



NEWSLETTER

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Dear Parents, Carers and Members of the Community,

As we move into the heart of the autumn term, this newsletter brings you key updates and reminders to support our shared commitment to a safe, respectful, and thriving school environment.

In this edition, we highlight:

- Our continued focus on positive behaviour and wellbeing, including the impact of recent improvements and the supportive role of *The Hive*.
- Guidance on effective communication with staff to ensure your concerns are heard and addressed.
- Important information about the use of sensory tools, such as fidgets, in school.
- The value of daily assemblies in building community, celebrating achievements, and reinforcing our core values.
- A reminder about the importance of good attendance and the procedures for reporting absences.
- Expectations around PE kit and school uniform to ensure safety and consistency.
- A crucial message about parking safely outside the school to protect our children.
- Exciting changes to our lunchtime structure, designed to enhance wellbeing, nutrition, and play.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Together, we are making Upwell Academy a place where every child can flourish.

Warm regards,

Chris Harris
Principal, Upwell Academy

Key Dates for your diary

Halloween Disco
23 Oct 2025

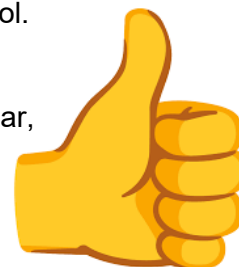
Half-Term
25 Oct 2025 to 02 Nov

Back to school
03 Nov 2025

Supporting Positive Behaviour

We want to create a calm, safe, and purposeful learning environment for every child. That's why one of our key priorities this year is to continue promoting high standards of personal development, behaviour, and wellbeing across the school.

We firmly believe that every child has the right to learn without disruption, and every adult has the right to teach without interference. From the start of this year, we've taken significant steps to strengthen our behaviour systems, ensuring consistency and clarity for all pupils.



Since implementing a number of changes, we've already seen a noticeable improvement in behaviour across the Academy. Visitors, parents, governors, and colleagues have all commented on the calmer, more focused atmosphere in school. This progress is a testament to the hard work of our staff and the positive response from our pupils.

To support this improvement, we've introduced a range of strategies to ensure that expectations are clear and consistently upheld. All significant behaviour incidents are now recorded and monitored, allowing us to identify patterns, provide targeted support, and make informed decisions about further improvements.

This data also enables our SEND team to access additional support for pupils who may need it, working in partnership with families and external professionals. While we are proud of the progress made, we recognise that behaviour is an ongoing area of development. We are committed to continuing this journey together.

In some cases, when a child's behaviour significantly disrupts learning or poses a risk to others, and when all other strategies have been exhausted, a suspension may be necessary. These decisions are never taken lightly and are always made with the best interests of all pupils and staff in mind. Our guiding principle remains clear: every child deserves the opportunity to learn in a calm and respectful environment.

We also understand that children develop socially and emotionally at different rates. To support this, we have created a safe, nurturing space within the Academy. 'The Hive' provides a calm, supportive environment for individuals or small groups to explore and regulate their emotions through creative activities, stories, and discussion.

At Upwell Academy, we are proud of the support we offer to help every child thrive: academically, socially, and emotionally. I would like to share my appreciation for your continued support as we work together to ensure the very best for all our children.



Communicating with Upwell Academy

We value strong communication between home and school. To ensure that your concerns and messages are addressed effectively, we ask that all communication begins with your child's class teacher. They spend the most time with your child and are best placed to respond to any questions or concerns you may have.

The most appropriate time to speak with class teachers is at the end of the school day. At this time, teachers are available to meet with parents and carers and can give your concerns the attention they deserve. In the mornings, teachers are already in their classrooms preparing for the day and may not be able to respond to messages immediately.



While it may be convenient to pass on messages verbally at the gate in the morning, we have found that these messages can sometimes be forgotten or miscommunicated. To ensure accuracy, we kindly ask that any morning messages are also emailed to the school office. The office team will then forward your message to the appropriate member of staff.

If you feel that your concern has not been resolved after speaking with the class teacher, please contact the school office to arrange a further conversation. We are committed to working together to support your child's education and wellbeing, and we appreciate your cooperation in following these communication guidelines.



Use of Fidgets in School

Some children benefit from using sensory tools, such as fidgets, to help them concentrate and regulate their emotions during the school day.

However, we kindly ask that children do not bring their own fidgets into school. While these items may be helpful at home, they can sometimes be noisy or distracting in the classroom, which can affect the learning of others.

To ensure a calm and focused learning environment for all pupils, the Academy will provide appropriate fidget tools when needed. These will be used discreetly and under the guidance of staff, so they support concentration without disturbing others.

If your child requires additional support with focus or regulation, please speak to their class teacher. We will work together to ensure they have access to the right tools and strategies to help them succeed.

Thank you for your understanding and support in helping us maintain a positive and productive learning environment for everyone.



The Power of Coming Together: The Value of Daily Assemblies

Celebrating Our Values and Achievements

Daily assemblies provide a vital opportunity to reinforce our core values. Whether we are focusing on kindness, respect, resilience, or responsibility, assemblies allow us to bring these principles to life through stories, songs, and real-life examples. They also give us a chance to celebrate the achievements of our pupils—both big and small. From academic successes to acts of kindness, we take pride in recognising the efforts and accomplishments of our school community.

Building a Shared Identity

Assemblies help to foster a strong sense of identity and unity across the school. When children from different classes and year groups come together, they see themselves as part of something bigger. This shared experience helps to build mutual respect, empathy, and a collective sense of purpose. It's a time when every child, regardless of age or background, can feel seen, heard, and valued.

A Platform for Shared Experiences

Our assemblies are also a space for storytelling, reflection, and learning from one another. Whether we're exploring a theme like friendship, celebrating a cultural festival, or hearing from a guest speaker, assemblies provide a platform for shared experiences that enrich our understanding of the world and each other.

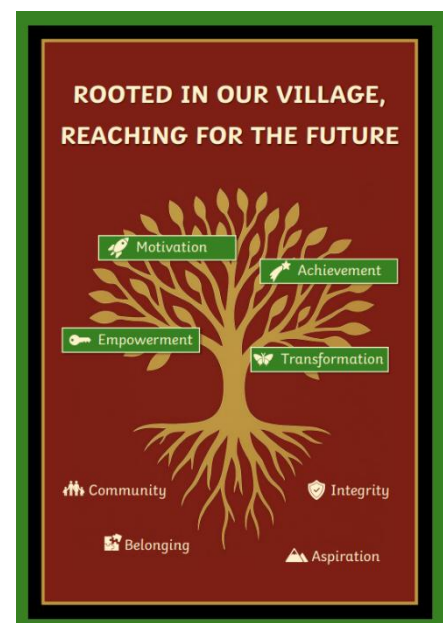
The Importance of Age-Appropriate Conversations

While whole-school assemblies are a powerful tool for community building, we also recognise the importance of age-appropriate discussions. That's why we balance our approach with class-based assemblies and circle times. These smaller, more intimate settings allow for deeper conversations tailored to the developmental stage of each group. They provide a safe space for children to ask questions, express their thoughts, and explore topics in a way that is meaningful and relevant to them.

A Balanced Approach

By combining daily whole-school assemblies with regular class-based discussions, we ensure that our pupils benefit from both a strong sense of community and personalised support. This balanced approach helps us to nurture confident, compassionate learners who understand the importance of their role within the wider school family.

At Upwell Academy, our daily assemblies are more than a tradition—they are a daily reminder of who we are, what we stand for, and how we grow together.



The Importance of Good Attendance

One of the key factors influencing a child's academic success and future opportunities is regular school attendance. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to achieve better outcomes, both academically and socially, setting a strong foundation for success in later life.

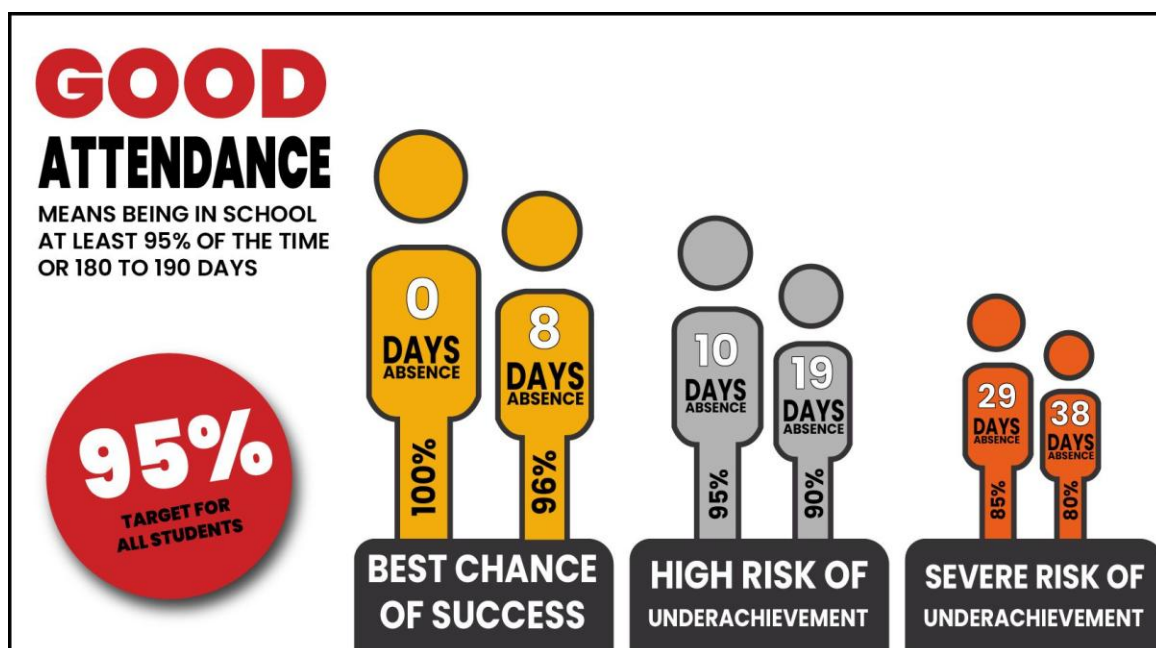
Research shows that poor attendance can significantly affect a child's progress. Missing school means missing out on vital learning experiences, friendships, and opportunities to develop important life skills. Over time, this can lead to gaps in knowledge and reduced confidence, which may impact future education and employment prospects.

As part of our duty to promote good attendance, Upwell Academy is required to notify Norfolk County Council of any unauthorised absences. This may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued to parents or carers. We understand that this can be concerning, but it is important to recognise that these measures are in place to support children's education and wellbeing.

Absence during term time can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Requests for leave must be submitted in advance and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. For more information on our attendance policy and procedures, please visit the attendance page on our school website.

We also understand that children may need to be absent from school due to illness. In such cases, we ask that parents follow the guidelines provided on our website to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils. If your child is unwell, please inform the school office as soon as possible.

Together, we can work to ensure that every child at Upwell Academy has the opportunity to thrive. Thank you for your continued support in promoting good attendance.



PE Kit and Uniform

We kindly remind all pupils and families of the expectations regarding PE kit and school uniform to ensure consistency and safety across the school.

PE Kit Requirements:

- Full PE kit must be worn on PE days, including appropriate footwear.
- All jewellery must be removed before PE lessons for safety reasons.
- If earrings cannot be removed, they must be securely taped up by the pupil before the lesson.
- Long hair should be tied back during PE activities.

Uniform Expectations:

- Pupils must wear the correct school uniform each day.
- School ties are a required part of the uniform and should be worn properly.
- Uniform should be clean, tidy, and labelled with the pupil's name where possible.



We appreciate your support in maintaining high standards of presentation and safety at our academy. If you have any questions regarding uniform or PE kit, please contact the school office.

A Reminder About Parking Safely

We would like to remind everyone of the importance of not parking on the yellow zigzag lines outside the front of the school building. Recently there have been a few near-misses.

These markings are there for a vital reason: to keep our children safe. Parking on or near these lines reduces visibility for both drivers and pedestrians, increases the risk of accidents, and makes it harder for children to cross safely.

Please help us maintain a safe environment by:

- Never stopping or parking on the zigzag lines, even for a short time.
- Using designated parking areas or parking further away and walking.
- Being mindful of pedestrians, especially during busy drop-off and pick-up times.

We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our school community safe. Let's work together to ensure that every child arrives and leaves school safely each day.



Enhancing Lunchtime at Upwell Academy

At Upwell Academy, we are always looking for ways to improve the school day experience for our pupils. One of the most impactful changes this term has been the restructuring of our lunchtime routine, designed to better support children's wellbeing, play, and nutrition.

We now operate two separate lunch sittings to ensure a smoother and more enjoyable experience for all. The first sitting is for our Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pupils, who have 25 minutes to enjoy their lunch while Key Stage 2 (KS2) children engage in outdoor play. Following this, KS2 pupils have their own 20-minute lunch sitting.



This staggered approach not only reduces congestion in the dining hall but also allows children to eat in a calmer, more focused environment. It also maximises play opportunities, with KS2 pupils enjoying structured activities while younger children dine.

We are proud to offer a wide range of structured play activities during lunchtime. These include scooter sessions, staff-led football games, and an engaging activity led by Premier Education. In addition, children have the freedom to enjoy their own play using the outdoor gym equipment, trim trail, and tyres. These options promote physical activity, teamwork, and creativity, making lunchtime a valuable part of the school day.



We understand that every child is different, and some may require more time to eat their lunch. Our staff in the dining hall monitor this closely. If a child from the first sitting needs additional time, they are welcome to continue eating into the second sitting. Similarly, if a KS2 pupil requires more than 20 minutes, they are invited to begin their lunch earlier to ensure they have sufficient time.

This flexible and child-centred approach ensures that all pupils are supported in meeting their nutritional needs while also enjoying meaningful play and social interaction. The new lunchtime structure reflects our commitment to creating a nurturing and inclusive

