



Promoting good attendance - information for parents.

Your child's education is really important. Regular attendance at school increases your child's chance of getting a good job.

Any absence means that children miss important school time – both educationally for other school activities. It will be difficult for them to catch up on work later on.

The Law

You are responsible for:

- ensuring your children receive full time education
- their regular attendance at school

As the parent you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly, even if they are missing school without your knowledge. You run the risk of being issued with a Penalty Notice or being taken to court.

The Local Authority may decide to prosecute parents in instances where absence is unauthorised by the school. If this happens:

- parents can be fined up to £2500 or be imprisoned for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly
- magistrates can impose a Parenting Order, which means that the parent has to attend a counselling and guidance programme, usually a parenting class
- a Penalty Notice of £60 may be issued by the Local Authority as an alternative to prosecution. This rises to £120 if unpaid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay will normally lead to prosecution.

What can you do?

Make sure that your child attends school regularly and arrives on time. Lateness can be very disruptive for the class and your child. If your child arrives after registration closes it will be counted as an unauthorised absence.

If your child is absent from school you must:
As early as possible on the first day of absence

- phone the school, or
- send a note, or
- call at the school to notify them of the absence, the reason and the expected return date.



When your child returns to school always send a signed note which should be dated and give the reason for absence.

Your child should not be kept away from school to

- look after brothers or sisters
- mind the house
- visit relatives
- have long weekends
- go on shopping trips
- for birthdays
- go on holidays during term time.

Term time holidays

You should not expect your child's school to agree an absence for a holiday in term time.

The law says that parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time.

School attendance regulations make it clear that the Head teacher may **not** authorise any absence from school unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you feel there are exceptional circumstances why your child needs to be absent from school you should apply, in advance, by writing to the Head teacher explaining clearly the dates and reasons you are requesting leave of absence.

If the school refuses the request and the child is still taken out of school this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and noted in the child's record. You may also receive a Penalty Notice for the period of absence.

Working with your school can help them to make sure that:

- rules are observed
- discipline is maintained
- other pupils and school staff are respected
- all tasks and homework are completed
- school buildings and facilities are cared for

Your school will inform you of:

- the daily starting and finishing time
- term and holiday dates
- other days when the school will be closed



Your school will inform you if:

- your child is not attending
- your child is frequently late
- homework is not being completed

How to contact us

If you are experiencing problems which could have, or is having an effect on your child's regular attendance at school, you should speak to someone at the school.

Alternatively you can contact the Early Intervention Service on **01204 338173**.