



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & CARERS

The law states that a parent/carer is responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and on time. Failure to do so renders the parent/carer guilty of an offence.

Compulsory school age is from 5 years to 16 years of age.

Ideally a child's overall attendance should be above 96%.

Parents/carers are expected to inform the school on the first day of their child's absence to give the reason why their child is not in school. Failure to do this means the school will code the absences as **UNAUTHORISED**. Prolonged non-contact from the parent could lead to a "Safe and Well Check" being initiated on the grounds of safeguarding, (this can involve the Police).

A child's absence from school is either recorded as authorised or unauthorised by the school. Parents/carers **CANNOT** authorise their child's absence.

School can request supporting evidence from parents/carers, this allows them to record a child's absence as authorised.

School will discuss with and may refer cases where appropriate, to their Education Welfare Officer, should a child's attendance become a concern or fall below 95%.

The Department for Education (DfE) considers a child, whose attendance falls below 90%, as a "**persistent absent**" child. Schools are expected to address attendance at this level and **not** continue to authorise any further absences unless evidence is provided.

The regulations regarding holidays in term time changed on the 1st September 2013. These regulations prevent Head Teachers from authorising holidays in term time except in exceptional circumstances. **PARENTS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED NOT TO BOOK HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME WITHOUT FIRST SPEAKING TO THE SCHOOL OR EWO.**

Children are expected to attend school for 190 days per academic year; the other 175 days are spent at home with you

Legal action can be taken against parents/carers by the Local Authority if their child's absence has been recorded as unauthorised. This can either be a:

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE (A FINE)

£80 per parent, per child if paid within three weeks, doubling to £160 per parent, per child if paid in the fourth week. Payment is required in full. Failure to pay will result in the Local Authority submitting the matter for prosecution through the Magistrates Court.

PROSECUTION

In the Magistrates Court. The Court can impose a fine of up to £2500 and or 3 months' imprisonment - parents may also be expected to pay court costs and a victims surcharge. The parent/carer usually receives a criminal record. Parents/carers may also be required to attend a parenting course.

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SENIOR EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

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