

School Attendance

Supporting regular attendance at school is a priority because of its impact on teaching and learning and on levels of attainment. There are well proven links between regular attendance at school and levels of individual pupil attainment.

Section 30 of The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 requires parents to ensure that their child attends school regularly. Regulation 7 of The Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Amendment etc. Regulations 1993 requires each child's absence from school to be recorded in the school register as authorised (e.g. approved by the local authority) or unauthorised (e.g. unexplained by the parent/guardian (truancy) or excluded from school).

Definitions of Attendance & Absence

The following definitions are taken from The Scottish Government publication "Included, Engaged and Involved, published in December 2007:

Attendance is defined as participation in a programme of educational activities arranged and agreed by the school. In addition to actual attendance within the school premises, this encompasses a range of other activities within the category of attendance (out of school but marked present), such as:

- Learning outwith the school provided by a college, off-site unit or other learning

provider while still on the roll of the school

- Educational visits, day and residential visits to outdoor centres
- Interviews and visits relating to further and higher education or career events
- Debates, sports, musical or drama activities in conjunction with the school
- Study leave for pupils participating in national exams, if arranged by the school during the period of the national examination timetable
- Activities in connection with psychological services, learning or behaviour support
- Receiving tuition via hospital or outreach teaching services
- Work experience

Authorised Absence

- Illness where no learning provision is made
- Medical and dental appointments
- Meetings prior to, and in, court
- Attendance at, or in connection with, a Children's Hearing or Care Review, or appointment with another service provider, e.g. social worker
- Religious observance
- Bereavement
- Weddings or funerals of those close to the family
- Arranged absence in relation to children in Gypsy/Traveller families
- Participation in non-school debates, sports, musical or drama activities agreed by the school
- Failure of school or service transport due to bad weather, breakdown, etc

- Exceptional domestic circumstances (short-term)
- Only those family holidays agreed by the school to be taken in exceptional circumstance
- Period of exclusion

Unauthorised Absence

- Most family holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Parent-condoned absence where the school does not agree there is a satisfactory reason for absence
- Truancy, with or without the knowledge of the parent
- All other unexplained absence is recorded as unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory explanation is subsequently provided
- Longer-term exceptional domestic carer circumstances where support has been provided
- During disputes, such as relating to the return of a pupil after an exclusion

Non-Attendance at School

Where there is initial concern at school level regarding unexplained/ill explained absences, schools will contact the parents/guardians and request an explanation. If school staff remain concerned about the reasons given (or not) for a pupil's absence, or there has not been an improvement in attendance, the Head Teacher or representative may arrange a meeting to discuss attendance. This may

involve the Inclusion and Support Services Manager and other appropriate agencies. If attendance issues continue, the case may be referred to the Schools' Attendance Sub-Committee of the Moray Council.

It is the duty of every parent or guardian under The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, (Section 30) to provide efficient education for their child who is of school age.

Parents/guardians failing in the above duty make themselves liable to prosecution in terms of Section 43 of The Education (Scotland) Act 1980. The law now provides for a fine of up to £1000, or imprisonment, or both, in the event of first or subsequent convictions, whether or not in respect of the same child.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT

THE HEADTEACHER

OR

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For alternative formats, languages or further information, please ask an English speaking friend or relative to:

Phone: 01343 563319

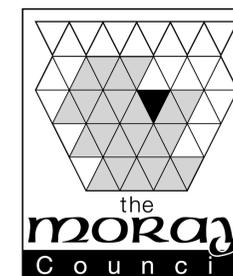
Email: equalopportunities@moray.gov.uk

This leaflet is one of a series of leaflets produced for parents and carers.

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
AND ABSENCE**

**INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS & CARERS**

produced by



EDUCATION & SOCIAL CARE

2016

(reviewed December 2017)

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