



Hi everyone,

Welcome to the latest Carbeile Junior School Attendance newsletter!

As you might be aware, the lasting effects of poor attendance during COVID is still an issue in schools across the country. This is therefore still having a massive impact on pupils education! It is more important than ever that pupils attend school everyday, unless there really is an exceptional reason why they can't. In order to prepare children as well as we can for the next phase of their education, we need every child in school every day so they do not miss any learning.

On Friday last week, I had a lengthy meeting with a Cornwall Local Authority Attendance Officer to go through our attendance policies and procedures. There were a number of things that he highlighted that we need to change in order to show that attendance at Carbeile is an extremely high priority.

The purpose of this letter is to highlight how importantly we take the attendance of the children at Carbeile, the part you have to play in that, and the new processes that we will be employing from now on to ensure high attendance.

I know that the content of this letter is very 'firm' to say the least, but we have had a very serious reminder from the local authority about our attendance data and they have said that it is vital to pass this onto parents. With attendance being a further branch of safeguarding it is vital that Carbeile is doing everything it can for its children. As with all communication to parents, if you have any feedback, please let me know.

Attendance so far this year

I would like to start by saying a huge thank you to the 42 children who have managed to achieve 100% attendance so far this year. You are amazing!

Carbeile's attendance targets are for all children to achieve above 96% with attendance over 97% seen as excellent attendance. A level of attendance under 95% is not considered to be regular attendance, with any child who has attendance under 90% classified as a "persistent absentee" (PA).

So far, since September 2023, we have 62 children with attendance less than 90%. That is 62 children who have missed, on average, at least half a day of school every single week for a term and a half – half a school year. This equates to 19% of all of our children, 1 in 5, who are currently classed as persistent absentees.

Change in Procedures

Due to Mr. Tamblyn's new role from after half term, Mrs. Nicholson will be the new attendance lead at Carbeile. By liaising with Sue in the office, the data will now be analysed weekly, with a particular focus on those children who have attendance less than 90%, persistent absentees. We will celebrate improvements, but contacting parents regularly if the percentage continues to go down.

How to Report Absence

If your child is too ill to attend school, please contact the school office before 9.00 am with full details of your child's illness/symptoms. If we do not hear from you, we will call you to find out why your child is not in school. If we are unable to make contact and you do not provide a reason for your child's absence, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If a pupil has two consecutive days of unauthorised absence with no reason given then this becomes a safeguarding concern.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. We give you details on attendance in our regular correspondence and remind parents about the importance of good attendance on our newsletter. We talk to the children about the importance of good attendance. We meet and discuss attendance issue with families and offer relevant support when needed.

At Carbeile Junior School we promote attendance in many ways. For example:

- A warm welcome from the class team
- A rich and diverse curriculum
- Praised for working hard
- Ensuring that your child attends a safe and nurturing environment
- An 'open door' policy for parents to seek support and advice

At Carbeile Junior School we celebrate attendance in many ways. For example:

- A display in the main front reception to celebrate the best class attendance.
- Giving raffle tickets to all pupils with 100% attendance for the week (to win a book in assembly each week).
- Give additional playtime/football time on a Friday for the best class attendance.
- Rewards for children with 99-100% attendance for a term/year

Attendance Statistics

Excellent attendance maximises the learning opportunities and parents/carers have a vital role in promoting positive attitudes to good attendance. Every lesson counts and it is this commitment to learning that will have a positive impact on your child's attainment and progress. The table below shows the impact that missing just a few days of school can have over the course of an academic year.

Percentage	Description	Days absent per year	No. of lessons lost	Weeks lost
100%	Excellent	0	0	0
98-99%	Very good	2-4 days	Up to 20	Almost 1 week
97%	Good	5.5 days	Up to 27.5	Just over a week
96%	Satisfactory	7.5 days	Up to 37.5	1.5 weeks
95-95%	Cause for concern	9.5-13 days	Up to 65	Almost 2.5 weeks
91-92%	Unsatisfactory	14-17 days	Up to 85	Almost 3.5 weeks
90% and below	Persistent Absence	19 days or more	More than 95	4 weeks and over

Punctuality/ Lateness Statistics

We are going to be very closely monitoring those children who are consistently late to school. Poor punctuality can lead to your child...

- Feeling embarrassed in front of their friends
- Missing the beginning of vital lessons making them fall behind

- Missing important instructions for the rest of the school day
- Learning bad habits which could affect their employability in the future

The table below shows just how much education could be missed by being late to school each day.

Minutes late per day	Learning time lost in a year
5 minutes	3 ½ days
10 minutes	7 days
15 minutes	10 ½ days
20 minutes	14 days
30 minutes	21 days

Persistent Absence

Persistent absence is defined by the Government as attendance below 90%. This equates to 19 days or more of absence a year or 100+ lessons missed. If a child's attendance drops below 90% this could lead to them becoming a safeguarding concern.

The parents/carers of children with less than 90% attendance will be contacted via letter in the first instance and then through a phone call from Mrs. Nicholson or myself. We totally understand that attendance can be affected by prolonged bouts of illness, in which case we would now be expecting to see an improvement in the percentages. The main thing we will be looking at will be the 'broken weeks' where children are consistently having days off every week without good reason. The Cornwall Local Authority Attendance Officer has recommended that we now request medical proof for any future absence, once the child's attendance goes below 93%.

Continued persistent absence could result in the authority taking legal action against parents, resulting in a fine or court appearance. Over the next few weeks I will be making contact by letter with the families of children whose attendance is below 90% to inform you of your child's decreased attendance and offer any support we can in order to get your child/children's attendance back up.

Changes at Carbeile

- Weekly monitoring of attendance, particularly those at 93% or below.
- Contacting of parents regularly as needed, with individual attendance plans used as needed.
- Parent meetings as needed to ensure we understand any barriers to non-attendance.
- Attendance being marked as unauthorised for persistent absentees without good reason for non-attendance.
- Parents of children whose attendance is below 93% to needing to provide medical evidence for future absence.

Please always remember that we want to support you with your child's attendance, as we know that there could be a number of factors that are stopping your child coming to school. We are not here to judge, or to get the local authority involved without speaking to you first. We will always work with you to see if we can help in any way before we have to involve the Cornwall Local Authority Attendance Officer.

If you do receive a letter about attendance, and you would like to discuss it with me, please feel free to come and see me.

Thank you

Mr. H