

PRESS RELEASE

Friday 24 May 2019

Primary School pupils raise importance of attending hospital appointments

Pupils from Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy in Longton have been working on an exciting project with the outpatients' team at University Hospitals of North Midlands to raise awareness of missed hospital appointments to reduce the number of failed attendances.

Every week almost 1,500 hospital appointments are lost because patients did not attend. Each hospital outpatient appointment costs the NHS approximately £160, which equates to more than £9 million. If missed appointments are avoided it helps to reduce the waiting times for everyone at the hospital. The main focus for this project was to help increase the number of appointments available.

Jo Martin Assistant Principal said: "As we are currently working hard on raising attendance at Belgrave, which also includes time taken out for medical/dental appointments, we were very keen to get involved in the project. This opportunity also allowed us to raise awareness regarding the millions of pounds that are lost every year through missed appointments, not only with our families and pupils, but also amongst our own staff in school."

The project involved a poster competition with pupils from the school, focusing on raising awareness on this issue and the cost to the NHS. Five winners were selected from more than 80 entries, they were:

- Sheza aged 8
- Emily aged 8
- Hassaan aged 6
- Azaan aged 7
- Faisal aged 7

Lesley Hurst, Deputy Associate Director and Outpatient Manager, said: "We are delighted that St Bartholomew's Academy wanted to get involved and raise awareness about the importance of letting us know if you are unable to make your appointment. We were impressed with the level of understanding and creativity from the pupils and the winning posters will be used as part of the hospitals on-going campaign to reduce the number of missed appointments alongside the continued use of our text reminder service."

Jo added: "We are so incredibly proud of our pupils and their posters will now be framed and shared with the outpatient's team at Royal Stoke University Hospital, which is an amazing achievement - well done to our winners and to all of the pupils who took part."

Rachel Marshall, Service Improvement Manager for outpatients, said: "A Big thank you to all the children who took part in capturing the impact of missed Outpatients appointments, many of the posters not only illustrated the financial cost of failed attendances but also the health implications to individuals and others – Fantastic work."

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For further information or assistance please contact Thomas Harrison, Communications Officer, on 01782 676646