

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, sorry for the delay! Somewhere in the busy start of the year, my September newsletter never made it to print and so apologies for not sharing key dates sooner. My September edition highlighted the fantastic school return by all of the children after what is a really long absence from school routines.

This is something that has continued and allowed us to jump straight back into our learning. Thank you to all of the parents and carers for returning the children smartly in their uniform and preparing them for their new class or indeed school; the Reception children in particular have settled brilliantly and it has been a joy hanging out in the classes a little bit already.

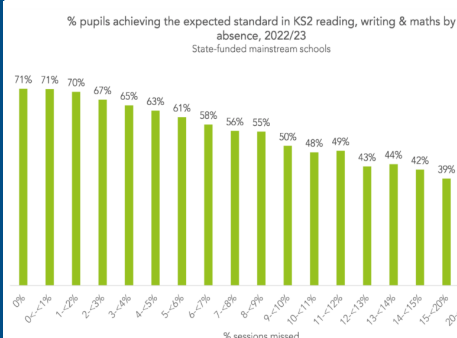
Thank you also to the parents who have been able to attend the three parent awareness sessions that we have already held. These really are a great way for us to explain more about what is involved in some key areas of our teaching. We would aim to hold around one session a month and we hope you can continue to join us.

Pupil Committees The most important aspect of education is the concept of TEAMWORK and promoting the idea that we are all here to contribute towards making the school the best it can be. A key element of this is asking the pupils (particularly in Key Stage 2) to become a pupil leader through a number of our pupil committees: Eco, Digital, Sports, Gardening, Playground, Wellbeing, Choir, Pupil Parliament, Librarian, Reading Buddies, Respect Champion and our House Captains.

Although we have many pupils volunteering in several roles, we currently have the equivalent of 192 pupils volunteering within one of these roles and we cannot explain how incredibly proud we are of the additional motivation these children have shown in wanting to make North Wootton Academy the best school it can be for themselves and for others. This is also our opportunity to give back to our local community with park litter picks, tree planting and carol singing all planned within the local Wootton area before the end of the term.

Thank you again for all of your support in the many letters and speeches that has led to the number. We have been a little overwhelmed by the number and so there are more badges on order. I have also spoken with the committee members today and explained when and what they will be doing between now and February. There will then be another opportunity for others to apply with a letter and to contribute too.

Why are we so focused on attendance?



As a school, we have to have the ambition of having every pupil in school every day, unless they are too ill to attend. This is because all of the evidence shows that for every 5% or 9 days of absence, there is a 10% drop in achievement at the end of primary, which in turn significantly affects achievement in high school. For us, that is sending five more pupils to high school not reaching the expected standard that we would have planned. If we allowed this to drop to 90% which is not difficult with a holiday and several small periods of illness, this would be ten pupils.

As a parent, I completely understand the financial reasons why families take a holiday during school time as I face the same costs. However, I hope the graph helps parents understand why we can never authorise this absence without exceptional reason and will always look to deter families from doing so. Ultimately our job is to maximise the education of all our pupils and therefore, we would not be doing our jobs if we did not try to address something that can have such a strong impact upon us achieving this.

PTA The PTA held its AGM last month with a record twenty-three parents attended. It is great to see that after a hugely successful year where the funds raised have reached £12,000, that there were so many new members looking to add their TEAMWORK and help contribute to the school experience of our children. Despite this number, we are always looking for new members as the more volunteers there are, the more they can offer. Please look for NWA PTA on Facebook if you can help.

