

Pupil's rights

It is the right of all children of school age to attend school and it is the responsibility of parents to support them in order that they can obtain the maximum benefit from the education provided.

Education Welfare Team

If you would like to speak to an Education Welfare Officer in confidence about school attendance, punctuality or any welfare issue that is causing concern you can be supported in the following ways:

- ✓ Listening to your concerns
- ✓ Visiting you at home
- ✓ Arrange & attend meetings in school
- ✓ Offer you advice and assistance

MAKE EVERY DAY COUNT
MAKE EVERY LESSON COUNT
MAKE EVERY MINUTE COUNT

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TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

A Parent's Guide to Good School Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance at school is essential if your child is to get the best possible start in life that we can give them. Pupils who fail to attend regularly experience educational disadvantages and their future life prospects are impaired.

It is a fundamental parental responsibility to help your child get the best opportunities they can by ensuring excellent attendance at school.

Parental responsibility

Regular attendance at school is essential if children and young people are to develop the knowledge and skills they require in order to achieve their full potential.

Parents have both a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and that they arrive on time. Supporting your child will help give them the best possible start in life.

For the purposes of ensuring regular attendance a **Parent** is defined under **Section 576 of the Education Act 1996** as:

all natural parents, whether they are married or not; 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. Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

Legal enforcement of attendance at school

The local authority has a statutory duty to enforce the law in relation to absence from school. There are a number of legal interventions that can be considered when parents fail in their responsibility to ensure the regular attendance at school of their children.

The use of legal enforcement is one of a number of strategies to improve attendance. Legal interventions are used whenever they are considered appropriate to the circumstances including:-

Penalty Notices – An on the spot fine similar to a parking ticket, £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days;

Parental Prosecution – Maximum fine for a serious offence is £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment;

Education Supervision Order – where the young person is made subject to an order by the court.

Regular and punctual attendance

If children and young people are to get the best possible start in life that they can it is important that they attend school on every occasion it is open and that they arrive on time.

When pupils do not attend regularly parents need to work with the school to address any issues that are affecting their child's attendance.

If your child is absent without good reason the school will not authorise the absence and this could result in a legal intervention to ensure you make your child attend regularly.

Good school timekeeping

Arriving at school on time is an important aspect of school life. There are a number of benefits for your child in arriving before registration starts.

Punctuality helps instil good habits in children and shows reliability in them. This is a valuable asset for their future working life.

If your child arrives after the close of registers it will be recorded as an unauthorised late absence. Frequent unauthorised absence may lead to a Penalty Notice being issued.

NO Holidays in Term Time

Legislation states clearly that Parents **do not have a right** to take their children on holiday during school time.

Head Teachers have the discretion **in exceptional circumstances** to authorise leave of absence but not for a holiday.

Children and young people deserve the best start in life that we can give them. Help them achieve it by ensuring their regular and punctual attendance at school.