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@YewTreeSandwell



September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, we look forward to welcoming back all of our children on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2026 after, what we hope has been, an enjoyable summer break. We are looking forward to seeing the progress everyone is able to make in another year of great success at Yew Tree.

You know, from our communication each week, how much emphasis we place on school attendance. Not simply to 'boost our numbers' but because we know that children who attend school regularly tend to do better in their learning than those who have a high percentage of absence.

As the table below demonstrates, we have made significant progress in recent years in improving the life chances of our children. We are extremely proud of these achievements and recognise that none of this would have been possible without your continued support.

| Academic Year | Whole School Attendance |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| <b>21/22</b>  | <b>94%</b>              |
| <b>22/23</b>  | <b>94.3% + 0.3%</b>     |
| <b>23/24</b>  | <b>94.6% + 0.3%</b>     |
| <b>24/25</b>  | <b>94.9% + 0.3%</b>     |
| <b>25/26</b>  | <b>95.2% + 0.3%</b>     |

As I am sure you will be aware, regular school attendance continues to be a national priority as there are simply far too many children missing too much school across the country. Therefore, since August 2024, the Government changed rules around penalty notices (fines) by increasing the cost and limiting the number of times a penalty notice can be issued before a prosecution takes place. We have communicated about this further but have also added information to the attendance page of our website [HERE](#).

At Yew Tree, our focus is to support first and enforce later wherever we can. We want to support children and families in attending school and avoiding the need for enforcement notices where at all possible.



To support the message of 'Moments Matters, Attendance Counts', this year we are delighted to continue with our exciting attendance campaign, which has seen great success over the past 2 years. Our message being simple... **'Be in to win!'**

Our campaign will be shared next week with our children during their assembly. I'm sure they will be really excited to tell you all about it. Once again, each child will be given an Attendance Passport for this academic year, where they will receive a stamp for each week that they manage to be in **every day, on time**. This means they need 100% attendance within a week to achieve their stamp and they cannot get a stamp if they are late or they do not attend for any reason (i.e. including authorised absences).

We understand that there are valid reasons why children may be absent from time-to-time but we believe that our campaign still creates opportunities for children to win prizes/gain stamps even if they have had the odd difficult week for attendance.

Our Yew Tree Attendance Shop will open at the end of each term so that the children will have the opportunity to come along, with their passports, to redeem their stamps for prizes. If they have the willpower they could save their stamps for something they want to save up for. If your child decides to hold out until the end of the year and has had the perfect attendance thus managing to collect the maximum number of stamps (37), there will be a 'Mystery Prize' reward. Last academic year saw 23 children hold out for the mystery prize with their full book of stamps.

The Government expectation is that parents/carers ensure that their children attend school regularly. Any attendance below 90% is classed as persistent absence and schools are required to take necessary action where children fall in this category.

At Yew Tree, we pride ourselves in achieving excellent attendance and set clear expectations with our target of 96%. Last year we managed to end the year above both the Local Authority and the National average for attendance with the support of our families.

Good attendance remains a priority to us at Yew Tree and this was recognised in our Ofsted report from January 2026. Not only did the inspectors recognise this as a strength at Yew Tree, but it is also imperative to your child's ongoing academic achievements.

We ask that you to continue to work with us in 2026/27. We know there are reasons for absence but we also know that, by working together, we can support children in attending regularly and doing as well as they can. We trust that we can rely on your support in ensuring your children attend school on time, every day.

Regards



Mr Jamie Barry  
Head Teacher