

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS



A Parent's Guide



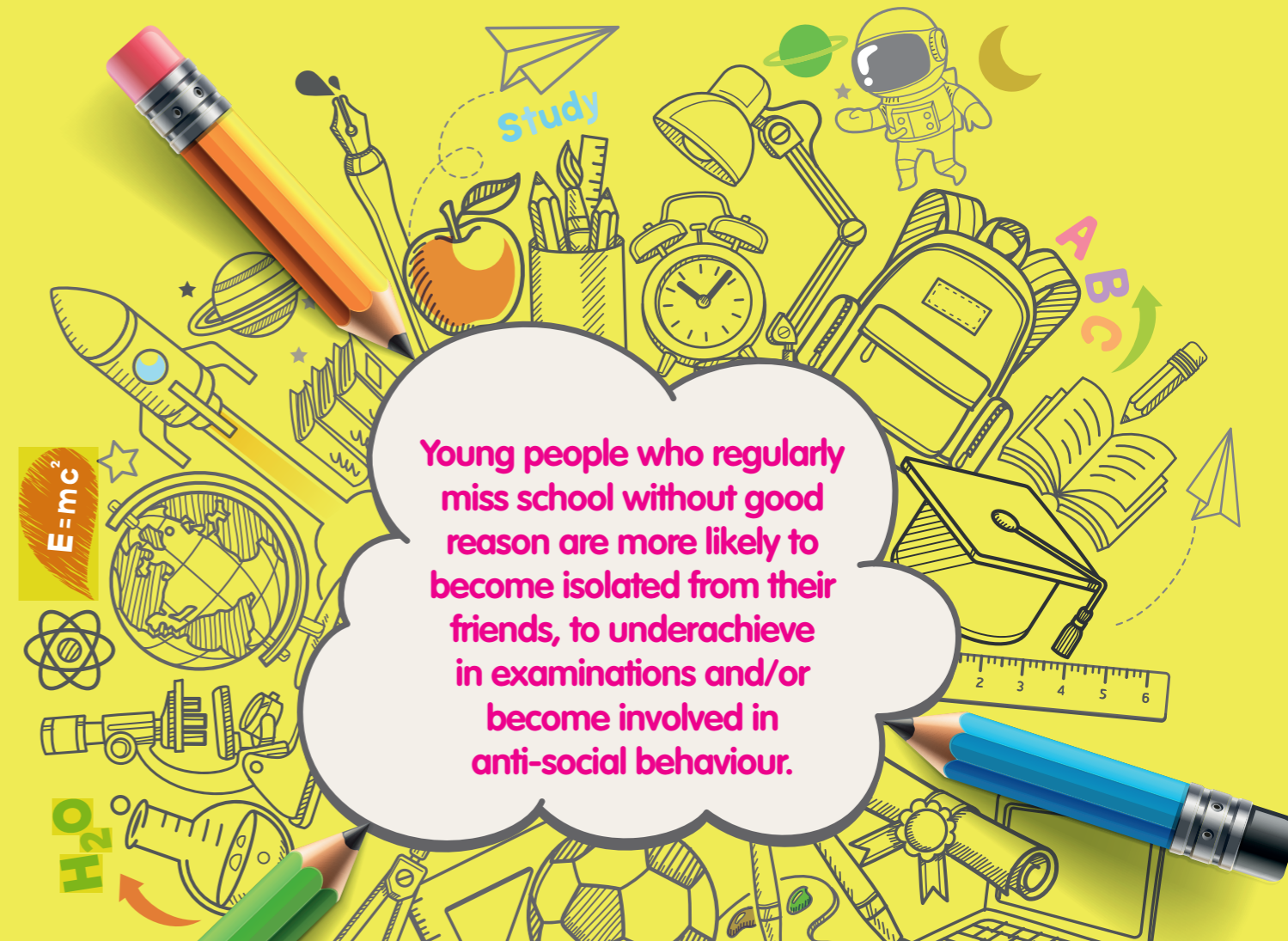
WHY ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL IS SO IMPORTANT

If a child of compulsory school age is registered at a school it is essential that they attend their school regularly and maintain a pattern of good attendance throughout their school career.

Excellent attendance at school is important to allow a child or young person to fulfil their potential.

Below are just some of the key reasons why it is so important children attend school:

- To learn. To have fun.
- To make new friends.
- To experience new things in life.
- To develop awareness of other cultures, religion, ethnicity and gender differences.
- To achieve. To gain qualifications.
- To develop new skills. To build confidence and self-esteem.
- To have the best possible start in life.



WHAT THE LAW SAYS

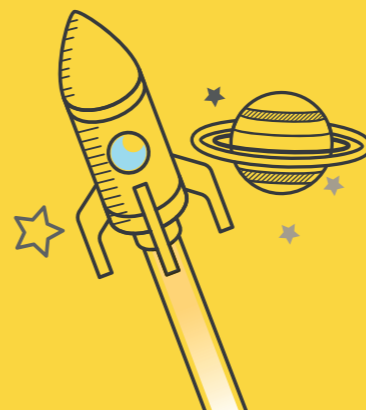
By law, all children of compulsory school age (normally five to 16) must receive a suitable full-time education. As a parent, you have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens – either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable, full-time education. Once your child is registered at a school, you are legally responsible for making sure they attend regularly. This means your child should not have sessions of unauthorised absence.

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines parent as:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

Education is not an option – IT'S COMPULSORY.



FAMILY HOLIDAYS

You can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not taking holidays during term time. Any child or young person who is absent from school due to a holiday will miss out on important learning and will fall behind with their school work.

In each Academic Year there are only a maximum of 190 statutory school days – this allows plenty of time for holidays to be arranged outside term time.

Holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence.

AVOID taking family holidays during the school term.



HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

- Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead.
- Make sure your child goes to school regularly and follows the school rules.
- Ensure your child arrives at school on time – not late.
- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible.
- Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness – this should be followed up with a written note when your child returns to school.
- Take truancy seriously – if your child is not attending school as you expect they may be putting themselves at risk – Who are they with? What are they doing?
- Take family holidays outside term time.
- Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homework).
- Attend parent evenings and school events.
- Praise and reward your child's achievements at school.
- Always support school staff in their efforts to control difficult or challenging behaviour.
- Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school – staff are there to help and will be supportive.

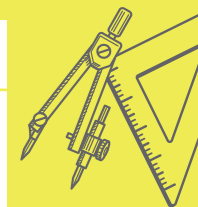
DO NOT be afraid to ask for help if a problem arises.



EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

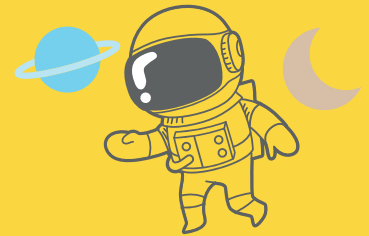
Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning.

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|-----------------|---|--------------|
| 100% Attendance | 0 Days Missed | Excellent |
| 95% Attendance | 9 Days of Absence 1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed | Satisfactory |
| 90% Attendance | 19 Days of Absence 3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed | Poor |
| 85% Attendance | 28 Days of Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed | Very Poor |
| 80% Attendance | 38 Days of Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed | Unacceptable |
| 75% Attendance | 46 Days of Absence 9 Weeks and 1 Day of Learning Missed | Unacceptable |



For some parents, 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during the school year – that's nearly 4 school weeks.

**Give your child
the best start in life
– every school
day counts.**



Knowsley Council

