



Elton Primary School & Nursery

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Headteacher – Mr Kevin Manning

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Update from Mr Manning

Dear Parent/Carer

As we are now over half way through the school year and almost at the end of half term I thought I would write an update on all things school related.

Firstly, a big shout out to all our superb children. I have lost count of the amount of times I have received emails, letters or verbal comments praising our children. Every visitor we have to school always comments on how the classes are so calm and the children so polite and welcoming. This was perfectly summed up following a visit we had as part of a DFE trial. After their week with us, the staff carrying out the trial emailed me to say "A massive thank you to your lovely children they are a credit to you and your school."I couldn't agree more!

Residentials

Today is the final day of our Yr6 residential – check out our Twitter account to see some of the amazing things they have been up to this week. This completes our 3 residentials for the year.

We are already in the planning stage for next year and have recently confirmed the booking for next year's Yr4 residential (our current Yr3 class). More details to come out soon.

We are aware that next year's Yr6 and Yr2 are very small cohorts and so it would be impossible to offer a residential trip for those classes. To ensure that the children in these classes do get a chance of participating in a residential we are now considering doing a joint Yr5/Yr6 visit and a joint Yr1/Y2 visit. We will be writing out after half term, once we know estimates of costs, to see if there would be enough interest for these to take place.

I would like to add a big thank you to the staff who volunteer to take part in these residentials, for no extra pay, just to ensure the children get to enjoy these amazing experiences. They complete risk assessments, planning and are on duty 24/7 throughout the trip. Residentials couldn't happen without our staff volunteering so I am extremely grateful to them.

It isn't just residentials that staff offer up their free time to deliver, just last week it was a very late night for the staff who volunteered to accompany the children to the fantastic Young Voices experience. Well done to all the children in our amazing choir who performed so superbly throughout what is a very long day!



This Friday we have two school discos taking place that will be organised and supervised by both staff and parent volunteers – once again a massive thank you to all involved.

Staffing

This term we have welcomed some new faces to school. Mrs Carter and Miss Russell have joined us as teaching assistants. Mrs Owens and Mrs Hocking have joined us as Mid-Day Assistants. They have all fitted in perfectly already!

You may have noticed that two of our teachers have cause to celebrate. Congratulations to Mrs Higginson and Miss Duncan who are both expecting a new arrival later this year. Mrs Higginson will leave us at Easter to start her maternity leave and Mrs Duncan will be with us until the end of the academic year. I will write to Yr3 and Yr5 parents soon to explain the changes in staffing that will take place from Easter when Mrs Higginson starts her maternity leave. What I can share with everyone is that Mrs Harland will become our SENDCo during Mrs Higginson's leave.

Attendance

Now that attendance registers are shared with government on a daily basis we see constant updates about how our attendance compares to other schools. Unfortunately, we are still one of the lowest in the whole of Cheshire West for attendance.

It is important to say that this isn't about children having a few days over the year absent when ill, it is important children stay at home when poorly. I myself was struck down with illness for 2 days last week which led to me being absent. We all get sick at some point and need rest.

The national average for primary attendance is currently 95%. That means, on average, a primary school child is off for approximately 10 days in a school year. Attendance is classed as a concern by the government once it drops below 90% which equals 19 school days, or four full weeks, over the school year.

Once children miss this level of school, gaps do appear in their learning which become very hard to address and this has an impact on their future progress. Currently we have 46 out of our 171 children who have attendance below 90%.

Under the new government rules school meets with an Education Welfare Officer every term to discuss children who are below 90% to help find out what is causing the absences and what next steps school should take. Our next meeting is the first Monday back after the half term break.

If there is any way that school can help with any attendance issues you are having then I would recommend that you contact myself or Mrs Deakin. Mrs Deakin is trained in Emotionally Based Non-Attendance and will hopefully be able to work alongside you to address any issues.

Lates

One thing that comes up regularly in our attendance inspection meetings is the number of lates that we have. This number has risen substantially over the last 12 months.

Can I remind everyone that the school day starts at 8:45. If the children are not in class at 8:45 when the register is taken then they are marked as late. Once the school gates are closed, children will need to be signed into school via the school office by a responsible adult.

Lessons begin at 8:45 so if the children turn up late, they have missed the teacher input to their lessons which will make it harder for them.



Ideally we would close the school gates at 8:45 but this is never possible because of the number of late parents we still have on the playground.

Could I ask that everyone tries to get to school between 8:30-8:45 when the gates are open.

I will just end with a reminder that we finish for the half term break this Friday 14th at 3:15 (don't forget the discos later that evening) and return on Monday 24th February.

Yours sincerely

K Manning

Mr K Manning
Headteacher

