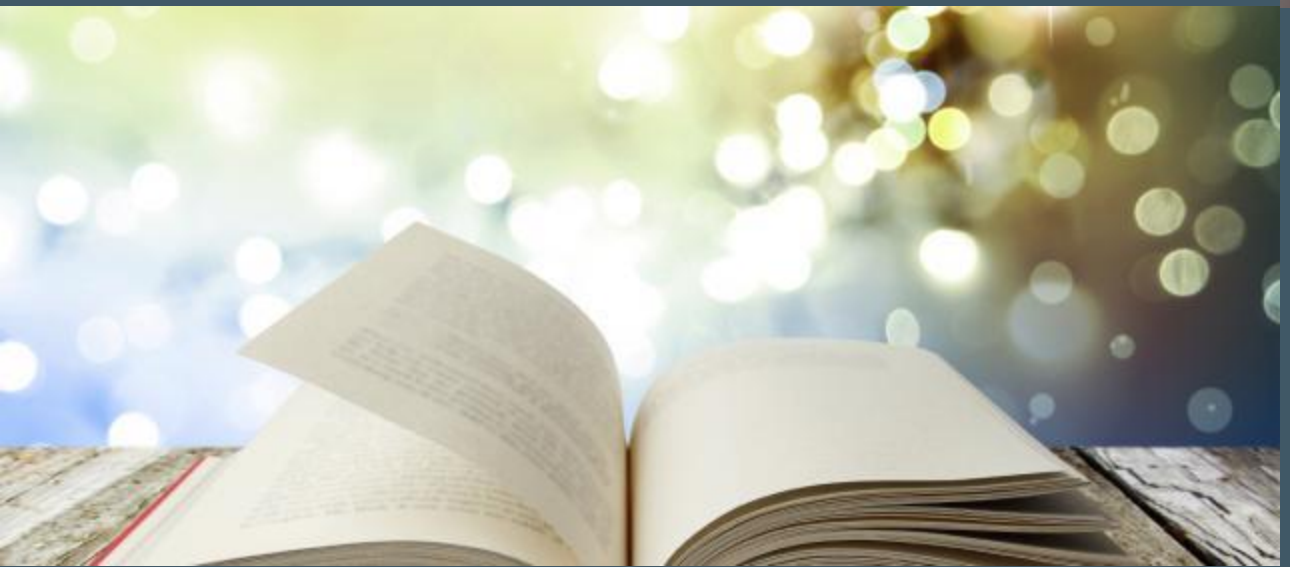
Supporting Disadvantaged Pupils & Engaging Parents

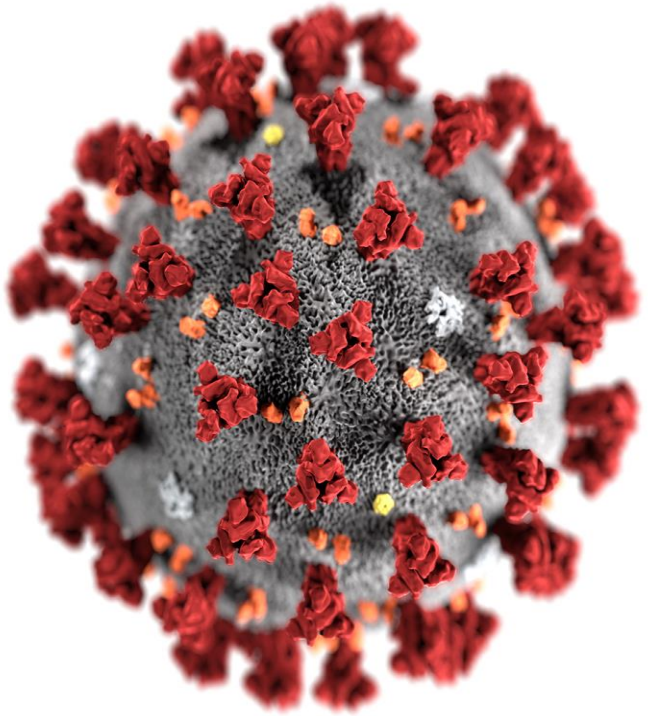


Alex Quigley

National Content Manager

November 2021

Disadvantage...the impact of the pandemic



Who we are …

- The Education Endowment Foundation is an independent grant-making charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement.
- The EEF was founded in 2011 by lead charity the Sutton Trust, in partnership with Impetus, with a £125m founding grant from the UK Department for Education.
- In 2013, the EEF and the Sutton Trust joined the What Works Network, as the designated What Works Centre for Improving Education Outcomes for School-aged Children.

214
EEF-funded projects

children and young people reached
1,700,000

£123 million
total funding committed to date

15,000+
schools, nurseries, colleges involved

THE SUTTON TRUST

Impetus Private Equity Foundation

Department for Education

What Works Network

What we do …

Synthesis

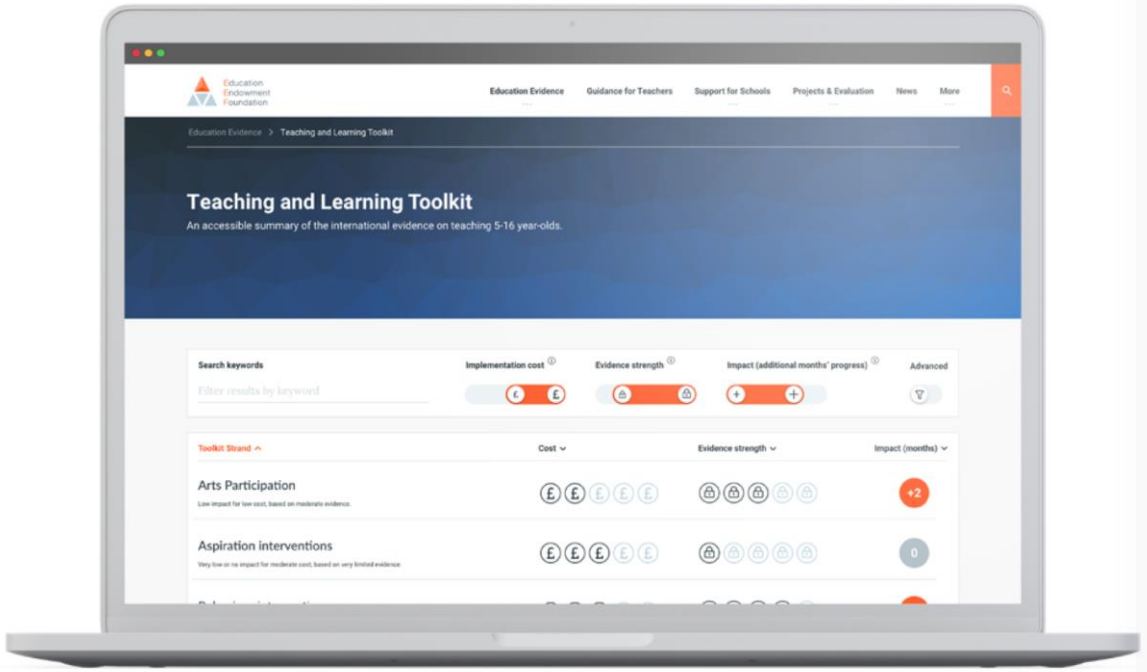
Generation

Mobilisation

Education Endowment Foundation

@EducEndowFoundn

What we do …


Education Evidence
Guidance for Teachers
Support for Schools
Projects & Evaluation
News
More
Education Evidence > Teaching and Learning Toolkit
Teaching and Learning Toolkit
An accessible summary of the international evidence on teaching 5-16 year-olds.
Search keywords
Implementation cost
Evidence strength
Impact (additional months' progress)
Advanced
Toolkit Strand
Cost
Evidence strength
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Arts Participation
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Aspiration interventions
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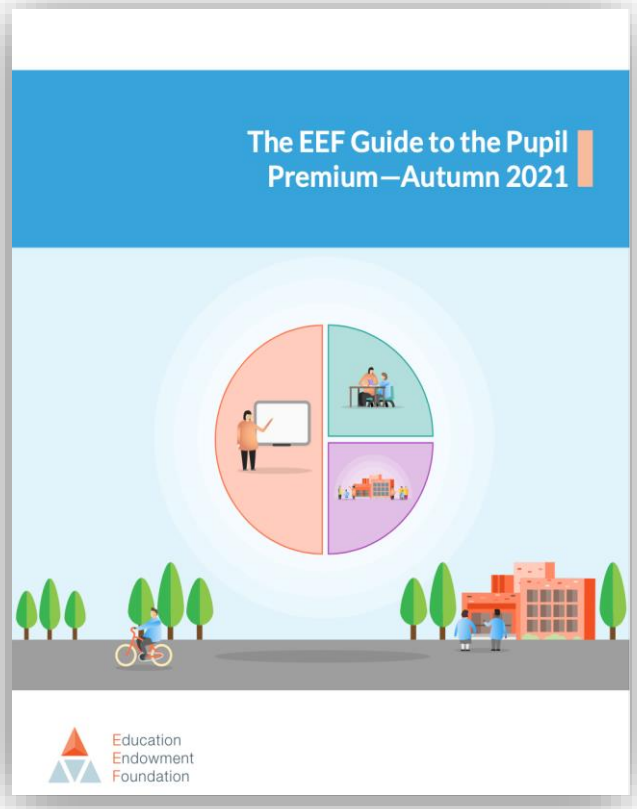
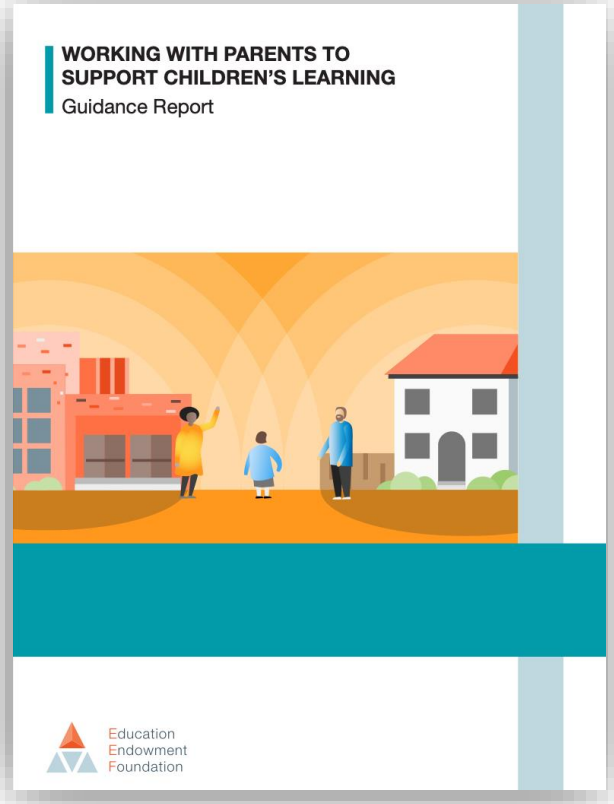

The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium—Autumn 2021
Education
Endowment
Foundation


WORKING WITH PARENTS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING
Guidance Report
Education
Endowment
Foundation

Why use evidence?

It gets beneath the headlines…

Why use evidence?

Helps teachers and leaders make more informed decisions about what to do (and what to stop doing!)

We can characterise our efforts as making "best bets"

What problem are we solving?

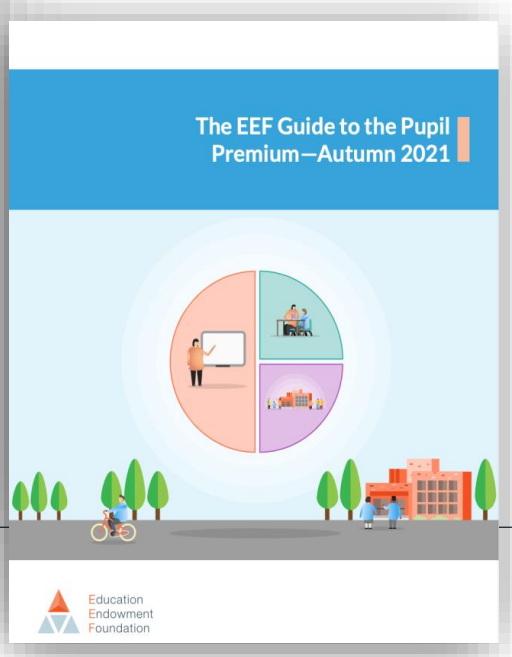
Securing attendance	**Curriculum adaptations**	**Sustained parental engagement**
Reestablishing routines	**High quality teaching**	**Supporting high need pupils and families**
Targeted academic support	**Timely, actionable assessment**	**Supporting teacher development**

Manageable & meaningful prioritisation

Sustained parental engagement

Manageable & meaningful prioritisation

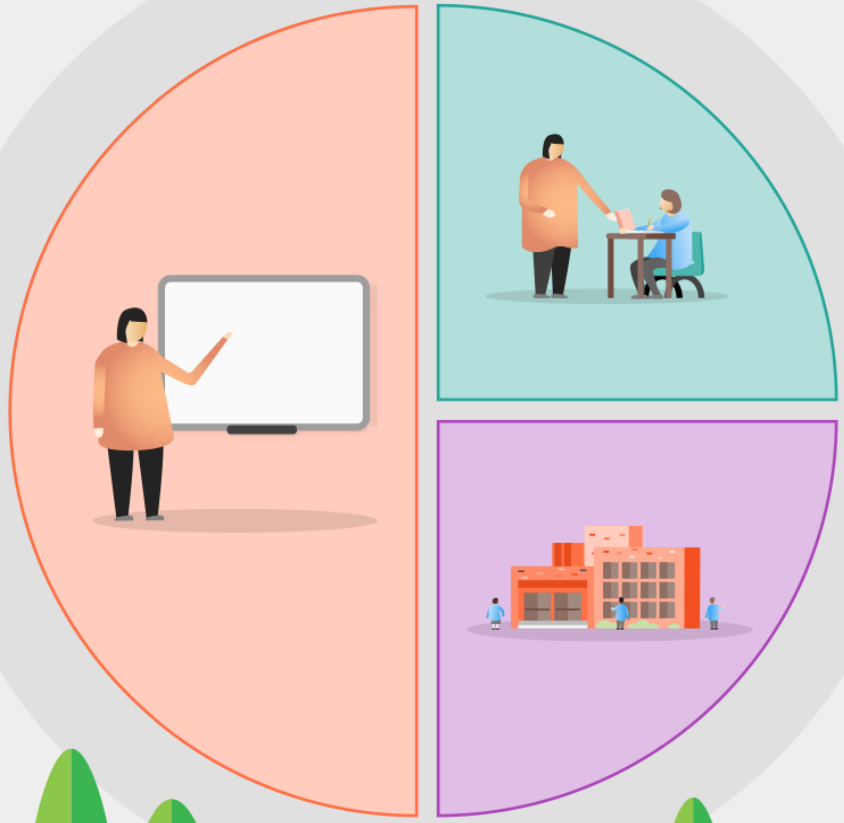
Manageable & meaningful prioritisation



1 Teaching

For example

- Professional development programme
- Supporting Early Career teachers
- Assessment
- Effective remote learning



2 Targeted academic support

For example

- Structured interventions
- Small group tuition
- One to one support
- Effective deployment of Teaching Assistants
- Reading interventions

3 Wider strategies

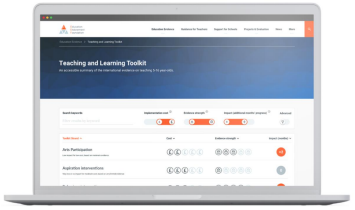
For example

- Sustaining parental engagement
- Social and emotional learning
- Reinforcing behaviour routines
- Breakfast clubs

Manageable & meaningful prioritisation

Sustained parental engagement

Sustained parental engagement



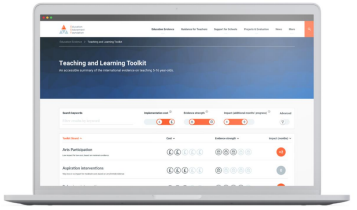
Behind the average

Effects are substantially higher in early years settings (+5 months) and primary schools (+4 months) than secondary schools (+2 months).

Effects tend to be higher for literacy (+5 months) than for mathematics (+3 months).

The majority of studies examined home reading interventions. A smaller number of studies examined interventions that aimed to improve parenting skills.

Sustained parental engagement

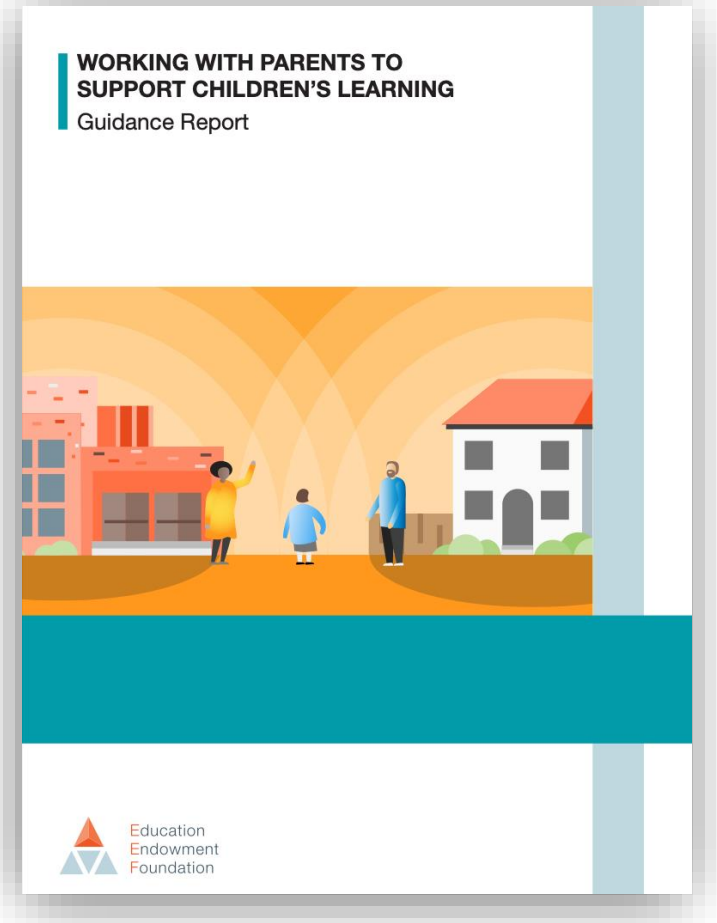


How could you implement in your setting?

The key mechanism for parental engagement strategies is improving the quality and quantity of learning that takes place in the home learning environment. This is very challenging to implement in practice. Some key elements schools might choose to implement include:

- tailoring communications to encourage positive dialogue about learning
- regularly reviewing how well the school is working with parents, identifying areas for improvement
- offering more sustained and intensive support where needed

Sustained parental engagement



3

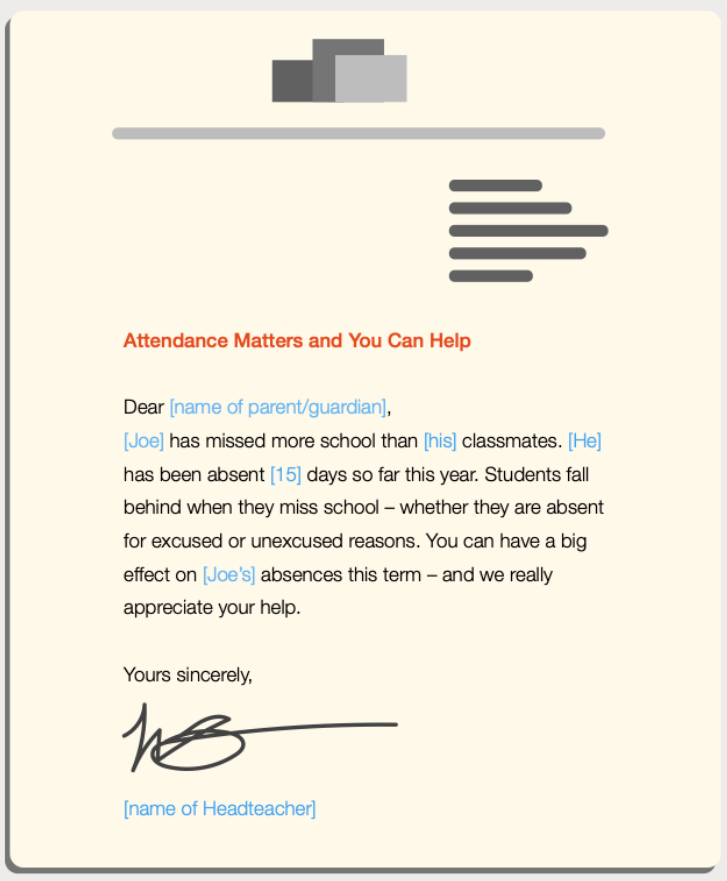
Tailor school communications to encourage positive dialogue about learning

- Well-designed school communications can be effective for improving attainment and a range of other outcomes, such as attendance.
- Examples include weekly texts sent from school to parents, and short, termly letters.
- Impacts from such approaches may appear small but they are generally low cost, and straightforward to introduce.
- Messages are likely to be more effective if they are personalised, linked to learning, and promote positive interactions by, for example, celebrating success.
- Communication should be two-way: consulting with parents about how they can be involved is likely to be valuable and increase the effectiveness of home-school relationships. Currently around half of parents say that they have not been consulted.
- School communications may be particularly important for engaging some parents who could play an important role but may have less contact with school.

Box 5: The value of personalised communications

In a randomised controlled trial in 203 American schools, sending a letter to parents stating the total number of days their child had been absent led to an average reduction in absences of one day per child (versus no letter).[41] The study showed that the wording of the letter matters: a simple reminder of the importance of attendance helps a little, but the crucial piece of information was personalising the letter to give the total number of absences to date.

Parents in the study received an average of four letters over the course of the year. There was some evidence that further reminders would have been beneficial: attendance improved directly in the period after the letter before falling back again. The letter can be very simple (fewer than 50 words) and should aim to promote parents' efficacy ('attendance is something you can help with') rather than blaming them.

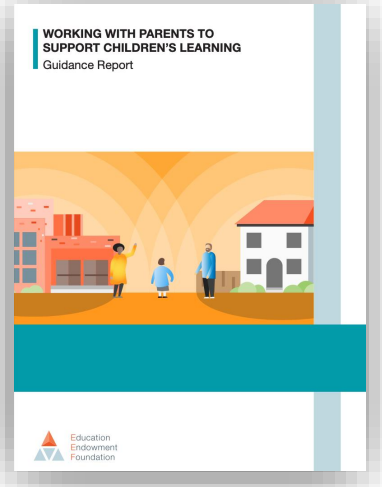


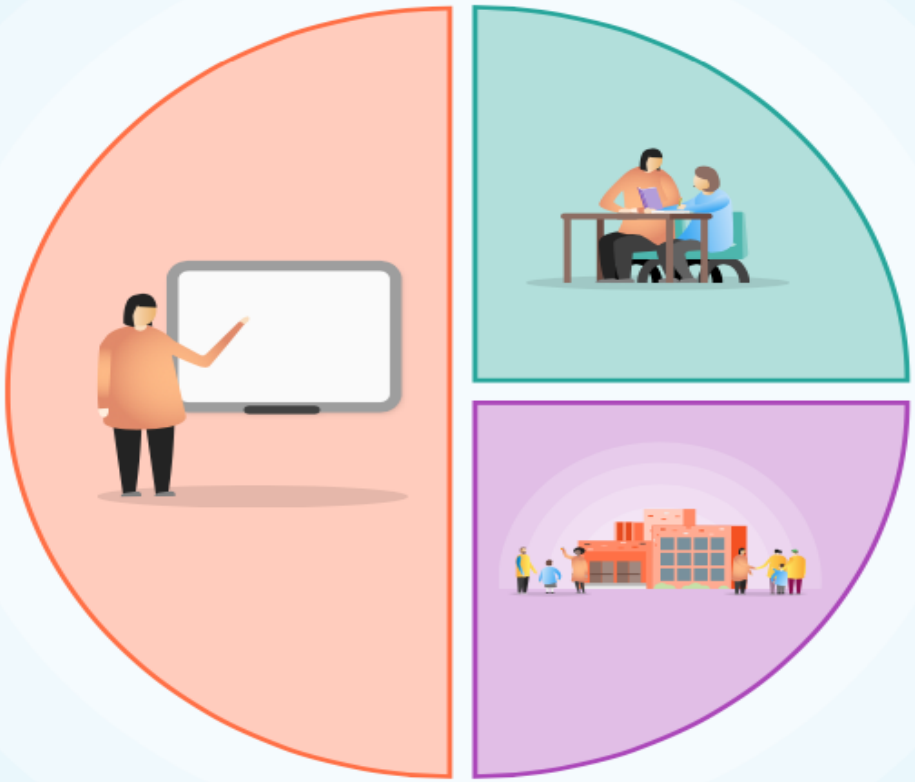
Attendance Matters and You Can Help

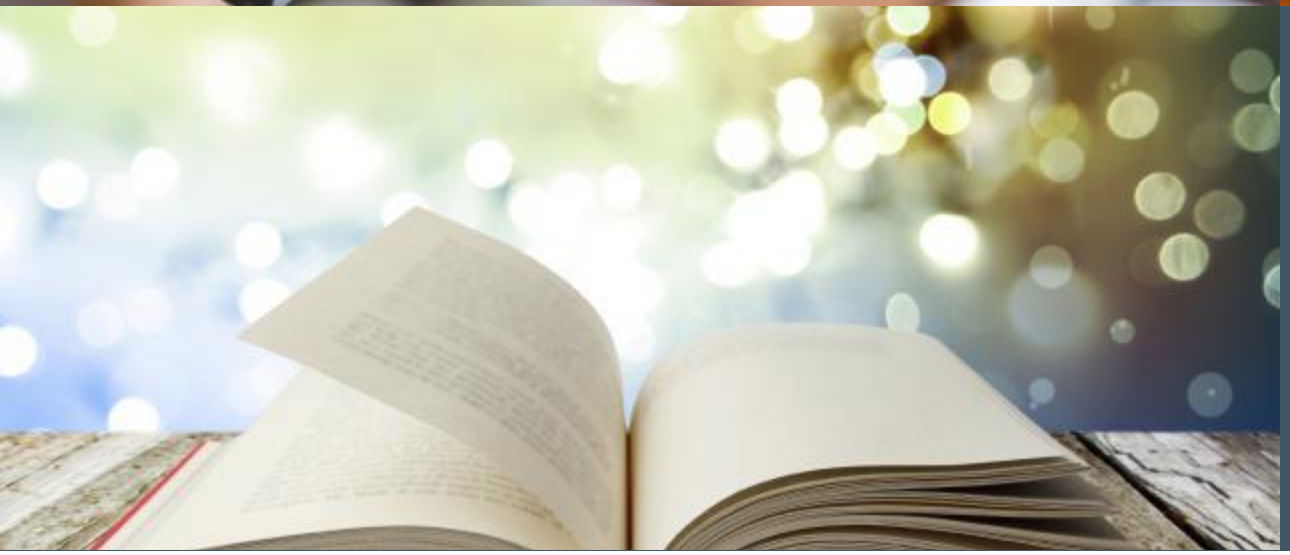
Dear [name of parent/guardian],
[Joe] has missed more school than [his] classmates. [He] has been absent [15] days so far this year. Students fall behind when they miss school – whether they are absent for excused or unexcused reasons. You can have a big effect on [Joe's] absences this term – and we really appreciate your help.

Yours sincerely,

[name of Headteacher]







Thank you

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