater for the bespoke needs of your school?
- ▶ **Smart Spend** & education group partnership opportunities to share resource.



EA Education Attendance Commitment

- ▶ HLW Role: Aspirational & Ambitious
- ▶ HLW Good Practice to Shape Role Development
- ▶ HLW Specialism for Engagement
- ▶ Share and Develop Effective Practice Across Authority
- ▶ Learning Group HLW School Positions



What's next for OPS & JHPS?

Respectful Relationships
Parent/Carer Group

Parent/Carer Support Focus Groups

Empowerment Programme

Kinship Café & Kindness Cafe

Additional Focus on 79% - 89% Absence

Wider Community Event Opportunities

Social Work Partner Workshop

SWEIC Attendance Event

Invitation to Share Good Practice



**RELENTLESS
POSITIVITY**



Reason
Relate
Regulate

The Key to a
Successful
Approach





**The most
effective way to
do it, is to do it.**

Amelia Earhart

BrainyQuote®