

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

This leaflet explains your responsibilities if you are a parent of a child aged between 5-16 (or are responsible for a child) who is registered at a school.

WHY REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Young people deserve the best start in life

School prepares children and young people for the world of work and college. It is most important that children and young people receive a good education. This will affect them for the rest of their lives.

Children learn bad habits about reliability and time keeping by not attending school regularly and punctuality.

Children who truant from school risk getting into crime, or may become victims of crime or abuse.

Children make friends at school and learn how to behave towards each other. Children who do not attend frequently show signs of poor behaviour.

YOU MAY NOT REALISE THAT YOUR CHILD IS TRUANTING

Look for the signs, such as:

- A lack of interest in school
- Attempts to keep you away from school
- An interest in when you will and will not be at home
- Sudden disappearance of homework
- Keen to get to the post before you
- Having friendships with people who are much older than themselves or who are known truants.

THERE ARE MANY REASONS WHY CHILDREN FAIL TO ATTEND SCHOOL

- Bullying
- Fear of failure
- Family concerns
- Boredom
- Dislike of the Teacher or lesson
- Problems with class work or homework
- Pressure from friends to truant
- Teenage rebellion
- Relationships

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO ENCOURAGE ATTENDANCE

Always let school staff know when and why your child has been absent

Avoid keeping your children at home unless they are too ill to attend school

Take a positive interest in your child's work and listen to what they say

Discuss your concerns if you think your child is unhappy or missing out on education

Become involved in meetings for parents and school events

Support the school all you can

When parents and schools work together the risks of truancy are lower

Let your children know that you value their education

THE LAW

Parents have a duty to make sure that their children are educated.

If your child does not attend school regularly and punctually, parents risk having to go to court. The result could lead to a large fine and one of a range of Orders available to court.

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

Head Teachers can no longer authorise holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances means: rare, significant, unavoidable, short, and the leave could not reasonably be scheduled for another time.

Unauthorised leave of 10 sessions (5 days) or more will qualify for a fine. No warning will be issued from the local authority as schools will have informed parents in advance.

Penalty Notice fines are issued to both parents and are £60 per parent per child. If the fine is not paid within 21 days the fine will be doubled to £120. Failure to pay the fine after a further 7 days will result in a summons to Magistrates Court and potentially a larger fine and a criminal record.

SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL

Schools will encourage and support children to attend school regularly.

Schools may offer incentives or rewards recognise good attendance.

School staff are available to help parents and students to deal with any issues which may be affecting attendance.

SUPPORT FROM EDUCATION WELFARE

Schools have access to an Education Welfare Officer, who can help you, in confidence, to resolve any problems which may be affecting your child's attendance.

Children's Services

Early Help and Schools Service

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

**Number One Riverside, Smith Street,
Rochdale OL16 1XU**

Tel: 01706 925115

Email: education.welfare@rochdale.gov.uk



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