



## Attendance Matters

Attendance matters.....it's a life skill that we all need.....help your child learn good habits early!

### What the Law Says!

Under Article 45 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 ("the 1986 Order"), it is the duty of parents who have a child of compulsory school age to ensure their child receives efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude, ability and to any special educational needs they may have. Such education may be provided by regular attendance at school or otherwise, for example home education.

Paragraph 3 (1) of Schedule 13 to the 1986 Order states that it is the duty of a parent of a registered pupil of a school, to secure their regular attendance at school. This applies to all children of compulsory school age who are on the roll of a school. As a parent you are legally responsible for making this happen.

Under Part III of Schedule 13 to the 1986 Order, if a child or young person who is registered at a school, does not attend regularly, a parent can receive a fine not exceeding £1,000 in court (for each child). An Education Supervision Order (ESO) could also be made by a court under Article 55 of the Children (NI) Order 1995.

***The National Audit Office (Feb 2005) found that regular attendance and good punctuality are key building blocks to maximising achievement and developing opportunities in later life***

### Attendance Targets

- All schools have an attendance target, ours is currently 97%. All children, parents and staff have a part to play in contributing to this target

### Attendance and Achievement

- It is shown that habits developed in primary school follow onto secondary school i.e. poor attendance in primary continues and in many cases gets worse in secondary school
- In secondary school it is found that a significant fall in attainment levels that accompanies only a marginal decrease in overall attendance. The percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSE A\*–Cs falls from 75% to 35% when set against a decrease in attendance of just 3.5%

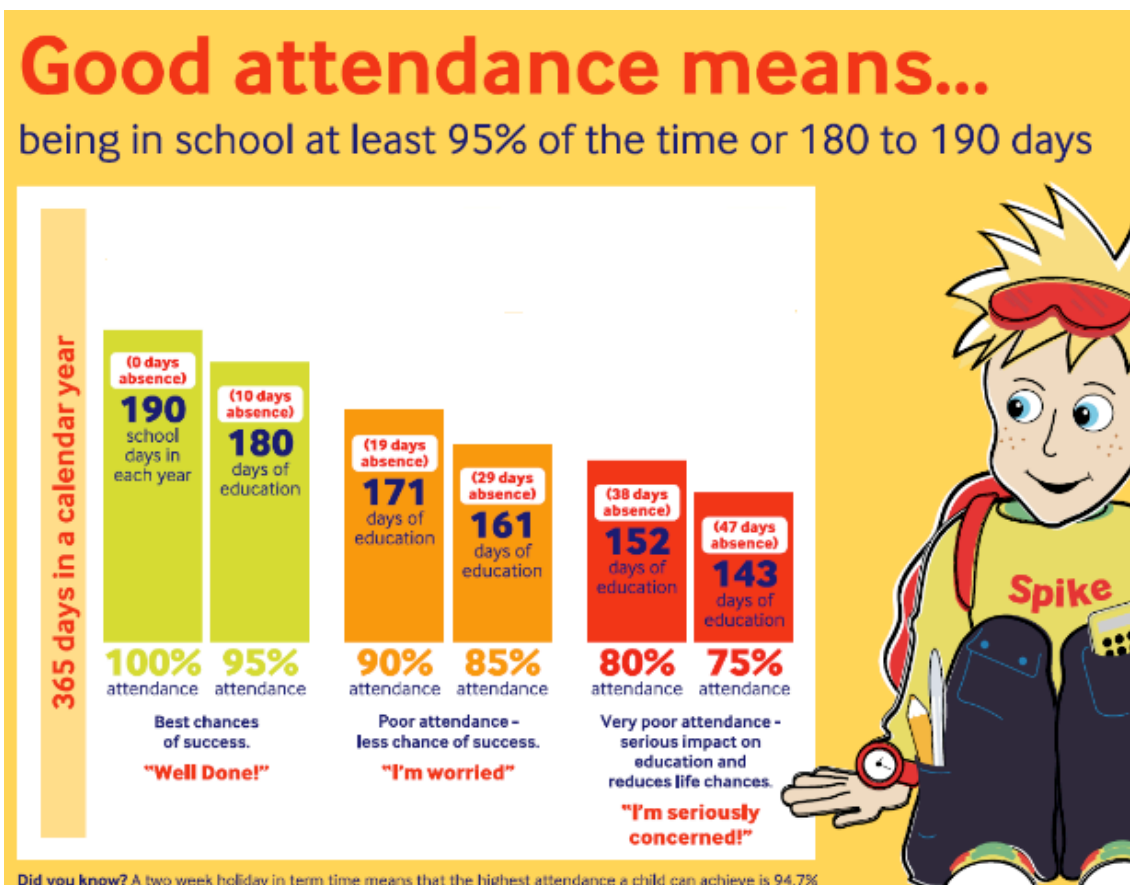


**School success starts  
with attendance**

- If a child is off sick for a week and takes a two week holiday in term time they would miss 22.5 hours of literacy, 22.5 hours of numeracy and 45 hours of learning in other subjects. If this is repeated throughout their school life they would miss over a year of learning!! The impact of absence adds up!

### School Recording and Reporting

- Schools are legally obliged to monitor and follow up on attendance
- Registers are taken electronically in the classroom twice a day, with lateness being recorded in the morning
- School starts promptly at 8:40am, all children should be in school when the bell goes at 8:40am, ready to start the day
- Any child entering school after 8:40am is recorded as late with the number of minutes late recorded
- Any child entering after 9:10am is recorded as later after registration, the child **loses** the entire mornings mark, this is an unauthorised absence
- Absences need to be reported to the school on the first day of absence by 9:10am. If the absence is not reported the school will text or call to find out where the child is. This can also lead to absence being recorded as unauthorised
- School celebrates attendance weekly with an Attendance Champion Award for each unit – this is a randomly selected child who has achieved 100% attendance the previous week. There is also a weekly Attendance Award for any class achieving 100% attendance over the previous week.
- A Termly award has also been introduced for all children achieving 97% and excellent punctuality.
- School also produces a monitoring report looking at key statistics and individual pupils of concern, any pupil whose attendance falls below 90% will be reviewed
- School also works closely with Education Welfare to follow up on cause for concern, severe cases could result in prosecution



## Holidays in Term Time

School does not have the ability to authorise any holiday in term time, except in very exceptional circumstances. Therefore almost every holiday will be an unauthorised absence. Parents can be fined for taking their child out of school in term time.

## The Role of Parents/Guardian



- Punctuality is a good thing. Being on time helps:
  - ✓ to get the day off to a good start
  - ✓ to set positive patterns for the future
  - ✓ to maximise your child learning time
  - ✓ children to develop a sense of responsibility
  - ✓ leads to success and self confidence
- Lateness is a bad thing. Being late:
  - ✗ can be stressful, gets the day off to a bad start and can put everyone in a bad mood
  - ✗ can be embarrassing when a child has to go into class on their own which can damage confidence
  - ✗ can lead to confusion - the child misses out on vital information and news from the start of the day
  - ✗ disrupts the entire classroom and learning for everyone
  - ✗ is cumulative, it can make a child fall behind in their learning
  - ✗ can create habits for the future
  - ✗ can lead to poor attendance as a child may want to stay away rather than be late
- You can help:
  - ★ Help your child get everything ready the night before – are PE kits ready, book bags, lunch
  - ★ allow plenty of time to get to school, traffic and buses can be unpredictable
  - ★ make friends and help each other out, if you can't get your child to school ask for help
  - ★ make sure your child eats breakfast
  - ★ make use of breakfast clubs
  - ★ establish a good bedtime routine, it's hard to get up if you're tired
  - ★ make sure your child gets enough rest and is not disturbed by too much computer or TV
  - ★ set an alarm clock
  - ★ arrange medical and dental appointments out of school hours

## Attendance Issues

- If you have issues with punctuality and attendance, what should you do?
  - ✓ First of all talk to your child, use the information in this handout to help
  - ✓ Talk to your child's class teacher
  - ✓ Ask for help from someone you feel you can talk to in school

***Remember! We are here to help. We want to work together to find solutions so that little problems don't become BIG ones!***