Why is it important for children not to miss school?

All parents want the best for their children and for them to get on well in life. Having a good education is important to ensure that they have the best opportunities in their adult life. They only get one chance at school, and your child's future may be affected by not attending school or alternative provision regularly.

If children do not attend school regularly they may:

- Struggle to keep up with school work. In a busy school day it is difficult for schools to find the extra time to help a child catch up.
- Miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up.

Setting good attendance patterns from an early age, from nursery through primary school, will also help your child later on in their life. Children who have a poor school attendance record may have less chance of securing a job when they are adults.

Why is punctuality so important?

Being on time is vital. Arriving late at school can be very disruptive for your child, their teacher and the other children in the class. It is important that children understand the importance of time keeping and being organised.

There may be times when parents are finding it difficult to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If this is the case, it is important to talk to school as soon as possible.



What might the impact of poor attendance be on your child?

In primary schools less than 65% of children achieve good results in English and Maths with an average of 15 days absence a year compared to almost 90% where the average is less than 8 days. Parents can be very surprised at how quickly their children can accumulate 15 days absence within a year.

Research has also shown that children who are not in school can become vulnerable. For example, children who play truant are more likely to be drawn into crime than those who do not.

What does the law say?

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

Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure he or she attends regularly. If your child fails to attend regularly – even if they miss school without you knowing – the Local Authority may take legal action against you.



What happens if your child does not attend school regularly?

Your child's school is responsible by law for reporting poor attendance to the Local Authority. As a parent, you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly.

You run the risk of being issued with a penalty notice or being taken to court. The LA may decide to prosecute a parent. If this happens:

Parents can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly; Magistrates can also impose a Parenting Order, which means that the parent has to attend a counselling and guidance programme, usually a parenting class.

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is essential that you follow school's absence procedures and contact school to provide a reason for their absence.

You should contact school before 9:30am on the first day of absence.

Parents can encourage good attendance by:

- having a regular bedtime and morning routine
- preparing for the morning routine by packing a bag the night before and setting out uniform
- talking together about all the fun their child will have at school
- arranging routine medical appointments, outings and holidays out of school hours
- talking to their child's teacher if there are any concerns or anxieties
- working with their child to develop healthy hygiene practices

If you are facing difficulties getting your child into school, please contact our Attendance Champion, Mrs Avery. It is important to discuss this with school at the earliest opportunity.





The world is run by those who turn up.

Attending school every day = 100% attendance

Attending 4½ days a week = 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed per year

Attending 4 days a week = 80% attendance = more than half a term missed per year.

An average attendance of 80% or less across a child's school career adds up to missing a whole 2 years from school.

Punctuality is just as important. Make every minute count!

Being late for school reduces learning time. If your child is 5 minutes late every day they will miss three days of learning each year. If your child is 15 minutes late every day they will miss 2 weeks of learning each year.



OUR LADY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Regular school attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life.

Attendance and Punctuality - The Facts