

20th May 2022



Dear Parent/Carer,

It is my pleasure to introduce this week's round up of news and successes at Morecambe Bay Academy.

This week the Government released some research demonstrating the link between absence from school and lower attainment. It is not surprising to find there is a link. I think we all understand that if pupils are not in school then they will not be learning as well as their peers. But the statistics make it clear just how much small improvements in attendance can improve life chances for pupils. Some of the key findings are given below:

- Pupils with **higher attainment** at primary and secondary school had **lower levels of absence** over the key stage compared to those with lower attainment.
- Pupils who did **not achieve at least grade 4 in English and maths GCSEs** in 2019 (the minimum most employers and colleges are looking for) had an **overall absence rate of 8.8%**
- Pupils who achieved grade 4 or better in English and maths GCSE had an overall absence rate of 5.2%
- Pupils who achieved a grade 5 or better in English and maths GCSE has an overall absence rate of 3.7%

But the research went on to show how important it is to not miss any schooling if possible. The next two statistics show that pupils who miss no sessions of schooling are twice as likely to achieve the required college and employer standard compared to persistently absent pupils.

- Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS2, 83.9% achieved the expected standard compared to 40.2% of pupils who were persistently absent.
- Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS4, 83.7% achieved grades 9 to 4 in English and maths compared to 35.6% of pupils who were persistently absent.

The message could not be clearer. **Good attendance is vital to school success.** I know you will support us in ensuring your sons and daughters maintain excellent attendance in school.

This is the first examination season we have had in school for two years and all is going well. Morning examinations start promptly at 9am so please do not be late. OfQUAL, the examination regulator, has released some information which parents and your children may find interesting. Please see the sections on Grading and OfQUALs Information for students below.

Keep safe
Gavin Gomersall
Principal

Grading

We want to get back to pre-pandemic grading, but I don't think it would be fair to do so in one jump. So, in 2022, rather than going straight back to pre-pandemic standards, results will reflect a staging post between 2021 and 2019.

Ofqual will ask the exam boards to set grade boundaries to reflect the pandemic context, to avoid disadvantaging some students who might otherwise have just missed out on a higher grade. It means that overall, 2022 results are likely to be higher than in 2019, when summer grades were last determined by exams, but lower than we saw in 2021.

As in any other year, grade boundaries will be set at a national level, but only after students have taken their exams, and only after their papers have been marked. To be clear, there is no quota of students that get a particular grade. It absolutely isn't something that is decided in advance.

Information for students

Ofqual has published a [student guide](#), which contains information on the arrangements in place for awarding both GCSE, AS and A levels, and vocational and other qualifications, in 2022. We'd be really grateful if you could point students to it, as well as the other resources we've published this year to support them which include:

- a [guide to coping with exam pressure](#), produced with Professor David Putwain, a researcher (and a former school and college teacher) at Liverpool John Moores University
- a [blog by Professor Kevin Woods and Dr Tee McCaldin outlining the sorts of things that might help students to prepare for exams](#)
- [videos on our social media channels](#) of tips for students from other students

As this will be the first time that many students have taken formal exams, it's also important that they're fully aware of the rules that apply in the exam hall— and in particular that students don't bring in their watches or other prohibited devices such as mobile phones.

Behaviour Curriculum Update

In this week's newsletter I would like to inform you of the improvements we have seen over this half term before sharing refinements we plan to make to further raise standards next half term.

The implementation of new lesson routines has had a really positive impact on the learning climate in school. Each lesson now begins and ends in a similar manner as well as the teachers using a technique called "STAR" when they need to speak to gain 100% attention from their students. This has made a significant impact; corridors are calm and lessons are purposeful, staff are enjoying being teaching and students learning.

To move us further forward next half term we will widen our focus to uniform and attendance.

Firstly, uniform, let's begin by re-sharing the reason why it is important:

- It enables students to feel equal to their peers, e.g. If all students wear school shoes no one feels left out because they cannot afford a £100+ pair of trainers.

- It prepares students for life, no matter what our students do or where they go in life there are expectations of dress, at a wedding we dress formally in suits, dresses and even hats, whilst on a night out we dress smartly but in a more casually manner, a plumber must wear a hard hat and footwear with steel toe caps, a surgeon must be dressed in their clean surgical gown, gloves, hat and mask, the list goes on. We need to teach them this expectation.

Finally, upholding the standard of uniform is good for student wellbeing:

- It gives a sense of belonging that builds the culture of school which in turn has a positive impact on both student demeanour which in turn improves academic progress.
- When we uphold a simple standard such as uniform, it tethers behaviours and stops them escalating, students know where the boundaries are.

The vast majority of students wear their uniform with pride, thank you for your support, we are very proud of them.

However, a small number persist in not meeting this standard, next week we will write to their parents individually, but it would amiss if we did not share collectively how this will be addressed.

Current Issues from a minority of students	How will be addressed?
Students arrive at school with missing items of uniform	Uniform will be checked at the gate on the way into, any issues will be addressed by asking student to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loan items from the store in the gate house. • Remove jewellery or correct their dress.
If students then subsequently wear their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewellery: ring or drop earrings, nose studs, studs on the upper ear not on the lobe, chains outside of the shirt collar, rings etc. • Sunglasses and excessive make up • Jacket or hoodie under their blazer • Blazer sleeves rolled up. • Skirts rolled up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of staff will ask students to correct the item, if appropriate-in cases of jewellery or hoodies-confiscate them before recording the discretion on synergy. Confiscated items will be taken to the office for collection. • Students will correct the item, if applicable hand it over to staff before then collecting from the office at the end of the following day from the office. • If the students refuse to correct uniform or persistently break standards, they will be given a S5 detention or be placed in isolation.
Please note we are aware that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some items are too big. For example, skirts maybe too big on the waist, but the waist band must be visible so that they are worn to a length that protects dignity of all. When this is the case, we ask that reasonable steps are taken to alter them by using a safety pin or alter them to take the waist in or gather spare material in an elastic band or a hair bobble. In school we will provide elastic bands, but if you need assistance with this, please let us know, the e-mail addresses of head of year are below. 	

- The cost of living is rising and that it is not always easy to fund new uniform, if there are any cases of hardship, please let your child's head of year know and we will help out.

Year 7 – droberts-jones@morecambebayacademy.co.uk

Year 8 - jread@morecambebayacademy.co.uk

Year 9 & Year 11– deastwood@morecambebayacademy.co.uk

Year 10 – agribbin@morecambebayacademy.co.uk

Sixth Form – hfitzwilliam@morecambebayacademy.co.uk

Attendance:

We are pleased that overall attendance is in line with national figures, despite the challenges of COVID 19 and that we have 367 students whose attendance is above the school target.

However, a number of students' attendance has fallen when compared to last year.

In half term we will write to the you to:

- Congratulate students and yourselves where attendance is above 95%.
- Inform the families of students that attendance:
- Last year was above 95% but is now fallen below.
- Has fallen below 90% or below 80%, which is classed as persistent absence by government and can lead to legal action.

To ensure all our students thrive in school is a team effort, we cannot improve any standards, no matter what it is without your support, so may I thank you in anticipation whether this be for attendance or uniform.

Thanks, in anticipation of your support, enjoy the weekend.

Mr Senior
Vice Principal

Parent View Questionnaire

We are always keen to have feedback from parents telling us what we do well, and what we need to improve. I would be most grateful if you would complete this short survey. It is only 15 questions long and should take no more than five minutes. Your feedback will help inform our next steps. Please could you share your views with us by Friday 27th May at 4pm.

<https://forms.office.com/r/eWjrf1mmMJ>

Many thanks
Gavin Gomersall

Health & Social Care – Sixth Form

Some of our lovely sixth form student have been visiting the residents at the Sands Care Home to help them get ready for the Jubilee Celebrations. They have been helping residents make decorations that will be placed on the windows of the care home.

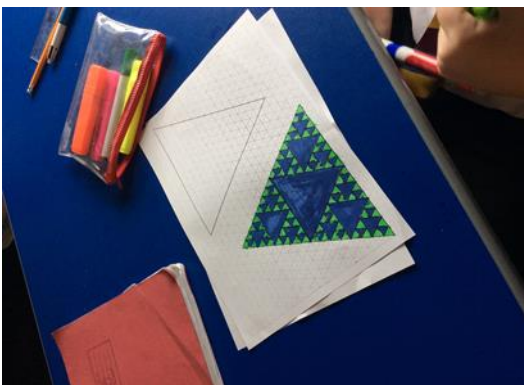
Students have also found old news articles of the last time that the Queen was in Lancaster and Morecambe and shown these to the resident who loved talking about the 'old' Lancaster and Morecambe.



We have also been helping the resident to get ready by painting their nails so that they are ready to celebrate the bank holiday weekend.

Maths

Students in Years 7-9 recently investigated fractals as part of National Numeracy Day. Here are some photos of Year 7 making Sierpinski gaskets. For further explanation, look them up on line, eg <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QsMvoui5WlQ>



Geography – Yr 12 NEA Trip



Year 12 geographers conducted data collection methods in Manchester to help prepare and plan for their NEA project.

Eco Club

The year 7 Eco club have started creating their bottle top mural.



Student Participation and Wellbeing Study - University of Cambridge

STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND WELLBEING STUDY

Looking for UK-based students in Year 7/8/9 to participate in my online survey and online interview!

Master's project at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge

ONLINE SURVEY

The 15-min survey will ask you how much you (dis)agree with a number of statements about your participation and wellbeing in school.

ONLINE INTERVIEW

At the end of the survey, you can choose to sign up for a 30-min online interview, where I will ask you more specific questions about your participation experiences at school. This is optional!

PURPOSE

The study looks at different forms of participation at school (such as having a say with teachers, or organising school events), and how that might affect students' wellbeing. Results might inform educational practice in order to promote student participation and wellbeing!

REWARDS

There will be a giveaway of three £10 Amazon gift vouchers among the survey participants. For the extra effort, a fourth voucher will be given to another randomly selected interview participant.

ACCESS

After your parent/carer has given consent via this [link](#), you will receive a separate link to the survey via email. At the end of the survey, you can choose to sign up for an interview.



LEARN MORE

Detailed information about the study and data processing can be found [here](#) (there's also an information sheet for your parents or carers).



CONTACT

This study is conducted by Master's student (Psychology & Education) Rebekka Tavakoli as a dissertation project at the Faculty of Education, and is supervised by Prof. Rupert Wegerif. Please don't hesitate to contact me (Rebekka) with any questions or concerns about my study at rt568@cam.ac.uk.

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