

## Tips Sheet: Punctuality

Being late happens, being persistently late has consequences for children's education, future learning and employment.

Here are some tips to help prevent persistent lateness.



### Why being on time for school matters

Persistent lateness can normalise behaviour, a normal way of operating. This can have negative consequences for children's current and future learning (at school and college).

Being persistently late for work can result in misconduct issues, even losing employment (dismissal).

Being late can result in legal action if children's late marks are coded U (unauthorised late).

Being on time for school is therefore important to avoid falling behind with learning and to ensure future prospects.

Minutes late per day	Equivalent of missing
5 minutes	4.4 days a year
10 minutes	6.9 days a year
15 minutes	10.3 days a year
20 minutes	13.8 days a year
30 minutes	20.7 days a year

### Some causes of persistent lateness

- **Organisation:** **disorganisation** is a main reason for lateness e.g., when clothes are not ready, school bag is not packed, or a shoe has gone missing.
- **People:** families usually have an **unwritten 'system' for operating** e.g., who gets up first, who uses the bathroom. Sometimes this system can alter and put a family's ordinary functioning out of synchronicity.
- **Adrenaline:** some people need adrenaline to drive them into action. It's important then to find **alternative reasons to motivate** being on time.
- **Distraction:** a wandering mind can cause **people to become distracted** from the task in hand.
- **Conscientiousness:** being conscientious is about making deliberate actions to achieve desired outcomes (being on time), the alternative is **not making deliberate actions**.

**SOLUTIONS CAN BE ACHIEVED**

## Tips to help change behaviours

- 1. Admit persistent lateness:** by doing this you acknowledge the difficulty exists which increases the probability of improving the situation.
- 2. Make being prompt a priority:** admitting you have a punctuality issue and realising the consequences of being late puts you in the driving seat to make necessary changes.
- 3. Know why you want to be punctual:** whenever you want to create a new habit, you need to be very clear why you want to build that habit. Use the plan overleaf to help with this.
- 4. Track how long tasks take:** when we review the actual time of doing things we can then see if we have set sufficient time to prepare.
- 5. Watch the clock:** having clocks in many rooms can help to ensure that you keep an eye on the time when moving about your home e.g., brushing your teeth in the bathroom and having breakfast in another room.
- 6. Focus on priorities:** we can sometimes cram too much into a short window. Make sure your activities are focused on the essentials for school.
- 7. Be prepared:** preparation is key, prepare the night before not in the morning.
- 8. Give yourself extra time:** once you've fine-tuned how long it takes to complete your essential morning tasks give yourself some extra time for unforeseen circumstances e.g., extra toilet time, the iced windscreen, congestion on the route to school.
- 9. Accept waiting:** people sometimes don't like arriving early because of having to wait and they see this as wasted time. The key to overcoming this is to accept that having to wait is a reality in life. And, to see this time as opportunity e.g., time to speak with other families, to read school notices, or, for children to catch up with friends before the start of school.
- 10. Change thoughts:** some people view the person as having to wait as them being unimportant (something that nobody wants to feel). Being early is a sign of good organisation and will help model (to normalise) this for children's future's (learning and employment).
- 11. Always leave on time:** the moment that you leave the door is the moment that you are likely to determine your time of arrival. Once you've calculated the time for your essential morning tasks, you will have determined the time needed to leave home. Be consistent with this, so it becomes automatic.
- 12. Set reminders:** if there's a change to your plan (perhaps a different start time for others) set reminders for these in advance. Talk and make these changes known to others in your household so that everyone can achieve individual and whole family goals.

## Reflections

Being on time will help children not miss vital learning, it will also enable social time with others before the start of the school day and will help prepare children for life beyond school (college and employment) by normalising good routines for being punctual.

**Key words: organisation; consistency; reliability; communication; achievable.**

**Remember, it's you that can make the change!**

## Our Punctuality Improvement Plan

<p><b>Our punctuality issue (how many occasions have you been late this year?).</b></p>	<p>Before registration (code L): After registration (code U):</p>
<p><b>Our punctuality pledge (why is being on time important to you).</b></p>	<p>We pledge to:</p>
<p><b>We want to be punctual because...</b></p>	<p>Being on time will help (children): Being on time will help (children): Being on time will reduce: Being on time will ensure:</p>
<p><b>Our morning essential tasks are...</b></p>	
<p><b>Our 'night before school' tasks are...</b></p>	
<p><b>Our school start times are...</b></p>	<p>Primary: Secondary:</p>
<p><b>Our modes of transport for getting to school are...</b></p>	<p>Walk: Bus: Train: Car:</p>
<p><b>How long do tasks take?</b></p>	<p>Getting washed: Brushing teeth: Getting dressed: To prepare and have breakfast: To prepare and pack lunch: To prepare school things/bag: To travel to school: Total time =</p>
<p><b>We will ensure our sleep times will...</b></p>	<p>Social media will stop at: Getting ready for bed will be: Sleep time will be:</p>
<p><b>Our morning tasks take __: __ min. Including extra time of __: __ min. We need to wake up at?</b></p>	<p>Alarm clock time is: To be out of bed time is:</p>
<p><b>We need clocks in...</b></p>	<p>Bedroom: Bathroom: Kitchen/Dining room: Other:</p>