



School Prayer This Week

Dear God, Thank You for our groups and communities. Help us to be the first to step forward when we see someone who needs a friend or a helping hand. Let our kindness spread from one person to the next. Amen.



School Diary

16 th December	Children's Christmas lunch – wear party clothes
19 th December	School closes for Christmas at 1.15pm
7 th January 2026	School re opens at 8.45am

Christmas Fayre Update

A huge thank you to all the members of the PTA who helped organise our Christmas Fayre yesterday. We raised just over **£1700!** Thank you to all who came and supported us yesterday.

Friday Bake Day

We will be selling cookies/cakes every Friday. This is being done as a treat for the children for all their hard work. They are nut & dairy free but not gluten free.

Important Updates

- Hurray!!!! The roadworks have now finished. 😊
- Quick reminder -please do not park on the zigzag lines outside school. These are there for the safety of our children and all our families.
- School closes at the end of term, next **Friday 19th December 2025** at **1.15pm**. We wish you all a restful and peaceful break.
- Applications are now open for **September 2026** intake for reception. Please complete any application forms ready for the new school year. This relates to children who were born between 1st September 2021- 31st August 2022.
- Quite a few children are coming into school without their ties on. Please make sure that they wear their ties, and if they have been lost, they can be purchased from the office for £4 KS1 and £5 KS2.

Christmas Fayre Raffle Tickets

Raffle tickets can still be purchased from the school office and your children can purchase within school for £1 per strip. Lots of lovely large Christmas hampers to be won.

Pupil Vacancies in Reception and Year 1

We currently have 3 places available for pupils in Reception and 3 places available in Year 1. If you know of anyone who would like to join our wonderful school. It is rare that we ever have places in our school available for pupils.

Attendance for the week

Whole school target: **96%** Current attendance of whole school: **95.0%**

Rec: **89.6%** Year2: **93.0%** Year 4: **97.7%** Year 6: **93.3%**

Year 1: **99.3%** Year 3: **96.0%** Year 5: **96.3%**

Overall Punctuality winners.....Year 2! Overall attendance week winners.....Year1!



CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN CAMP

KICK OFF CHRISTMAS THE
SOCCER HQ WAY



CHRISTMAS PARTY VIBES



CHRISTMAS WORLD CUP



CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR ALL
CHILDREN

£18 PER
DAY

22ND AND 23RD
OF DECEMBER
10AM-3PM
PLECKGATE HIGH
SCHOOL



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **SCHOOL AVOIDANCE**

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them. Such an approach can go a long way.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



The National College

Pupil Wellbeing Conversations

It can feel difficult to know how to start a conversation with a pupil about their wellbeing. Sometimes this is because you don't feel equipped with the information you think you need, or you don't feel confident enough to open up the conversation. This guide shows you what action to take and how to handle a mental health disclosure.

1. NURTURE WARM, TRUSTED, KIND RELATIONSHIPS

When pupils have a consistent, emotionally available adult who shows they care and who 'holds them in mind', they thrive. They are also more willing to open up about their wellbeing and seek your support.

2. CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Provide a classroom environment which is free from belittling and shame-based behaviour management. This will help pupils feel they can share worries, talk about their feelings, know they are listened to and difficulties are acted upon.

7. LOOK AFTER YOUR OWN WELLBEING

To be able to help pupils with their wellbeing, the adults around them need to be regulated and calm. It is so important that you know what helps you manage and make time for wellbeing in your life.



6. KEEP CALM, EVEN IF YOU'RE WORRIED

In situations where pupils disclose mental health difficulties, keep calm whilst expressing concern for their wellbeing. Reacting with panic will create more alarm and raise a pupil's level of anxiety.

5. BE OPEN & CLEAR ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY

If you invite a young person to tell you about their wellbeing, make sure you know what you will do with the information, and remember that you cannot promise to keep it to yourself.

3. HAVE SIDE-BY-SIDE CONVERSATIONS

Some pupils find safety in side-by-side conversations such as a walk and talk, whilst tidying the classroom together or perhaps during a lunchtime club.

4. PROVIDE A QUIET ROOM FOR CONVERSATIONS

If a child discloses a mental health difficulty, invite them to talk in a safer, more private environment, and if appropriate, talk to your designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for advice about how the situation can be managed.

HELPFUL OPENERS

- You don't seem your usual self today. Would you like to talk about anything?
- You look sad/worried today. Do you want to have a chat about it? Is there anything I can do to help?
- You said something interesting in circle time/at lunchtime about how you felt when... How do you feel about it now?

Taken from Mentally Healthy Schools:
<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/1811/tips-for-having-a-conversation-with-a-child-about-mental-health.pdf>

The National College

This guide is part of The National College staffroom poster series. A collection of information posters for your school staffroom.



Meet the Expert: Anna Bateman
 Anna Bateman, subject matter expert on mental health & wellbeing and school improvement adviser

The National College | Remote video CPD to empower school leaders & teachers

www.thenationalcollege.co.uk Email: support@thenationalcollege.co.uk Twitter: @TheNatCollege Facebook: @thenationalcollegeuk

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 16.04.2021