

Suffolk Attendance Strategy 2013-15

This document confirms Suffolk's commitment to participation in education as a key factor in improving the life opportunities of children and young people in Suffolk. It links directly to Suffolk's Raising the Bar agenda

Parents, Schools, and the Local Authority (LA) all have a crucial role to play in ensuring that children attend school regularly and that absence is tackled promptly.

Why is good school attendance important?

- There is a direct link between school attendance and achievement
- Children who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve and less likely to become unemployed
- Being in school keeps children safe

What parent(s) need to do:

- Ensure their children are in school on time every day
- Send their children to school with the correct uniform and equipment for the day including provision for lunch
- Take an interest in their child's education
- Talk to staff as soon as possible if problems arise
- Only take family holidays during school holidays

What School(s) need to do:

- Have an attendance policy that is clear to staff, pupils and parents
- Have systems in place to identify pupils who are absent
- Know why individual pupils are absent and work with the pupils, parents any other involved professionals (if any) to ensure full attendance is achieved as soon as possible

What the Local Authority needs to do:

- Work in partnership with schools to ensure best practice is followed by schools and challenge schools if this is not the case
- When working with children, young people and their families ensure that improving and sustaining good school attendance is part of every plan
- Ensure that families are supported and challenged when pupils with poor levels of attendance are identified
- Take legal action to require parent(s) to send their child(ren) to school when appropriate
- Ensure that children not in the mainstream school system are receiving an appropriate education

Suffolk Attendance Priorities for 13/14 Academic Year:

In Primary Schools reduce Overall Absence from 5.2% to 4.8% and Persistent Absence from 4.1% to 3.1% by September 2014.

In Secondary Schools reduce Overall Absence from 6.1% to 5.8% and Persistent Absence from 6.9% to 5.9% by September 2014.

Actions to achieve priorities are:

1. Target Persistent absentees through support and challenge to parents and education settings.
2. Raise awareness of good punctuality and its link to preventing attendance issues.
3. Ensure best whole school practice is proactive in managing attendance
4. Ensure *all* professionals, both SCC and associated agencies, working with families of statutory school age children actively promote attendance
5. Target interventions to reduce parentally condoned absence from schools and settings.
6. Target approaches to ensure the attendance of groups vulnerable to underachievement.
7. Ensure the LA quickly identifies children missing education (CME) and returns them to education as quickly as possible.
8. Further develop community awareness and joint working through Truancy Sweeps and multi agency impact days.
9. Ensure there are robust processes and practice in place to meet the Local Authority's duties with regard to Child Employment and Performance Licensing

Core Principles in ensuring good attendance

Suffolk County Council aims to improve attendance and attainment for all pupils, with a particular focus on improving the attendance and attainment of vulnerable pupils.

- Suffolk County Council supports all educational provisions when Ofsted identifies attendance issues that need to be addressed.
- Suffolk County Council Officers support schools to analyse their data on attendance and *identify early* those pupils who are developing a pattern of absence.
- Suffolk County Council Officers work with parents and carers to support, encourage good attendance and take legal action if appropriate to address issues of non attendance.
- Suffolk County Council Officers will make all educational provisions aware of changes to legislation surrounding attendance.
- Suffolk County Council operates a robust system for investigating 'children missing education'.

Implementation and Review

This policy will be reviewed in September 2014

Supporting Guidance and Policies

SCC Education Attendance Service, Technical Guidance and Working Practices
Version 6 – August 2013

SCC Children Missing Education ‘Everyone’s Responsibility’
Version 29 July 2013

SCC Penalty Notice Protocol & Administrative Guidance
Revised August 2013

SCC Children in Employment and Entertainment Technical Guidance
2013

References

Education Act 1996

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 / 2010

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 relating to Penalty Notices

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 &
2013.

Children Act 1989 – Section 36 relating to Education Supervision Orders

Improving attendance at School [Charlie Taylor Report] 2012

Advice on School Attendance Department for Education 2013.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013