

1 The Law
By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a suitable, full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education. Once your child is registered at a school you are responsible for making sure he or she attends regularly.

2 Why it matters
Regular school attendance is an important part of giving your child the best possible start in life and for their future. Your child will only get one chance at an education and research shows that children with poor attendance are at a disadvantage later in life. They often:

- Earn lower wages
- Have a higher chance of being unemployed
- Have low self-esteem
- Struggle to make and keep friendships

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

7 What to do if you are worried
Talk to the class teacher if you are worried. Working with the school will get the best results for your child and help them to reach their full potential. Don't be afraid to ask for advice, remember they have experience. Ask to make an appointment with someone else in school such as the SENDCO, family liaison officer or Headteacher if you are still worried.
Discuss your worries with the school at the earliest opportunity - they want to help.



3 Getting it right from the start
Poor attendance and punctuality, even at the earliest age, can affect achievement in later life. Setting good attendance patterns in Year 1 and 2 helps children as they move up through the school. If you build good routines around getting up on time and packing their bag the night before, your child will get used to doing this and as they get older they will learn to do this independently.

6 How you can help
Make sure you follow the school's procedure for letting them know if your child is off school. Co-operate with any support offered and talk with the school about the challenges you are experiencing, they can not help if they don't know. Try to make any appointments outside the school day or in the holidays. If it is during the day do not let your child miss the whole day. Any absences must be requested in advance and can only be authorised by the school.

5 What happens if my child does not attend regularly?
The school may request a meeting, it is important to attend and be open about your challenges. They may inform you that they will no longer authorise your child's absence without proof of the reason. The school may instruct Slough Borough Council to issue you with a penalty notice or a warning period both of which could lead to prosecution.

4 Why punctuality is important
Being on time is vital. Arriving late at school can be very disruptive for your child, even if they don't say so. The first few minutes in class involve important parts of the day including reconnecting with their friends and finding out about the day.
If your child is 15 minutes late very day they will have missed 2 weeks of learning a year.