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Headteacher: Miss Melanie Spark, BA (Hons), NPQH

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you to highlight the importance of punctuality and to ask for your continued support in ensuring that all children arrive at school on time each day. A calm, settled start to the morning has a significant impact on children's wellbeing, confidence, and readiness to learn.

National data from the Department for Education shows that attendance across the country has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, and persistent absence has increased. This highlights how important it is for children to be in school every day and on time.

At Freegrounds Junior School, the gates close at 8:50am. Children arriving between 8:50am and 9:05am receive an 'L' code for lateness. During this time, they miss key settling activities that help them prepare for the day. Lessons begin promptly at 9:00am, so even a few minutes late can mean missing important introductions and instructions.

If a child arrives after 9:05am, they receive a 'U' code, which means they are marked as arriving after the register has closed. This is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can have a significant impact on their attendance record and learning.

Missing the start of the day can lead to:

- Lost learning time that quickly adds up over the year
- Children feeling unsettled, anxious, or behind their peers
- Missed instructions and explanations that affect understanding
- Disrupted routines that make it harder to engage in lessons
- Long-term patterns of lateness that affect overall progress

We understand that mornings can be challenging, and we are here to support you. If you are finding it difficult to get your child to school on time, please speak to us so we can work together to help. Our Parent Support Worker will be holding a coffee morning on 12th March at 9:00am, and you are warmly invited to come along for advice or a friendly chat.

Over the coming weeks, we will be monitoring lateness across the school and will contact families if we feel punctuality is becoming a concern. Our aim is always to work in partnership with you to support your child's success.

Thank you for your continued support in helping your child start each day positively and ready to learn.

Warm regards,

Melanie Spark  
Headteacher