

SECTION 15

Attendance

School Attendance Policies

Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to make the most of education opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress and leads to underachievement, behaviour problems and low attainment.

It reduces pupils self esteem and undermines the cohesion between the social and academic elements of school life.

Young peoples prospects in later life can be seriously harmed by irregular attendance and they may also be at greater risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse.

The Legal Framework

The legal framework governing school attendance and the responsibilities of parents, schools and the LEA is set out by a succession of education and other acts, guidance and regulations.

Major legislation and guidance includes

- The Education Act 1996, Section 7 and Section 437 – 448
- The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 1995 (as amended)
- DFEE Circular 6/95 The Parents Charter, Publication of information about secondary school performance
- Warwickshire LEA Operational Policy – School Attendance, March 1997
- DFEE Guidance , Social Inclusion – Pupil Support Circular No. 10/99 and 11/99
- The Ofsted Handbook, Guidance on the Inspection of Schools.
- The Children Act 1989
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2004 (Education Related Measures)

In summary the essential legal points are as follows:-

- Parents have a duty to ensure that their child, if of compulsory school age, receives full-time education either through regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Schools are required to maintain two registers, admissions register (which serves as the school roll), attendance register (which must be called twice a day. In addition only the school can authorise the absence).
- LEA are required to ensure parents carry out their responsibilities with regard to their child's education.

LEA Guidelines on Producing a School Attendance Policy

As a matter of good practice all schools should have in place their own attendance policy. All the staff of a school should be fully aware of the policy, its contents and its ethos. It should be applied consistently to all pupils. The policy should dovetail into the LEA's Operational Policy on School Attendance (March 1997) – further copies are available from the Education Social Work Service on 01926 476814.

An effective attendance policy should:

- Support the aims of the school;
- Ensure that legal requirements are met;
- Offer clear guidance to parents with regard to their legal responsibilities in relation to school attendance. This should also include information on punctuality;
- Outline the ways that the school will encourage attendance by promoting a positive school environment;
- Identify the school's policy and arrangements for authorising absence from school in special circumstances eg. religious festivals.

Schools will need to have agreed criteria for the kinds of special circumstances which will be authorised, even if in practice there is some flexibility. These guidelines will need to be based on the community, the situation and the sorts of reasons parents may have for wishing to take leave of absence.

Consideration should also be given to:

- Ways of identifying what is considered as authorised/unauthorised absence;
- Clear procedures to identify and follow-up all absences;
- A range of strategies to promote good attendance and deal with absenteeism;
- Guidelines on sensitive approaches to deal with the need of individual pupils;
- Ways of setting attendance targets for individual pupils, forms, groups, whole school etc;
- Procedures by which parents shall contact school in case of absence;
- The procedures that school will adopt in relation to the follow-up of absence in the short and the long term;
- The procedures for a child's return to school including procedures for re-integrating long term absenteeism;
- The needs of particular groups such as travelling families;
- Procedures outlined in the School Attendance – LEA operational Policy. Referral process to the Education Social Work Service;
- A reward system for good attendance;
- Consideration of a telephone call to parents on first day of absence followed by a letter, after 3 days continuous absence;
- Primary-secondary liaison, identification of non-attenders at age of transfer;
- Methods of ensuring that the whole policy is monitored, updated and evaluated at regular intervals;
- Clear advice to parents that it is school staff, and not parents, who may authorise an absence;
- Clear guidance to staff to discourage parents from taking holidays in term time;
- Information to the Governing Body on an agreed regular basis relating to levels of absence, both authorised and unauthorised;
- Home – school agreement

LEA Training and Support for producing school attendance policies

The intention of the specimen attendance policy is to provide schools with a possible policy framework on which to hang their own unique and individual practices. An attendance policy can be developed after extensive consultation with the school community and stakeholders.

The ESWS will:

- Offer advice during its consultation
- Be a member of an attendance policy group
- Offer inset to school staff
- Attend staff meetings
- Attend governors meetings
- Attend parents meetings

Monitoring role of LEA in relation to school attendance policies

- School Governors should regularly review and update their attendance policy (in line with their policy review strategy)
- Schools can request that a member of ESWS is included in the review process
- Where the unauthorised absence increases by 2% above the median average for a school's FSM quartile then the ESWS should review with the school the effectiveness of the policy
- Where ineffective practice is identified then a review of the attendance policy should be considered

Dissemination of Good Practice by the LEA

- ESWS will continue to disseminate good practice through professional development programmes, pastoral meetings, referral meetings, and through service publications

Warwickshire targets for overall absence by 2008 are as

Year	Absence	Attendance
2004-2005	6.12	93.88
2005-2006	6.06	93.94
2006-2007	5.96	94.04
2007-2008	5.86	94.14

Specimen Attendance Policy

Mission Statement

xxx School aims to maximise attendance rates in order to ensure that all pupils are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

Statutory Framework

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised (see below).

Rights and Responsibilities

Improving attendance at xxx school is the responsibility of everyone in the school community – pupils, parents and all staff.

Pupils

All pupils are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually. Pupils who do experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from tutor/class teacher, and if the need should arise, from their year head/head teacher. At the end of each term, pupils whose attendance is either very good or improved will be presented with awards.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible – by phone call or preferably in writing. A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent. Parents will be informed promptly of any concerns which may arise over a child's attendance. Parents whose child's attendance is a cause for congratulation or concern will be written to by the year head/head teacher at the end of each term. Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

Parents whose first language is not English or who have literacy problems will be offered appropriate support from school in matters of communication.

School

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff). The school will employ a range of strategies (see below) to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will investigate promptly all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

Registration

Registration will be called at xxx am and at xxx pm and will be in red or black in accordance with the list as set out in the register.

Registers will close at xxx am and at xxx pm. If a pupil fails to arrive before the registers close, they will be marked as 'absent'. Pupils who arrive after the registers have closed should report to the general office and sign the School Late Book. (The form tutor will amend the register entry to read 'absent/late'). If a pupil is persistently late, the year head/head teacher will contact the parents.

Parents are reminded that if a child arrives in school after the registers have closed and an unacceptable explanation is not forthcoming, the pupil has to be recorded as 'unauthorised absent' for that session.

All class teachers will take registers in each of their classes and will notify the year head/head teacher as soon as possible of any absenteeism.

The year head/head teacher will inspect all registers (manual) each half-term in order to ensure that correct procedures are being followed, totals are being calculated and entered.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

It is vital that all staff adhere to the same criteria when deciding whether or not to authorise an absence.

Xxx school will decide on how an absence is to be recorded in accordance with the latest guidance from the Department for Education and Employment. This states that:

Absence can be authorised if:

- The pupil was absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school)
- The pupil was ill 'or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause'
- 'the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belongs'
- the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home, and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LEA for any of the following
 1. the child's transport to and from school
 2. boarding accommodation for the child at or near the school, and
 3. enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/her home
- the pupil is the child of Traveller parents and the conditions as stated in the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (6) are met.
- There is a family bereavement
- The pupil is attending an interview with either a prospective employer or in connection with an application for a place at an institute of further or higher education or for a place at another school
- The pupil is attending a Pupil Reintegration Unit
- A Year 11 pupil is granted study leave
- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion (eg. if a pupil is attending graduation of an older sibling)

- Leave of absence is granted by the school for a family holiday of no more than two weeks (parents should be reminded that they cannot expect that, as of right, the school will agree to a family holiday during term-time)

Absence should be unauthorised if:

- No explanation is forthcoming
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- The pupil stays at home to mind the house or to look after siblings (the guidance suggests that absence in such cases should only be granted in exceptional circumstances)
- The pupil is shopping during school hours
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasion (eg. a birthday)
- The pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period of time longer than that negotiated with the school (normally a maximum of two weeks)
- The pupil is on a family holiday without permission or if the parents have failed to apply for permission in advance of the holiday and instead seek retrospective approval on their return

Holidays

Parents are urged strongly to avoid taking family holidays during term time. Indeed, parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for such a holiday. If, however, parents apply to the school in advance, the school may grant up to two weeks term-time absence in any year to go on a family holiday. Apart from this, leave in term time can only be given in exceptional circumstances.

Occasionally, holidays of more than two weeks to visit family living overseas may be planned. Parents are urged to discuss with school, the most appropriate time of year and point in the child's education career for this visit to take place. This will help minimise disruption to the child's progress at school.

Procedures for following up absence

- First day absence follow up process. (to be considered)
- If a pupil is absent for more than three consecutive days (without an explanation being forthcoming) the form tutor/class teacher will write to the parents. If the absentee is a pupil about whom there are already concerns, the form tutor will make every effort to contact the parents immediately.
- If a pupil is persistently (or intermittently) absent, the form tutor/class teacher will write to the parents and invite them to attend a meeting at school. (Year head/head teacher should become involved)
- If a pupil returns to school after a period of absence and fails to bring a note or if the explanation offered by a note is unsatisfactory, the form tutor/class teacher will write to the parents.
- If a pupil is persistently absent (or late) and the school's efforts to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the situation will be referred to the Education Social Worker during their consultation visit. (see School Attendance LEA Operational Policy for guidance)
- Notes from parents will be initialled by the form tutor and kept in the pupil's file. All telephone messages regarding absence/lateness are to be recorded in the telephone message book.
- All absences will be displayed daily on the staff room notice board. This is intended to enable class teachers to cross-check their registers with form registers.

Strategies for promoting attendance

- Xxx school will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. The school's ethos must demonstrate that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will be taken.
- A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to all pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that learning tasks are matched to pupil's needs. (Year 9 review)
- Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy/practice
- Good attendance awards will be presented at the end of each school year
- Pupils whose attendance is a cause of concern will be set targets for improvement. The form tutor will monitor and review these targets
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, the school brochure, parents' evenings etc.) of the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time will (when appropriate) have work sent home to them and will be re-integrated back into school upon their return. (see LEA Policy on illness)
- Pupils who have been absent for whatever reason for an extended period of time will (when appropriate) have individually tailored reintegration programmes prepared for them
- The head teacher will make an annual report to the school's governing body on attendance matters. In addition it is recommended that the head teacher reports on attendance to the governors termly
- Year heads/head teachers will, when appropriate, liaise with other agencies – when this may serve to support and assist pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties
- Year heads/head teachers/key stage co-ordinators, will have regular meetings with the school's Education Social Worker in order to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties
- Regular visits will be made to feeder primary schools in order to ensure the smoothest possible secondary transfer. Discussions with primary school teachers will seek to identify those pupils who may require extra support during this process.
 - Attendance systems audit by ESWS
 - Group work with ESWS
 - Parent groups with ESWS
 - Community strategy
 - Project work (eg art project on attendance jointly with ESWS)

Pupils with long-term attendance problems

Truancy

Truancy – What do we mean?

There is no identikit truant because reasons for non school attendance are so different. Children may fail to attend school for a wide variety of reasons, including illness, family bereavement, visits to the country of origin, family holidays, being a young carer, unhappiness at school or finally a defiant rejection of parental or school authority.

The term 'truancy' has generally been used where the decision to miss school is taken by the child without parental or other authority, and where the child uses the time for his or her own purpose. This truancy is seen as either a response to great unhappiness, or more commonly a small act of rebellion. It does not encompass the many other occasions on which a child may not attend school for other reasons.

Some of the most important factors behind truancy lie outside school, above all in family relationships and peer pressures. But how schools operate can make a great difference in shaping whether children do in fact truant.

How common is it?

Official figures gathered by the Social Exclusion Unit nationally:

- Secondary schools reported 1% unauthorised absence (when a pupil is absent for all or part of a school day, without the lawful authority of a teacher. It may not mean truancy).
- Primary schools reported 0.5% unauthorised absence.
- About 1 million children take at least one half day off per year without authority.

Anonymised surveys of pupils have indicated the following:

- In 1992 a Home Office random interview survey showed that 37 per cent of young men and 28 per cent of young women admitted to skipping for at least one day without permission.
- A 1990 study of 40,000 Year 11 pupils found more than a half had taken unauthorised absence.
- And the latest Youth Cohort Study showed that 2 per cent of children in Year 11 truanted for weeks at a time, a further 2 per cent for several days at a time, and another 34 per cent truanted occasionally.

Groups particularly at risk

- Truants tend to be older pupils, and from poorer backgrounds.
- For boys, living in a single parent family appears to be a risk factor.
- Ofsted has found that in some schools poor attendance is centred among pupils who are weak readers.
- It is found that non attendance can be a result of anxiety about GCSE coursework deadlines.
- Anxiety about bullying is frequently cited as a reason. One research study reports that a third of girls and a quarter of boys described being afraid of going to school at some time because of bullying.

- In a number of surveys pupils have said that they truant because they dislike particular lessons or teachers, or see school or the National Curriculum as irrelevant.

What school and the Education Social Work Service can do

The three major areas of influence upon non attendance (individual, family and social, and school factors) require a genuine cross departmental focus by a range of services to reduce truancy.

Strategies to tackle truancy in Warwickshire:

- LEA targets to reduce unauthorised absence.
- School targets in line with DfES target setting by free school meal quartile average.
- Publish data on schools performance on attendance.
- Schools having a proactive school attendance policy.
- (see Appendix B)
- County literacy and numeracy strategy.
- Computerised registration so schools can identify patterns and possible cures.
- Standards fund – ESWS Attendance System Audit Project.
- Curriculum – initiatives on opening up opportunities at KS4.
- Police Powers to remove truants.
- Parenting contracts – a voluntary agreement between parents, ESWS and school setting clear expectations and goals
- Fixed fines and prosecution of parents who fail to ensure that their child attends regularly.
- Parenting Order – Where a parent has been convicted of failing to secure a child's attendance at school. Court will be able to impose a parenting order for up to 12 months. It can include specific obligations upon the parent (eg parent escorts the child to school).
- Joint truancy crackdown between schools and ESWS.
- ESWS offering a range of strategies to help reduce unauthorised absence.
- Governors taking an active role on monitoring their schools performance on attendance.

“School Refusal”

Principles

Often youngsters refusing to attend school have complex, inter-relating difficulties arising from health, family, social and educational factors.

In cases where non-attendance becomes well established, involvement of professionals beyond the school may be indicated. It is important that their respective roles and responsibilities are agreed and that clear procedures for liaison, consultation and collaboration are established.

The key principles under-pinning roles, responsibilities and procedures are:

- The school retains responsibility for ensuring that the involvement of the various agencies is gained, as appropriate. (Where the child is not on the roll of a school the E.S.W holds this responsibility).
- The group of involved professionals is jointly responsible for the decision to seek to involve a further professional group.
- Decisions to involve a given professional group will be based on:
 - Criteria agreed, for example, time intervals.
 - Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of each group.
 - Responsibilities of each group.
 - Experience.
- Withdrawal from a case by any professional group follows the agreement of the existing stakeholder group.

School Responsibilities in relation to School Refusal

To develop a school culture that operates to reduce the risk of school refusal. This may include policy and practice re:

- Bullying and other forms of harassment, including racial
- Social inclusion
- Extra-curricular opportunities
- Mentoring schemes
- Special Educational Needs

To raise teachers' awareness of the indicators of a child at risk of school refusal.

- Training
- School policy development n.b. the respective roles of SEN and pastoral care staff. (Need to identify a named person).

Avoid any indication of condoning non-attendance.

- Training
- School : ESW links

To identify children at risk and then to:

- Engage with parents;
- Investigate any school based difficulties and respond;
- Consult ESWS
- Consult School Health staff

To identify a named person to ensure referral to other agencies, as appropriate.

Educational Social Work Service Responsibilities in relation to School Refusal

To advise schools of their responsibilities in relation to individual cases i.e. support implementation of school's responsibilities. In collaboration with the school, to advise parents of:

- The legal position;
- Their responsibilities;
- Available support;

To liaise with school health advisers and community paediatricians.

To plan further action on the basis of agreed approaches.

To discuss with school and family the possible need for:

- Further assessment, for example, by school's E.P.
- Further within school support, for example, by SEN Support Services.
- Further involvement of School Health.

To establish and maintain the County database re children out of school.

Educational Psychology Service (EPS) Responsibilities in relation to School Refusal

- To consult with those already involved.
- Where necessary, to carry out further assessments.
- To advise on future case management, generally.

Health Service Responsibilities in relation to School Refusal

School Health – to provide consultation to parents, school and ESW about possible Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMH) concerns, and about other health issues. As appropriate to communicate such concerns to child's G.P. and CAMH Services (CAMHS).

General Practitioners (G.P.'s)

G.P.'s have been asked to liaise with schools, either directly or through School Health staff, when presented with cases of school refusal.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) concerns

CAMHS professionals may become involved with cases where school refusal is a concern before the case is brought to the attention of Education Department staff. If this happens it would be helpful, if the family is willing, to inform the school's named person. (From within the Education Service, referrals to CAMHS would not normally be expected prior to consultation with the school's E.P.)

Children who are unable to attend for health reasons

A school retains responsibility for the delivery of a pupil's education for as long as the pupil is on the school roll. Sick children must not be taken off the school register without the consent of their parents and prior consultation with the LEA even after long absences arising from ill health. Some pupils may be too sick or unwell to do any schoolwork, but schools should not assume that pupils away from school because of ill health are unable to work. The school should ensure that:

- all non-attendance related to ill health is properly authorised and monitored by a relevant medical practitioner, and that
- advice and assistance is sought as appropriate from the School Health Service and/or the Educational Social Work Service.

Schools must arrange for a teacher to be nominated to co-ordinator educational provision for each pupil unable to attend school because of long-term ill health.

'Education out of school' involves sending work home. The range and amount of work is a matter for discussion between the school and parents taking into account the principles of good practice outlined earlier. Schools are not expected to provide home-based teaching. The nominated teacher must;

- consider the possibility of providing education out of school when a pupil has been absent for two weeks because of ill health, or when there is a series of absence of one week or more;
- contact parents to discuss needs and make appropriate educational provision;
- make mutually acceptable arrangements with parents for the regular setting, supervision, marking and collection of work;
- co-ordinate the school's response by providing a suitable programme of work for the pupil in co-operation with class or subject teachers;
- consider with parents whether it would be appropriate for any member of the school staff to undertake a pastoral visit to home or hospital, or whether it would be appropriate to encourage school friends to write or visit;
- liaise with all relevant Education, Health or Social Service professionals, and
- maintain records of all pupils for whom the LEA is providing education out of school

The nominated teacher should refer to the LEA in all circumstances when the total length of absence from school is expected to exceed 4 weeks or 20 school days, or when it is considered that the long term health needs of the pupil may result in intermittent attendance which could have a significant impact on the pupils education

- Parents must give prior consent to the referral itself and to the LEA seeking all relevant medical information and advice.
- All referrals must be made by the school. The LEA will not accept referrals from parents or agencies (except in the case of sudden hospital admissions).
- Referrals should be sent to the Specialist Service Leader of the Disability and Illness Service who will arrange for the LEA to make provision as appropriate.
- Schools can help the LEA to respond promptly both by providing the earliest possible notification and by ensuring that the referral is completed in full. It is particularly important to provide the correct names, addresses and telephone numbers of all relevant medical personnel so that the LEA can seek information and advise quickly. When considering the needs of pupils with mental health difficulties, the LEA will consult with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) either directly or through local area panels.

The nominated teacher may wish to consult the DISCS HELPLINE (024 7636 0835) for any advice on making provision for sick pupils.

Procedures for Tracking and Monitoring Pupils Out Of School

The Education Social Work Service is the service responsible for tracking and monitoring pupils out of school.

Home Education

- Centrally held LEA register managed by the Principal ESW
- Schools forward copy of letter from parents who have decided to educate their child at home, to the Principal ESW.
- ESWs carry out a home visit to explain monitoring system and whether parents are clear on the implications of home education
- Annual inspection
- Review meeting held termly between ESWs and Schools Team

Out of school Register

- Centrally held register managed by the County Out-of-school Group
- Register up date half termly
- Information gathered from a range of education services
- System reviewed six monthly

Procedures for checking children who move away from a school without notice.

- Regulation 9. (1) G. The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995.
Where a pupil of compulsory school age has been continuously absent for four weeks or more, his name may not be deleted from the admission register until both the school and the local education authority have failed after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil.
- School should carry out all reasonable enquiries,
 - Eg Telephone call to parents.
 - Letter to parent.
 - Any information from the grapevine.
 - Contact with any other known
 - If child is known to be in the Child Protection Register advise registrar immediately
- If child is out of school for 2 weeks without explanation being given – then referral to Education Social Work Service.
- Education Social Work Service carry out the following reasonable enquiries:-
(Timeline 2 weeks)
 - Home Visit immediately.
 - Check neighbours
 - Contact emergency numbers
 - Contact child's friends
 - Contact Housing
 - Contact Health Authority
 - Contact other services involved
- If no information, agree with school to remove the child from the school.
- Common Transfer file to be uploaded onto 'School2School' database under category XXXXX
- If knowledge of the authority the family have moved to – write to them with details of family and attendance and any other points. Give point of contact.

Guidance for Parents

The following is the text of an information leaflet for parents on Attendance.

The Importance of Regular School Attendance

The importance of regular school attendance cannot be overestimated. It is essential to a good education and establishing it must be a high priority for schools, parents and pupils alike. The reasons why attendance problems arise are many and varied. They are often complex and require sensitive and professional handling. Children who do not attend school regularly diminish the value of the education provided for them. They may also damage the learning of other because of the disruption that can be caused to other pupils. It is the duty of parents to secure education for their children and for the Local Education Authority (LEA) to ensure that this duty is carried out. The Education Social Work Department carries out this duty on behalf of the LEA. We carry this out in a number of ways:

- ✓ Working in schools with children and teachers
- ✓ Working directly with families and children in the home
- ✓ Project work within schools and communities
- ✓ Assisting schools with wider attendance issues

The Education Social Work Service also carries out a number of other duties relating to the welfare of children in the education setting and with employment matter concerning school age children.

The Law

If you are a parent of (or are responsible for) a child aged between 5 and 16 who is registered at school, this information explains your responsibilities for making sure he or she attends school regularly.

By law, all children of compulsory school age (5 and 16) must get a proper full-time education. You are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering the child at school or by making other arrangements, which provides an effective education. If your child is registered as a pupil at a particular school, that school must give permission for your child to be absent. If your child does not go to the school at which he or she is registered, the relevant education authority can take legal action against you.

The Role Of The Local Education Authority

- ✓ Local education authorities (LEAs) are responsible by law, for making sure that registered pupils of compulsory school age attend their school regularly.
- ✓ The LEA employs education social workers to monitor school attendance and to help parents meet their responsibilities.
- ✓ Education social workers work closely with schools
- ✓ If your child is not attending school regularly, an education social worker may visit you.
- ✓ For your child's sake you should co-operate with the education social worker to make sure your child overcomes his or her attendance problems and gets a proper education.
- ✓ If you do not do everything you can to co-operate with the education social worker and school, the LEA may have no choice but to apply for an education supervision order. This means that the court appoints a supervisor to help and give advice to you and your child.
- ✓ The LEA can, also prosecute you in a magistrates court. This could result in you and your partner being fined up to £1000 for each child (under review).

Some Vital Statistics On Attending School

Each year there are only 190 statutory school days, which means that if your child misses 8 days they are out of school more than they are in school. This means there are 185 days for:

- Shopping
- Birthday treats and trips
- Non-urgent medical and dental appointments.

Use these—not precious school time. None of the above are authorised reasons for being out of school and time off school will hinder your child's learning and progress in school. They will appear on your child's school report as unauthorised absences and can lead to legal action being taken against you as the parent/carer.

Remember school time is precious – don't waste it!

For example, if you miss a day a week for all of your school career, it is the equivalent of missing two years of school. That is like starting school at 7 or finishing at 14. Unnecessary days off school can soon mount up so that pupils have gaps in their knowledge which can be hard to fill.

Lateness

This is a problem because it: -

- Makes the child stand out
- Disrupts lessons
- Sets a poor example for later life
- May, if persistent, result in prosecution of the parent.

Some Good Advice To Children and Young People

5 good reasons to attend school

- ❖ Friendship
- ❖ Education and learning
- ❖ Knowledge
- ❖ Opportunities and choices
- ❖ Games/team activities

10 tips to help you get there

- ❖ Go to bed at a reasonable time
- ❖ Make sure the alarm is set to wake you
- ❖ Allow enough time for breakfast
- ❖ Set off in good time to get to the bus stop
- ❖ Make sure you have the bus fare/bus pass
- ❖ Pack your bag the night before
- ❖ Make sure your uniform is ready
- ❖ If you find your homework hard, or if you have not done it, talk to your parents/carer
- ❖ If you are having difficulties, find an adult you trust
- ❖ Make sure you tell your parents when you need extra kit, e.g. swimming, PE games.

Remember

We are here to help ensure that young people receive a happy full-time education.