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**The Department of Education and Children is committed to improving standards in all our schools, including a challenge to every case of unsatisfactory school attendance.**

### WHAT IS YOUR DUTY?

As a parent, you are legally responsible for:

- Ensuring your children receive education.
- Their regular attendance at school.

### THIS MEANS THAT :

Your children must:

- Arrive at school on time.
- Attend regularly.
- Be suitably clothed.
- Be in a condition to learn.



### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Any absence can disrupt your child's education.

They should only be off:

- If the absence is authorised by the school eg: Ill or receiving treatment (GP or dentist).
- There has been a significant family event.
- It is a day of religious observance.

They must not be off school to:

- Mind the house.
- Visit relatives.
- For long weekends.
- To look after brothers or sisters.

**These absences are unauthorised.**

Avoid Family Holidays in Term Time:

- These disrupt the learning pattern.
- Can affect exam and test performance.
- You have no automatic right to such leave and absences may be unauthorised.

### YOUR CHILD MISSING SCHOOL CAN:

- Disrupt their own and others learning opportunities.
- Interfere with the school's teaching routines and damage performance.
- Affect friendship patterns with peers.
- Encourage disaffection and harm long-term prospects.

### WHAT WILL THE DEPARTMENT DO?

- Work with your child's school to identify absences.
- Meet with you to resolve unsatisfactory attendance.
- Consider prosecution in all cases of excessive unauthorised absences.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The school must submit the attendance figures to the Department on a monthly basis.
  - The school Education Liaison Officer regularly checks the school's register.
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## HOW CAN WE HELP?

Your children are very important to us all and deserve the best possible education.

*But sometimes things go wrong.*

*So*, every school has an Education Liaison Officer whose job it is to work in partnership with you and the school.

**We can offer help by providing advice on:**

- Attendance problems.
- Behavioural problems.
- Bullying.

The service is completely:

1. Confidential.
2. Free.
3. Non-discriminatory.

## HOW TO CONTACT US:

Headteachers and other school staff can be contacted at your child's school.

Education Liaison Officers can be contacted by phone:

**Jo Callister, Senior Education Liaison Officer 685792**

**Beverley Fellows, Education Liaison Officer 693839**

**Magdalena Czarnecka, Education Liaison Officer 687346**

Remember, excessive absence will be referred to the Department and might lead to prosecution.



Promoting Good Attendance

**A Parents' Guide**

**September 2013**

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