

ATTEND TODAY
ACHIEVE TOMORROW

School attendance matters

A Parent's Guide

Primary/Secondary School





'Every day counts'

Help Your Child Succeed in School:

Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early

School success goes hand in hand with good attendance!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in primary school, too many absences can cause children to fall behind early on.
 - Missing 10%, or 19 days, can make it harder to learn to read and for Secondary school children it can drastically affect a student's academic success.
 - Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
 - Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
 - Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.
 - Students should miss no more than 7 days of school each year to stay engaged, successful and on track to achieve in their GCSE's
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with friendship issues or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
 - Attendance is an important life skill that will help your child succeed at school, college and keep a job.

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit early so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Good attendance will help children do well in school, college, and at work.

Why attendance at school is so important

Excellent school attendance is important to allow a child or young person to fulfil their potential and to grow as an individual.

Here are just some of the reasons why it is important for children to attend school regularly

- To learn
- To make friends
- To experience new things
- To develop new skills
- To achieve and gain qualifications
- To build confidence and self esteem
- To have fun
- To learn about life/cultures/religion/ethnicity and gender difference



What the law says

- Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the duty of parents/carer's who have a child of compulsory school age to ensure their child receives efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude, ability and to any special educational needs they may have. Such education may be provided by regular attendance at school or otherwise, for example home education.
- It is the duty of a parent of a registered pupil of a school to secure their regular attendance at school. This applies to all children of compulsory school age who are on the roll of a school. As a parent you are legally responsible for making this happen.
- Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 - if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent/carer is guilty of an offence and can be at risk of a parental prosecution and / or fine
- The term 'parent' means all natural parents, whether they are married or not; and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person; and any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.
- If a child or young person who is registered at a school does not attend regularly, a parent can receive a fine not exceeding £2,500 in court (for each child). An Education Supervision Order (ESO) (Section 447 of the Education Act 1996) could also be made by a court.

Education is not an option – it is COMPLUSORY

A young girl with brown hair is wearing a yellow diving mask and looking through the water. The background is a bright blue, slightly blurred underwater scene with some light reflections on the surface.

Family Holidays

Demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not taking holidays in term time.

Any child or young person who is absent from school due to a holiday will miss important school work and will fall behind. In an academic year there are a maximum of 190 statutory school days. This allows plenty of time for holidays outside of term time.

Holidays during term time will be classed as **UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE.**

Avoid taking holidays during term time

What you can do

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack school bags the night before.
- Don't let your child stay home unless they are truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers and school mentors for advice.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbour, or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments, dentist appointments and extended trips/holidays during school term time.
- Attend parent's evenings and school meetings.
- If you have concerns – talk to staff at school – teachers/mentors
- Understand the school policy and ensure your child follows school rules
- Take any truancy seriously
- Support school staff with their policy for handling problems with behaviour
- Praise and reward your child's achievements at school

Help your children stay engaged

- Find out if your child feels engaged by their classes and is not experiencing friendship issues or other threats. Make sure he/she is not missing class because of behavioural issues and school discipline policies. If any of these are problems, work with your school.
- Stay on top of their academic progress and seek help from teachers if necessary. Make sure teachers know how to contact you.
- Stay on top of your child's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Encourage meaningful afterschool activities, including sports and clubs.

Everyday really does count

Every single day of absence = a day of lost learning

Some parents think 90% attendance is an 'acceptable' level but in reality:

90% attendance = 19 days of absence across the school year or 3 weeks and 4 days of lost learning.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of your child's attendance please contact the School Attendance Service on telephone **0151 443 5177**.