

A major part of our school improvement plan this year is to improve School attendance and reduce the number of days pupils are absent.

Going to school regularly is important for your child's future. Parents and carers are responsible for making sure their children receive full-time education. Parents and carers are legally responsible for making sure that children go to school.

We believe that good attendance at school is not just valuable, it's essential. Going to school is directly linked to improved exam performance which should in turn lead to further learning opportunities and better job prospects. As well as this, going to school helps to develop:

- friendships
- social skills
- team values
- life skills
- cultural awareness
- career pathways

Achieving 90 per cent in an exam or test is a fantastic result but if your child is at school for only 90 per cent of the school year then they will have missed 19 days - almost four whole weeks of school, or in other words 130 lessons. A 90% attendance for S1 to S5 would mean missing 10% of a school year each year for five years, the equivalent of 95 days lost. If those 95 days were concentrated in S5, it would mean starting S5 not in August but in the last week in January. You would not expect in such circumstances for that pupil to do well in any exam, given how much they had missed.

How to prevent your child from missing school

You can help prevent your child missing school by:

- having a routine from an early age and sticking to it
- making sure your child understands the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- making sure they understand the possible implications for themselves and you as a parent or carer if they don't go to school
- taking an interest in their education - asking about school work and encouraging them to get involved in school activities

- discussing any problems they may have at school and letting their Principal Teacher of Pupil Support know about anything that is causing concern
- not letting them take time off school for minor ailments or holidays during term time

To avoid disrupting your child's education, you should arrange (as far as possible), appointments and outings:

- after school hours
- at weekends
- during school holidays

Term time holidays

Term time holidays have been increasing over the last number of years. Parents and carers should make every effort to ensure that their child does not miss school due to holiday plans. Schools are not obliged to agree to you taking your child on holiday during term time. We are entitled to record such holidays as being an unauthorised absence.

Support for parents and carers

As a parent, if you find it hard to talk to your child about their attendance at school or other school-related matters, support is available. In the first instance please contact your child's Principal Teacher of Pupil Support. If you are not sure who this our fantastic Office Staff will help you out.

Positive Destinations

There is a very strong link with pupil attendance and a positive destination when a pupil leaves school. We often include pupil attendance figures when replying to requests for a reference.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email and for your continued support of Calderhead High School

John Robertson

Headteacher