



# Churchfield News

Summer 1 Week 6 – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024

## Upcoming Diary Dates

- Tues 21<sup>st</sup> May – Y1 C4 Hepp DT Day
- Tues 21<sup>st</sup> May – Y5/6 E Sports Event
- Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> May – Family Bingo Night (7:00pm)
- Fri 24<sup>th</sup> May – FREE Parent Coffee & Chat (8:45am)
- Fri 24<sup>th</sup> May – Last Day
- Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> Jun – School Starts

## Y6 SATs

A HUGE well done to all of our Y6 children for their incredible effort, determination and resilience in SATs! As a reward for their hard work, an ice cream van will be visiting school on Tuesday morning next week! Our Y6 children are all incredible, and all excel in different ways. Every single child should be very proud of themselves, as we are of them!

## Start & Finish Consultation

We have a consultation open for 2 weeks on the start and finish times for next year. Please see the letter that was sent earlier today, and the link to give your response is here: <https://forms.office.com/e/CiwuysWN87>

## Crossing Patrol

Unfortunately, the crossing patrol service was unable to recruit to the vacant post, so it's now live again. Thank you to everyone for sharing it on local social media and through word of mouth. I'm sure we'll have someone in post soon!

## Crazy Hair Day

The Friends of Churchfield group is putting together another 'Crazy Hair Day' on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June. More details will follow soon!

## Mental Health Awareness Day

Everyone wore green today to support mental health awareness week. Talking about mental health is really important – if you'd like support on how to approach this topic with your child, please just come and speak to us!

## FREE Coffee Morning

It's our half-termly coffee morning again next Friday, the sports hall will be open from 98:45am – 10:00am. Pop along for FREE coffee, tea, cakes and a place to chat!

## Family Bingo Night

Our family bingo night is next Wednesday at 6pm. Come along to the sports hall for bingo, refreshments and a raffle!

## Half-Term

Just a reminder that we break up for half-term next Friday, and children have 1 week off school before the Summer 2 term.



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## Our Values

Our School Values & Golden Rule underpin everything we do!

## Our Golden Rule

We keep ourselves, and each other, safe.



We are proud, and work hard to be the best that we can be



We are determined and resilient, embracing all challenges



We collaborate well, treating everyone as equals



We are honest, kind and show integrity



We respect all people, property and the environment



We believe in ourselves and strive for our goals



At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](http://nationalcollege.com).

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

Emotionally Based School Avoidance is a term used to refer to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. It's often rooted in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. The rate of children who miss school more than 10% of the time in England has more than doubled since before the pandemic: rising from 10.9% in 2018-19, to 22.3% in 2022-23.

## 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 complaining of a tummy ache, headache, 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 which is 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.

### MANAGING OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

While there may be times you feel frustrated or angry, try to stay calm; acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss a range of coping strategies together to help them face the discomfort and overwhelming feelings. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk and practice the strategies in less overwhelming situations first.

### 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 limited time on 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.

### REDUCE STIMULATING ACTIVITIES AT HOME

If a child is avoiding school, reduce their access to more stimulating activities (such as watching television, playing games and spending time with friends) during school hours, where possible. This reduces the potential for the child having rewarding experiences at home, which could be interpreted as a positive aspect of avoiding school.

### 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.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: [nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance](http://nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance)

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