

*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply,
Love as God Loves You and Let Your Light Shine!'*



RAISING PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

A PARENT/CARERS' GUIDE TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

On behalf of the following schools:-

Barnes Farm Infant School

Barnes Farm Junior School

Chancellor Park Primary School

Perryfields Infant School

Perryfields Junior School

Springfield Primary School

The Bishops' C of E & RC Primary School

Trinity Road Primary School

Tyrrells Primary School

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School Attendance

If you are a parent of (or responsible for) a child in school, this leaflet explains how you can best meet your responsibilities for making sure s/he attends school regularly.

Why must your child go to school regularly?

Having a good education will help you to give your child the best possible start in life. If your child does not attend school regularly s/he will not be able to keep up with their work.

Employers will want to be sure that the people they are taking on are reliable. Children, who have attended their school on a regular basis, have a better chance of getting and keeping a good job. Young people who are off school for no good reason are at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse. They may also be drawn into antisocial or criminal behaviour.

What does the law say?

By law, all children between the age of 5 and 16 must receive full time education. During that time the school must give permission for your child to be absent. The school has the right to withhold permission and to take further action where appropriate.

What can I do to help my child and the school?

- Make sure your child goes to school regularly, arrives on time and attends all lessons. Start these good habits straight away
- If your child is ill, contact the school on the first day of illness. Staff will be concerned if they do not hear anything
- Take an interest in your child's school work
- Support the school in its efforts to control unacceptable behavior
- Book all non-urgent dental and doctor's appointments out of school time
- If you want permission for your child to miss school, you should ask permission a minimum of 4 weeks in advance giving full details. The school will not authorise leave of absence to agree to shopping trips, day trips, birthday celebrations or surprise holidays arranged by other family members
- Limit any school absence to as little as possible and avoid times leading up to and during important examinations or tests
- Arrange holidays and trips in school holidays
- Inform family members of holiday dates and the need to organize special holidays and treats in holiday time

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All absence from school is potentially detrimental to your child's academic progress and his/her social relationships.

Absence at the beginning or end of a new school year or term are particularly detrimental. The introduction to new work is missed, putting your child at a clear disadvantage. In addition, whilst the rest of the class are settling in and forming new relationships, your child will take longer to catch up and settle as part of the group when she/he does return to school. These problems are increased if your child already experiences learning or social difficulties.

Remember:

Holidays during term time may be cheaper but there is a hidden cost to your child.

Authorisation for leave of absence will only be granted for exceptional circumstances e.g:

- *Days of religious observance*
- *Interviews, for example transfer to other schools*
- *Participation in approved public performances*
- *To attend an exceptional family occasion such as weddings, funerals, graduations of close family members*

Leave of absence for holidays will not be authorised

Local Authority (LA)

The LA is responsible, by law, for making sure that registered pupils of compulsory school age attend their school regularly.

What is an Education Welfare Officer? (EWO)

Essex County Council employs EWOs to monitor school attendance and to help parents meet their responsibilities.

If your child is not attending school regularly, or is frequently late, you will be requested to meet with the Headteacher of your child's school. In cases where a family does not co-operate with the process, the LA may have no option but to set a supervision order. Extreme cases may result in prosecution.

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Absence from School

Are you aware of the potential impact on your child's education of absence during term time?

1 day = 2 school sessions

10 days off per school year = 94.7% Attendance

20 days off per school year = 90% attendance

90% attendance = 4 whole weeks off school

90% attendance in years 1-6 means more than half a year off school!

90% attendance for your child through Primary and Secondary school means they will have missed a WHOLE YEAR of school education!

Pupils with a high level of absence will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer and Local Authority, who may issue a Penalty Notice