



Shinewater Primary School and Nursery

Attendance Policy

Approval Date	December 2020
Next Review	December 2021
Co-Headteachers	Mrs M Burbidge/Mrs N Kaufman
Chair of Governors	Mrs J McCarthy-Penman
Version	4

Principles:

- To encourage staff, parents/carers and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential
- Provide clear procedures for involving parents/carers relating to school attendance
- Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late
- Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open; unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent/carer
- Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives them the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse
- Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why the information about the cause of each absence is always required, in writing or by telephone
- Authorised absences are mornings and afternoons away from school for a reason such as a genuine illness or other unavoidable cause
- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which “no leave” has been given. This includes:
 - ✓ parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
 - ✓ truancy before or during the school day;
 - ✓ absences which have never been properly explained;
 - ✓ children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.

Role of Parents and Carers:

- Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together
- Ensure that the aim is for their children to achieve 100% school attendance
- Ensure that pupils are on the premises between 8:45 and 9:00 am and not before
- The school front gate opens at 8:45 am, however, pupils remain the responsibility of parents or carers until they enter their respective classrooms
- Take children who are late (9:00am onwards) to the main entrance to sign in
- Collect children promptly at the end of the school day, which finishes at 3:00pm. After this time, children are the responsibility of their parents or carers
- Collect children promptly from after school clubs
- Ensure that the school has current parent/carers and emergency contact telephone numbers and addresses

Absences for Medical Reasons:

It is the responsibility of parents or carers:

- To notify the school by telephone on the first and subsequent days of absence, as early as possible and not later than 9:00 am
- To agree a later registration time with the Headteacher if the child needs regular medical attention before coming to school. The child must always sign in on arrival
- To inform the office in writing or to provide Medical Appointment Cards if the child needs to attend a medical appointment in school time. Whenever possible, please try to make all appointments out of school hours
- To liaise with the school about specific family problems, which might cause absence

Role of the School:

- Register the children promptly and accurately
- Record absence appropriately, including signing in and out during school hours
- Record as late, pupils who arrive after 9:05 am
- From 9:05 am to 9:30 am children will be marked as late in the register
- From 9:30 am children will be marked as an unauthorised absence for that session
- Check registers daily for first day absence
- Telephone and text those parents/carers who have not contacted the school on the first day of absence, priority being given to:
 - Children on the Protection Register or involved with Social Services such as LAC those with Child Protection Plans;
 - Children in families where there is a particular concern;
 - Children, whose parents or carers are normally fastidious in making contact.
- Keep records of all telephone calls and keep all letters concerning absence
- Monitor regularly absence and lateness, to look for patterns and take appropriate action
- Involve appropriate external agency support where necessary if there are any concerns regarding absence or punctuality
- Obtain details of telephone contacts for all pupils and to ensure that records are updated regularly by writing to parents to remind them of their responsibilities, whilst requesting current contact information. An emergency telephone number must be recorded for every pupil
- Send reminders regarding absence and punctuality on the school's regular newsletters
- Raise concerns regarding absence at parent consultation meetings, or sooner if necessary
- Discourage the practice of taking children out of school for odd days and holidays
- Report all authorised and unauthorised absence on the child's annual report

- Publish attendance data to parents
- Set attendance targets annually and monitor
- The school will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot be arranged out of school time.

Frequent Absence / Poor Attendance:

The Schools Attendance Target is now **97%**.

97-100%	
94-96%	
93% and below	
90% and below	

- The school aims to always work with parents/carers and support them in ensuring their child has a good attendance record. Where attendance drops, parents/carers will be notified as follows:

Lateness, Appendix 1:

- **Daily:** If late, parents/carers will be asked to complete a form explaining why their child is late
- **3 lates within one term:** Letter 1 sent home, which reminds parents/carers about the importance of being in school on time; include pupil's Attendance Certificate and record on Lateness Tracker. Filed
- **6 lates within one term:** Letter 2 sent home which explains that all future lates will be marked as unauthorised and that 10 further lates will result in a Penalty Notice; include pupil's Attendance Certificate and record on Lateness Tracker. Filed
- **10 unauthorised lates since last letter sent** (within a ten week period): Letter 3 sent home which explains that a Penalty Notice will be issued; include pupil's Attendance Certificate; complete referral for ESBAS and record onto Lateness Tracker. File

Absence, Appendix 2:

- **96% Trigger:** Letter 1 sent home which highlights the importance of good attendance; enclose pupil's Attendance Certificate and a copy of the Attendance Leaflet – 'Miss School, Miss Out' and record onto Attendance Tracker. Filed
- **93% Trigger:** Letter 2 sent home which invites parents/carers to attend an Attendance Clinic at the school or a Telephone Appointment to support the family; enclose a further leaflet – 'School Attendance Matters: A Parent's Guide'. After the date of the Clinic, send out a Follow Up letter which either confirms their attendance at the Clinic, what discussion took place and any support offered or if they did not

attend, what will happen if their child's attendance drops to 91%. All future absences, without medical evidence to be marked as 'unauthorised'. Filed

- **91% Trigger:** Letter 3 sent home which encourages parents/carers to attend a meeting with the Attendance Lead at a given time to discuss their child's attendance and to complete the Attendance Improvement Agreement. The letter explains that if their child's attendance remains irregular; the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action which could result in a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution. Enclose child's Attendance Certificate, a copy of 'Frequently Asked Questions' regarding Penalty Notices and record onto Attendance Tracker. Follow up letters to go out after the date of the meeting; confirming whether the parents/carers attended or not and detailing the outcome of the meeting; including any support agreed. A '10 in 10 to commence from this point if appropriate (10 absences in 10 weeks) and if no further improvement is seen in these 10 weeks a Fixed Penalty Notice will be submitted. Filed
- **89% Trigger:** Letter 4 sent home which explains that despite the school's intervention and support and attempting to engage with parents/carers several times in order to support with improvements in attendance, that there still does not seem to be any significant improvement with their child's attendance. The letter explains that it has now become necessary for the school to refer their concerns to the Education Welfare Service. Pupil's Attendance Certificate is enclosed and details are recorded onto Attendance Tracker. Filed

Holiday Absence, Appendix 3

- Responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parent/carer and pupil. It is made clear to parents/carers that any absence from school will disrupt their child's learning
- Parents/carers must complete a 'Withdrawal From Learning Request Form' which they are given by the office, alongside an ESCC leaflet about Holidays During Term Time
- This form must be authorised by one of the Co-Headteachers
- Once this is completed, the reply slip, along with an accompanying letter (and ESCC leaflet) is given back to the parents/carers. A copy of this is filed and the holiday is recorded onto the Withdrawal From Learning Tracker
- Once the holiday is taken, and if 5 sessions or more, the form is sent to ESBAS for a holiday fine
- If the holiday is taken without Withdrawal From Learning Form completed, send a letter home to parents/carers explaining that the school is aware they went on holiday and asking them to complete the Withdrawal From Learning Form retrospectively. Include the leaflet from ESCC and then send the form to ESBAS for a holiday fine

Rewarding Good Attendance, Appendix 4:

- The majority of pupils at Shinewater Primary School have a positive attendance record.
- Pupils are given incentives to attend a regularly and punctually through receiving a Privilege Card for individual attendance or a basket of fruit for achieving the highest class attendance for the week.
- Postcards are sent home whenever attendance improves significantly
- Classes each complete an 'AMAZING' poster – colouring in one letter for every day their class achieves 97% attendance. Once the poster is complete, the class receives 10 minutes extra play and have their photo displayed in Attendance Lead's office
- Class competition – any class with 97% attendance for the whole week achieves a 'sticker' on their class name on the Attendance display. The top scoring class, receives an additional sticker. At the end of the term, the class with the most 'stickers' receives additional playtime as a reward
- Whole School Termly competition – if the school achieves at least 97% for the whole term, they achieve an agreed reward. This may be a picnic or film etc

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Lateness

Shinewater Primary School and Nursery



Milfoil Drive, Langney
Eastbourne, East Sussex BN23 8ED
Telephone: (01323) 762129
Fax: (01323) 461816
e-mail: office@shinewater.e-sussex.sch.uk
website: www.shinewater.e-sussex.sch.uk

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Julie Prentice
Co Headteachers: Nicki Kaufman and Michelle Burbidge

Letter 1

Dear Parent/Carer of _____

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our students, we monitor their attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any students, whose attendance causes concern, including those pupils who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions. We are therefore writing to you due to your child's current number of late sessions.

Being late to school and registration can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
10 Minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
15 Minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

Students are expected to arrive at school by **8:45am** each day to ensure they are in class for morning registration at **9.00am**. At **9.05am** the registers close and your child will receive a late mark 'L'. We understand that the school mornings can be hectic, but when your child is late for school they are missing out on vital parts of their education. If your child arrives after 9.30am, they will have an unauthorised mark 'U', this is the same as an unauthorised absence.

We will continue to monitor your child's attendance and arrival time and we look forward to it improving very soon.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss attendance with anyone please do not hesitate to contact the school attendance team on 01323 762129.

Kind Regards,

Miss Wilson
Inclusion and SEMH Manager

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Letter 2

Dear X

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our students, we monitor their attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any students, whose attendance causes concern, including those pupils who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions.

Further to my previous letter, we are writing to you as your child has been late 6 times this term. This is concerning.

Should your child continue to be late (**arrives after 8:50am**), we will now record this as an unauthorised absence. Ten unauthorised lates will result in a Penalty Notice being issued. Consider this as a warning letter.

Being late to school and registration can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
10 Minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
15 Minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

If you have any queries or would like to discuss your child's lateness with anyone please do not hesitate to contact me on **01323 762129**.

Kind regards

Miss Wilson
Inclusion and SEMH Manager

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Letter 3

Dear X

Further to my previous letters, we are writing to you again about your child's persistent lateness. This is concerning.

As a parent, you are responsible for ensuring your child receives an education. The law says that if you do not make sure your children go to school you are guilty of an offence. You can be fined by being issued with a penalty notice, or prosecuted.

It was explained in the previous letter sent that if a pupil arrives at school after the register has closed (8:50am), it is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Ten unauthorised lates will result in a Penalty Issue.

I regret to inform you that since the last letter sent (dated X), your child has accrued ten further unauthorised absences as a result of being late. A Penalty Notice is therefore being issued.

Kind regards,

Miss Wilson
Inclusion and SEMH Manager

Appendix 2 – Absence

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Co Headteachers: Nicki Kaufman and Michelle Burbidge

Letter 1

Dear X,

Re Absence: Pupil Name, Class

We are very keen to ensure that all children attend school regularly. As you are aware, it is important for your child's friendships and academic progress. In addition it is proven that good attendance is linked with academic success.

The school target for attendance is 97%. Your child's attendance is now below this at 96%.

We understand that your child's absence may be for a range of reasons including illness but as their target is below school target, we feel it is important to share it with you.

The school actively encourages regular attendance. Children need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and may lead to educational disadvantage.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that children attend school. It is the school's responsibility to support attendance and to take seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance. Parental responsibility extends beyond securing regular school attendance so it is also important that parents ensure that their children arrive at school on time.

Please find enclosed your child's attendance certificate.

Please can you speak to your child about the importance of attendance. If you are having difficulty getting your child to school, please do not hesitate to contact the office and make an appointment to see me.

Your child' attendance will now be closely monitored and should it reach 93%, a meeting will be held to explore strategies to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely,
Miss Wilson
Inclusion and SEMH Manager

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Letter 2 - Invite

Dear X,

Re Absence: Name of Pupil, Class

As you are aware, East Sussex Schools are having a real focus on attendance as this has such a huge impact on children's learning. As a school, we are following all the East Sussex guidelines but we are also trying to be proactive in supporting families with any attendance issues before an Education Welfare Officer becomes involved.

X's attendance from the start of the Academic year is now at **93%**. Our school target is **97%**.

Please find enclosed your child's Registration Certificate. If any absences are due to medical reasons, please ensure you bring relevant doctor's notes and appointment details.

At **93%**, your child is now at risk of becoming considered a 'persistent absentee' by the Department for Education. We are seriously concerned.

Therefore, I would ask that you attend our weekly 'Attendance Clinic' which takes place on **Monday 19th November 2018 at 2:30pm**. This is a supportive meeting which reviews our Attendance Policy and will enable you to honestly discuss any issues or barriers to your child attending school.

Working in partnership with you, the school seeks to understand the difficulties that may be presented and the Attendance Clinic provides the opportunity to determine if the school can do anything further to support.

If you are unable to attend the Attendance Clinic but wish to discuss your concerns and how the school might be able to help, please call me on **01323 762129**. I am sure you are aware that it is important that your child maintains regular attendance, as any absence may interrupt their academic progress and may have an effect on friendships. You should also be aware that regular attendance is a legal requirement.

We look forward to talking with you and working in partnership to see an improvement.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Wilson
Inclusion and SEMH Manager

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Letter 2 – Follow Up: Showed

Date

Address

Dear X,

As a result of your child reaching 93% attendance, you were invited to attend an Attendance Clinic. Thank you for attending and / or telephoning me. This is really important as we value our home / school partnership and want to work with you to improve your child's attendance.

The importance of attendance was explained along with what the law says ('education is not an option – it's compulsory'). The need to avoid taking family holidays during term time was discussed and strategies for how parents can help raise their child's attendance were explored.

Thank you for bringing to my attention....

I have now spoken with the Attendance Lead, X, and we have agreed the school will be able to support in the following ways:

I am sure that X's attendance will continue to improve and that it will not be long before her attendance figure is above 96%.

Please remember, that if you have any concerns with regards to X's attendance, you are more than welcome to come and discuss them with me.

It was good to speak with you today, thank you once again for attending / calling.

Kind regards,

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Letter 2 – Follow Up: Did not show

Date

Address

Dear X,

As a result of your child reaching 93% attendance, you were invited to attend an Attendance Clinic. It was a shame you chose not to attend.

You were also given the option to telephone to see if there was anything the school could do to support, however you clearly did not feel this was necessary.

Please find enclosed a leaflet about the importance of attendance and what the law says.

It is important that you are aware of what could possibly happen in the future, should your child's attendance continue to fall:

- should your child's attendance slip to 91%, intervention will be necessary by meeting with the school's Attendance Lead, X. She will determine whether or not targets need to be set and if not met, a notice to prosecute will be issued.
- if your child's attendance falls below 90%, your child is considered a 'persistent absentee' by the Department for Education and this will remain on your child's school records. The Local Authority will intervene and if necessary, a court appearance and fine may follow.

I am sure that X's attendance will continue to improve and that it will not be long before her attendance figure is above 96%.

Please remember, that if you have any concerns with regards to X's attendance, you are more than welcome to come and discuss them with me. We are here to support.

Kind regards,

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Letter 3 - Invite

Dear X,

Re Absence: Name of Pupil, Class

I am writing to inform you that X's attendance is still causing concern. We are very worried that continued poor attendance is affecting X's progress and I would like to meet with you.

Should X's attendance remain irregular; the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action. This could result in a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under Section 444 Education Act 1996, and a fine of up to £2500 and/or 3 months in prison.

It is requested with urgency, that you attend a meeting to discuss X's attendance.

I would like to meet with you at Shinewater School on:

DATE at TIME.

Please ring the school to confirm that you will be attending on 01323 762129.

Please sign in at the front office.

During the meeting we will discuss any concerns you may have, so we can continue to support your child in making good progress. We may also set targets in order to avoid further prosecution. I do hope that you will work with us to improve your child's attendance.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Miss Wilson
Inclusion and SEMH Manager

ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT

Meeting held at:

(School)

On:

(Date)

Present at Meeting:

.....
.....
.....

Pupil's Name:	
Date of Birth: Year:	
<u>Parent/Carers (1)</u> Name Date of Birth Address	
<u>Parent/Carers (2)</u> Name Date of Birth Address (if different)	
<u>Absent Parent/Carer</u> Name Date of Birth Address	

Sibling Details:	
% Attendance and unauthorised sessions on invite	
Other Agencies involved with family	

Reasons and factors affecting attendance provided by parent/carer and pupil:

AGREEMENTS MADE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION:

The SCHOOL will:

- (a) Not authorise illness without medical evidence.**
- (b) Set an attendance % punctuality target of 100% to be reviewed on a weekly basis by the school.**

The pupil's attendance will therefore initially be reviewed on:

Date.....

The PARENT/S will:

(a)

(b)

(c)

The PUPIL will:

(a)

(b)

WARNING:

I/We understand that should (name) accrue a further 10 unauthorised absences over the next 10 school week period then the Education Support Behaviour & Attendance Service will be requested to issue a Penalty Notice. A Penalty Notice is issued to each parent; this is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days, but will increase to £120 if paid after this period. If this is not paid within 28 days it will result in legal action.

Signed: Parent/Carer

Signed: Parent/Carer

Signed: School (1)

Signed: School (2)

Dated:

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Letter 3 – Follow Up: Showed

Date

Address

Dear X,

Thank you for attending a meeting with me today with regards to X's attendance. As I explained at the meeting, your child's attendance has now unfortunately reached 91%, which is why you were invited to meet with me today.

I was delighted to hear...

I appreciate you sharing with me...

The following actions were agreed:

--

I am sure that X's attendance will continue to improve and that it will not be long before her attendance figure is above 92% and even getting closer to 97%, in line with our school and the Government's targets.

Please remember, that if you have any concerns with regards to your child's attendance, you are more than welcome to come and discuss them with me.

It was good to meet with you today, thank you once again for attending,

Kind regards,

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Letter 3 – Follow Up: Did Not Show

Date

Address

Dear X,

WARNING OF POSSIBLE ISSUE OF PENALTY NOTICE

You were invited by letter dated [date] to attend a meeting on [date]. This was to give you an opportunity to discuss any difficulties you may be experiencing in fulfilling your legal responsibility with regard to school attendance and to discuss how we could support you in this. You did not attend the meeting and no response was received to our invitation.

If you wish for a meeting to be re-scheduled then please contact me on the above number to rearrange at a mutually convenient date and time.

I confirm that I shall monitor [Student's Name] attendance and review this periodically.

This letter is a warning that should [student's name] accrue 10 sessions of unauthorised absence during the next 10 school week period we will be requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.

If you have any queries, please contact me on the number above.

Yours sincerely

,

Kind regards,

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Letter 4

Date

Address

Dear X,

Re Absence: Name of Pupil, Class

I note that there has been no significant improvement in your child's attendance since our last meeting.

X's attendance for this academic year has fallen to **%**. This is a significant concern despite intervention from a range of staff at **X** School.

Furthermore I have not received any satisfactory explanation for absences.

Children whose attendance is below 90% are noted by the Department for Education as being "persistent absentees," which means that they are recognised as missing school on a regular basis.

Please find your child's Registration Certificate enclosed.

The school has attempted to engage with you several times in order to support with improvements in attendance. It has now become necessary to refer and the concerns around your child's attendance to the Education Welfare Service.

An Education Welfare Officer will contact you in due course. Should you have anything you wish to discuss concerning this matter, I will continue to be available.

Please contact me on the above number should you require an appointment.

Kind regards

Appendix 3 – Holiday Absence

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Date

Address

Dear X,

Withdrawal from Learning Application – Names of Pupils

Thank you for your recent request for an absence in term time for X days from X returning to school on X.

I am not able to authorise this absence – the absence is not deemed as an exceptional circumstance. I realise that you will be disappointed by my decision, but from September 2013 new Government guidance means that, as Head, I am no longer able to authorise any requests for children to be taken out of school unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We will be notifying the Local Authority of the unauthorised absence and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Please note that Penalty notices are issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60.00 which increases to £120.00 if not paid within the first 21 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid, this will result in further legal intervention. Unauthorised absence may also result in prosecution under section 444 Education Act 1996. Please note that once a Penalty Notice has been issued there is no right of appeal.

Please be aware that if you take your child out of school for a holiday of less than 5 days, and your child is sick immediately before/after the holiday or has extra days off immediately before/after it, we will ask for a copy of your holiday booking or a doctor's certificate to confirm the dates of your holiday or the dates of any sickness. Failure to produce this evidence will result in the School referring you to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice of £60 per child, per parent.

I hope you will understand and support our efforts in sustaining high attendance and attainment at X School.

Kind regards,

Appendix 4 – Rewarding Good Attendance

Postcard – posted to pupil’s address

*Well done on improving your attendance at
Shinewater School!*

*From
The Attendance Team*

3?? Attendance Target - 97%

AMAZING!

Weekly Attendance Competition Data – Term 2, Week 3 – ALL PUPILS

Class	%	Rank
	97.1	6
	90.8	11
	94.4	9
	97.5	4
	97.4	5
	90.7	12
	95.5	8
	99.0	1
	98.0	2
	97.6	3
	96.9	7
	86.1	14
	91.3	10
	90.0	13
Whole School %	94.45%	

Weekly Attendance Competition Data – Term 2, Week 3 – PP v Non PP

Class	PP	Non PP	Difference (PP+/-)
	96.36	97.65	-1.29
	100	86.25	+13.75
	93.57	95.38	-1.81
	96.67	98.13	-1.46
	93.0	100	-7.0
	87.69	93.33	-5.64
	93.33	97.27	-3.94
	97.50	100	-2.5
	96.0	99.0	-3.0
	96.67	98.24	-1.57
	99.0	95.65	+3.35
	71.11	95.71	-24.6
	87.0	93.5	-6.5
	88.57	87.5	+1.07
Whole School %	92.6%	95.54%	