



Connect Academy Trust, c/o Leigham Primary School, Cockington Close, Plymouth PL6 8RF
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Dear Parents/Carers,



My name is Jessica Jenkin and I have recently joined Connect Academy Trust as the Educational Welfare Officer.

I am brand new to the Trust but not to education. I have worked for 8 Years in a Plymouth primary school, firstly as a Teaching Assistant and then as the Parent Support Advisor. I am married and have 16-year-old daughter who is currently sitting her GCSE's so life is very busy!

What is an Educational Welfare Officer?

An Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) works closely with all school staff to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and ensure they have access to a safe and supportive learning environment. This is achieved by encouraging and supporting high attendance.

Why is good attendance so important?

Missing school has an impact on a child's learning and research shows that even missing a few days results in children falling behind and struggling to catch up. This leads to gaps in their learning, restricting their future options and opportunities.

Friendships can also be greatly affected by persistent absence impacting a child's ability to form strong relationships with their classmates.



What can you do to support good attendance?

Connect Academy Trust understands and appreciates that most parents and carers support their child with good attendance and punctuality. It is worth still being aware of what you can do to provide support consistently. We would really appreciate it if you can:

- Take family holidays during school holidays.
- Try to arrange non-urgent dental and medical appointments outside school hours. If an appointment is needed, ensure your child is back in school as soon as possible.
- Have a good morning and evening routine which goes a long way to preparing your child for the school day.
- Inform the school if your child is absent to illness or other reasons.

Most importantly, please discuss any problems or difficulties with school, all staff are there to help and will always be supportive.

90% attendance is the equivalent of missing half a day per week on average.

80% attendance is the equivalent of missing 1 day per week on average.

The Connect Academy Trust target for all children is a minimum of 98% attendance.

When do schools involve an Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)?

Please don't panic! If school staff have concerns about your child's attendance or punctuality, they would have already worked with you to try find a solution. This could be using resources in school and working with outside agencies to help. If your child's attendance improves, it is unlikely that any further action will be taken at this stage. However, if things are not improving then school staff might then request that I meet with you in school to discuss your child's attendance. This meeting will include the reasons it is important that your child goes to school and making you aware of your legal responsibility to make sure they do.

I am excited to join Connect Academy Trust and look forward to working with staff and families to make sure that all children are maximising their attendance and thriving in school.

Warmest regards,

Jessica Jenkin

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