

School attendance: Guidance for parents and carers

We understand that life for some parents can be demanding and getting your child to school every day and on time can become an uphill struggle. Simple steps can help your child to be organised so that mornings are not stressful.

Here are some tips:

- Going to school unprepared can be a major worry for children. Parents can help by packing schoolbags the night before and keeping an eye on homework progress.
- Tired children aren't punctual and find it hard to learn so ensure children have a sensible bedtime.
- Children can become unsettled if they have to go into school late and without their friends. Getting children to school in time to meet friends in the yard prevents this.
- Help your children get into a regular routine and set the alarm at the same time every morning.
- Make time for breakfast so there is no stopping at shops where children can get side-tracked on the way to school.
- Have a notice board or calendar at home for special trips or activities. This will help you and your children to be prepared.

To help your child get the best out of school:

- Be aware of the impact of regular absences - missing school is missing out.
- Don't let your child stay off for reasons like going shopping, birthdays, minding the house or looking after brothers and sisters.
- Try to avoid taking family holidays in term time.
- Try to make non-urgent medical and dental appointments out of school time.
- Be involved with your child's education and school - ask questions.
- Build up good habits of punctuality and attendance.

If your child is going to be absent, please:

- Contact the school on the first morning and keep the school up to date if it turns out to be a longer absence.
- Send a signed and dated note with the reason for the absence when your child returns to school.
- If your child recovers from illness before the end of the week, send them back to school even if it's only for one day - every day counts.

- If there is a problem, speak to the school and/or the Education Welfare Service on 0191 277 4500 - support will be available but staff need to be told about any difficulties as soon as possible.