

Dear Parent/Carer,

My name is Dale Edwardes and I am the school's Education Welfare Officer. I just wanted to introduce myself and explain my role and responsibilities to you, now that your child is starting at Malin Bridge Primary School.

I have been an Education Welfare Officer for 24 years now and I have worked across most areas of Sheffield. Over the last 12 years I have been working with 6 Primary Schools, including Malin Bridge Primary School.

My role involves working with schools, Parent/Carers and children, with regards to improving pupil attendance and punctuality.

Promoting school attendance is a key component of the Government's strategy to raise standards in education and included in this is a drive for schools to reduce persistent absence. Pupils who are 'persistently absent' are those who regularly have time off and whose attendance falls below 90%.

Every half term, I meet school staff and identify those pupils whose attendance is below 90% and where their attendance is irregular (eg. Regular absences on a Monday or Friday). We also discuss those children who are being brought late to school on a regular basis. I will then either make a home visit or meet with a parent/carers in school, to discuss the issues, offer advice and support and look at ways of improving the situation.

There are some re-occurring issues which I have come across in my line of work and **without wanting to sound patronising**, I wanted to ask for your support with the following:-

- 1) Please contact the school on the first day of your child's absence and keep the school informed if the absence continues.
- 2) Please ensure that you have credit on your mobile phone to contact the school and if not, please keep your mobile phone charged and switched on, so the school can contact you, if your child is absent or there is an emergency during school hours.
- 3) Please update the school if you change your mobile number or any emergency contact number.
- 4) Please bring your child to school on time each day. As you know, lateness impacts on a child's learning, relationships and self-esteem.

Outstanding Achievement for All

Headteacher: Mr Robbie McGrath

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- 5) Please take 'leave' during the school holidays - guidance has been given to schools, which states that term time leave will not be authorised by the school unless there are exceptional circumstances. If parent/carers do not comply with the guidance then a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued by the Local Authority.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and I hope your child has a successful transition into school.

If you have any concerns or need any support in relation to your child's attendance or punctuality, then please don't hesitate to ring me on **07885972039**.
Thank you.

Dale Edwardes
Education Welfare Officer