

## SERVICE UPDATE

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|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Name of Function:</u></b> | Children, Families and Communities |
| <b><u>Date:</u></b>             | 10.04.24                           |
| <b><u>Title of Update:</u></b>  | Parent Information Attendance      |
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### **UPDATE:**

At the Education and Children's Services Committee on Tuesday 20 February 2024 members requested that an information leaflet be developed to ensure parents were aware of the impact of attendance rates on attainment. A copy of the leaflet being shared with all parents next week is attached to this update. Schools will also be asked to print off copies to have available in reception areas.

## Make the most of time in school

- Communicate with school about any concerns or worries you or your child have related to attendance
- Establish routines at home, such as regular bedtimes, having their uniform and homework ready for school in the morning to support punctuality.
- Discuss school with your child and take a positive interest in their learning
- Contact school to inform them of any absences
- Plan holidays within school holiday periods
- Do not take your child out of school during exam times, including study leave
- Limit 'screen' time before bed
- Try to plan medical/dental appointments after school
- If medical/dental appointments are during the school day ensure your child is returned

## Make the most of time in school

If your child is moving school it is vital that you inform the school they currently attend in advance. Failing to do so may result in a local, national or international search for your child to ensure they are safe and well.

This will involve working in partnership with Police Scotland to locate your child. This is easily avoidable by communicating intentions with school staff and providing details of your child's new school.

If you make a school placing request for another school, it is vital that your child attend their current school, while the placing request is being processed.

## Impact of Attendance: Support your child to be successful

Attendance in school is vital for your child's future. Poor attendance results in a significant loss of learning and your child can drop whole grades as a result. Strong attendance is key to your child's development at all stages of their learning from Early Years through Primary and into Secondary.

| Percentage Attendance | Days missed | Impact on learning  |
|-----------------------|-------------|---|
| 100%                  | 0           | Gives your child the best chance of success.                                      |
| 95%                   | 9 days      | Attendance beginning to have impact on learning and progress.                     |
| 90% or lower          | 19 days     | Less chance of success due to poor attendance, may drop a whole grade.            |
| 85% or lower          | 27 days     | Serious impact on learning and progress, may drop two or more grades as a result. |

## Further useful information

### Children's rights

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/12/6827/3>

Education (Scotland) Act 1980  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/ukpga/1980/44>

Aberdeen City Council Attendance procedure



## Pupil Attendance

In Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Special Schools in Aberdeen City



## In Aberdeen's schools attendance matters

Your child has a right to an education. Aberdeen City Council wants all children and young people to feel happy, safe and secure in our schools. We recognise that regular school attendance and taking part in learning – wherever learning takes place – is vital to your child getting the best possible start in life.

## Legislation and school attendance

You, as a parent or carer are legally responsible for making sure that your child is educated.

Under Section 35 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 'Non-attendance at school without reasonable excuse is an offence'.

## Partners in your child's education

All schools in Aberdeen City Council will work in close partnership with you to make sure your child reaches their full potential. We recognise that life is not without its challenges and will work closely with you to support any difficulties you may face in ensuring your child has regular attendance and punctuality at school.

## Being late for school reduces time to learn

- If your child is 5 minutes late every day they will miss the equivalent of 3 days of learning each year.
- If your child is 15 minutes late every day they will miss the equivalent of nearly 2 weeks of learning each year.

## Is it ever okay for my child to be off school?

It is okay for your child to be off school if any of the following apply;

- They are ill.
- They are attending a medical or dental appointment.
- They are going to a meeting about a Children's Hearing or court, or if they are going to a Children's Hearing, care review or court.
- They are involved in an activity and the school agrees in advance.
- Someone close to your child has died.
- There is a crisis or serious difficulty at home or in your family.
- They are going to a religious ceremony or a wedding of someone very close to them.
- You are a Gypsy/Traveller family and while you go travelling you keep in touch with your child's school, informing them of when you will leave and return.
- Your family is returning to a country of origin for cultural or familial reasons.

## What happens if my child is absent?

If you inform the school of the reason your child is absent, and the school is satisfied that this is a valid reason, it will be classified as an authorised absence on your child's record.

If your child has an unexplained absence an absence enquiry letter may be issued to you. The letter will state clearly that the absence coding on your child's record will change to unexplained/unauthorised/truancy if an explanation is not provided by you.

If your child is marked as absent and if no explanation for the absence has been received, the school will contact you either by phone or Group call. Even where communication has been received from you explaining an absence, the school may still contact you for the purposes of confirmation that information has been received by you.

If the school becomes concerned about your child's attendance they may initiate Aberdeen City Council's Attendance Procedure. All schools in Aberdeen aim to support you in fulfilling your responsibility to ensure your child has regular attendance.

