

ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER



Improving Attendance – Some Ideas...

From Parents, For Parents: Making Mornings Easier

Parental Insights for Improving Attendance to School

Being a parent is one of the hardest jobs in the world. We recently surveyed some of our school community to ask: How do you make the school morning work?

The results were incredibly honest. From the "Monday Morning Blues" to the "Lost Shoe Panic," we all face similar hurdles. However, many families shared brilliant, practical hacks that have transformed their mornings from a battleground into a routine.

Scenario 1: The "Zombie" Morning

Your child is awake, but only just. They are groggy, moving in slow motion, and getting them out of bed feels like pulling teeth.

Parent Suggestions: The "Digital Sundown" & The Buffer

Our survey found a strong link between easier wakeups and night-time routines.



- *The Digital Sundown:* 70% of families with high attendance have a strict "no screens" rule in the hour before sleep.
 - Why it works: Blue light interferes with sleep quality. Many parents successfully use a "phones downstairs at 9 pm" rule to ensure their children are truly resting, not scrolling.
- *The Buffer Zone:* Most stress-free mornings include a 15–30 minute "buffer"—waking up slightly earlier than strictly necessary.
 - Why it works: This absorbs the unexpected (a missing sock, a slow breakfast) so that a small delay doesn't result in a late arrival.

Try this: The "Parental Alarm" Backup: Even for older students, many parents act as a safety net, waking their children up personally rather than relying solely on their own alarm. Students said that they put their alarm on the other side of the room so they have to get up to turn it off.

Scenario 2: The "I don't want to go to school"



It's Monday morning. Your child says they are too tired, or they just don't feel like it." The dread is real.

Parent Suggestions: The "Work Ethic" Chat & Future Focus - Monday dread is common, students rated Mondays as the hardest day to face.

- **Model Resilience:** Many parents found success by being honest: "I don't always want to go to work, but I do because it's my responsibility".
- **Focus on the Social:** When motivation is low, remind them of the social benefits (seeing friends) rather than the academic pressure. Students told us that "seeing friends" is their number one motivator for getting out of bed.

Student Voice: "If a friend was struggling, I'd tell them to just put their alarm on the other side of the room, so they have to get up."

Scenario 3: The "I Don't Feel Well" (But no fever)



They have a headache, a tummy ache, or just feel "off." You aren't sure if they are sick or just anxious, and you don't want to force them if they are unwell.

Parent Suggestions: "Try It and See" This was the number one psychological "hack" shared by parents.

- **The Strategy:** Validate their feelings ("I know you feel a bit yucky") but encourage them to go in and "try it" until break time.
- **The Safety Net:** Tell them: "If you still feel bad at 11 am, the school will call me."
- **The Outcome:** Parents reported that 90% of the time, the child feels better once they are distracted by friends and the school never calls home.

Note: If your child has a fever or is vomiting, they should absolutely stay home. But for minor ailments or somatic anxiety (nerves feeling like sickness), the "Try It" rule is a game-changer.

Scenario 4: The "Chaos & The Argument

You are shouting "Put your shoes on!" for the tenth time. The TV is on, the bag isn't packed, and everyone is stressed.

Parent Suggestions: Boring Mornings & The "No-Go" Rule *Successful mornings are often described as "boring and routine".*

- **Beat Decision Fatigue:** 90% of high-attendance families prepare the night before. Lay out the uniform and pack the bag before bed. This means no decisions need to be made when brains are tired.
- **The "No-Go" Rule:** The most popular rule in the school community is "No Screens Until Dressed."
 - Why it works: The reward (phone/TV) only comes after the responsibility (getting ready) is done. This removes the battle to get their attention.



Quick Wins: Top 3 Hacks from Parents

1. **Medicate and Send:** For minor sniffles or headaches, give paracetamol/Calpol and send them in. Usually, the distraction of school clears the head.
2. **Plan B for Transport:** Have a backup plan (a neighbour, a grandparent, or walking) for when the car won't start, so a logistic issue doesn't become an absence.
3. **Visual Calendars:** Keep a family calendar on the fridge so everyone knows exactly what is happening that week—no surprises.



Thank You!