What does the law say about attendance?

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16 yrs) must get a suitable, full-time education. As a parent **you are responsible** for making sure this happens.

Parents and carers commit an offence if a child does not attend school regularly and the absence is not agreed by the school.

Will an absence be authorised by the school?

Schools can only agree absences for a limited range of exceptional circumstances, these are typically absences that are completely unavoidable. Absences that **will not be agreed** might include:

- Arrival after registers have closed.
- Absences that are not properly explained.
- Day trips and holidays in term time.
- Leaving the school without school authorisation during the day.

Repeated unauthorised absences may be referred to Devon County Council for Parent Responsibility measures to improve attendance.

Who can help you?

Do not be afraid to ask for help if a problem arises.

Parents and carers should reach out to the school to explore how they can support and/or contact other services available to help.

Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership

www.devonscp.org.uk/

Public Health Nursing Hubs

Tel: 03332341910

www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/health/public-health-nursing/

Early Help

Northern Devon: Earlyhelpnorthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Southern Devon: Earlyhelpsouthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Mid & East Devon: Earlyhelpmideastsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Exeter: Earlyhelpexetersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Devon Independent Advisory Service

DIAS devonias@devon.gov.uk

Devon County Council

School attendance matters



Attendance advice and guidance for parents and carers

For further information about the Attendance Improvement Team and Devon Childrens Services please see our website:
www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/

Why is good school attendance important?

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential to supporting a child or young person to flourish, fulfil their potential and enables them to:

- learn
- make and manage friendships
- develop new skills
- have fun
- experience new things in the world around them
- develop awareness and respect of other cultures, religion, ethnicity, and gender differences
- build confidence and self-esteem
- achieve and thrive with a sense of belonging to their school community
- prioritise their well-being and happiness
- be given the best start in life, enabling the best possible choices in their future

Missing school... missing out!

Don't let your child be the one to miss out!

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent number of missed:		
	Days	Weeks	Average lessons
95%	9	2	54
90%	19	4	114
85%	29	6	174
80%	38	8	228
75%	48	10	288
70%	57	11.5	342
65%	67	13.5	402

"We are only a few minutes late" - Does it matter?

Being late for school reduces learning time and does not prepare your child or young person for their future working lives.

- Arrival 5 minutes late every day = 3 days of learning missed each year
- Arrival 15 minutes late every day = 10 days or 2 weeks of learning each year.

How you can help your child or young person to have excellent attendance in school

- Always inform the school if your child is absent.
- Talk openly to your child about school and work in partnership with the school to best support them.
- Encourage your child to attend regularly and advocate, speak up on behalf of their needs.
- Arrange medical or dental appointments outside of school hours when possible.
- Establish good morning and bedtime routines.
- Support your child to arrive at school on time.
- Take truancy seriously - consider where are they? Who are they with? What are they doing?
- Where possible attend parent consultations and school events.
- Value and acknowledge achievements in school.
- Take family holidays, visit family outside of term time.

