

At Suffolk County Council we are firmly committed to supporting good school attendance and believe that most parents and carers are too.

## Why is going to school regularly so important?

- Children who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve good results.
- Children who are absent without good reason are 12 times more likely to leave school without any qualifications.
- Young people with good attendance will find work more easily when they leave school.
- Young people who truant are three times more likely to break the law.
- Children who do not attend school are more likely to be victims of crime or be at risk from other kinds of harm.

## What's the law about school attendance?

The law says that parents and carers must make sure their children receive a suitable and full-time education. Most parents and carers do this by registering their children at a school and making sure they attend regularly.

If your children are absent from school without a good reason, you are committing an offence and may have to go to court. You could be fined up to £2,500 or even sent to prison for up to three months.

There are only a few reasons that will be accepted for not going to school.

These are:

- The school has granted leave of absence.
- Your child cannot go to school because of sickness or some other unavoidable reason.
- It is a day of religious observance in your religion.
- The county council hasn't provided transport for your child if they live more than two miles from school (if they are under eight) or three miles from school (if they are eight or over). If you have chosen to register your child at a school outside your catchment area, this does not apply.

This means it is never acceptable for your child to miss school for things like birthdays, shopping trips, looking after younger brothers or sisters, or minding the house.



## What can I do?

If your child has to be absent from school, contact the school on the first day of absence. If you do not do this, the school may contact you.

Unless your child is ill, you should ask the school's permission well in advance for your child to be absent. The school will decide whether to agree the absence or not.

Try to arrange medical appointments at the beginning or end of the day so that your child can attend school beforehand or afterwards. Dental appointments should be after the school day or during the holidays, except in an emergency.

If you think your child is trying to avoid going to school, contact their teacher or form tutor straight away so any difficulties can be sorted out at an early stage. The longer you leave things, the harder it will be to return your child to school.

### **Children have a right to a good education.**

They need this so that they get the best chance in life. Once children are registered at a school, parents and carers have a responsibility to make sure they attend regularly.

### **Children have a right to be kept safe.**

If your children are not attending school, you may not know where they are or even if they are safe. Their teachers will not know either.





### What can I do?

- Make sure your child arrives punctually at school every day.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep and is up in plenty of time each morning.
- Make sure your child is dressed correctly and has the proper equipment.
- Show an interest in what your child does in school each day and encourage them to do any homework that is set.

### What does the Education Attendance Service do?

The Education Attendance Service supports parents and carers in making sure their children go to school regularly.

Education Welfare Officers can liaise with schools and other agencies and, together with parents, look for ways of improving school attendance if it becomes a problem.

We also carry out truancy sweeps in towns across Suffolk. By stopping children, young people and parents and carers, we can make sure that everyone knows about why it is important to go to school regularly.

### Further Information

If you would like more information, please contact us at one of these addresses:

**Northern Area Education Office,**  
Adrian House, Alexandra Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1PL.  
Tel. 01502 405261

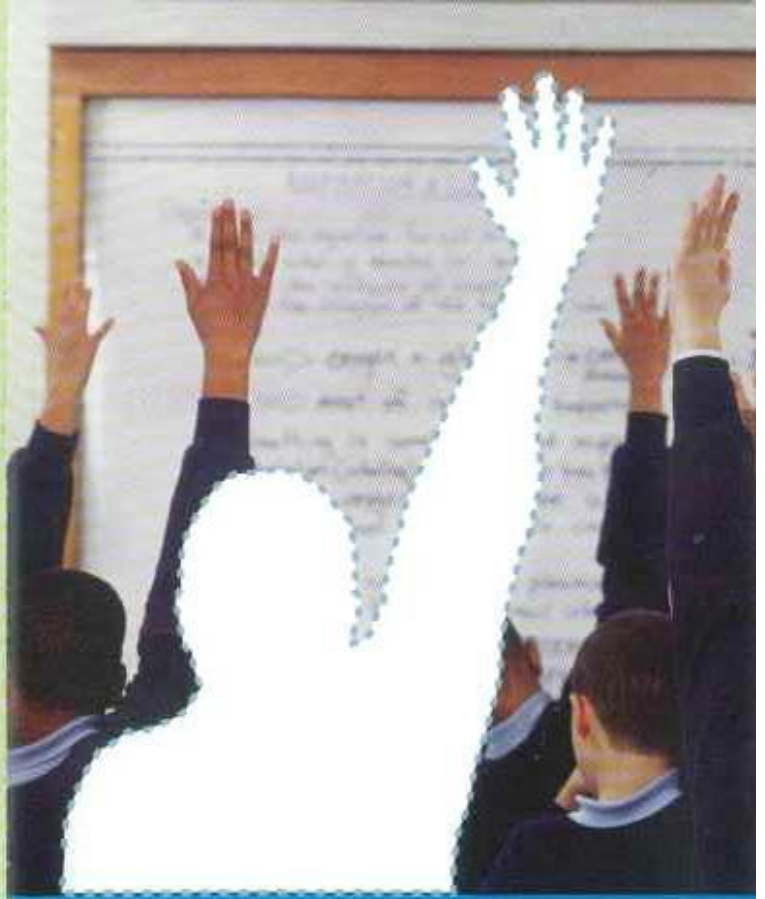
**Southern Area Education Office,**  
St Edmund House, Rope Walk, Ipswich, IP4 1LZ.  
Tel. 01473 584787

**Western Area Education Office,**  
Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1RX.  
Tel. 01284 352122

If you need help to understand this information in another language please call the number below:

إذا تحتاج إلى مساعدة لفهم هذه المعلومات في أي لغة أخرى فالرجاء الاتصال على الرقم التالي.	Arabic
এই সেবাটি যদি অন্য ভাষাতে বুঝতে চান তাহলে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন	Bengali
如果你需要其他語言來幫助你了解這些資訊，請撥以下電話。	Chinese
શો તમારે કોઈ અન્ય ભાષામાં સહાયતા મેળવવાની જરૂર હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને નીચેના નંબર પર કોલ કરો.	Gujarati
بەگەر تۆن ئۆزىڭىزنىڭ تىلى بىلەن بۇ ئۇچۇرنى چۈشەنەلمەيسىز، ئۆزىڭىزنىڭ تىلىڭىزدا بىزگە مەسلىھەت بېرىڭىز.	Kurdish
Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tych informacji w swoim języku zadzwoń na podany poniżej numer.	Polish
Se precisar de ajuda para ler estas informações em outra língua, por favor telefone para o número abaixo.	Portuguese

If you would like this information in another format, including audio tape or large print, please call 08456 066 067.



# School Attendance

A guide for parents and carers

