

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

From the time your child first starts at school, be sure that good routines and habits are in place.

- **Be ready** - make sure that children are ready and prepared for school with all the uniform, books and equipment needed.
- **Be careful about breakfast** - children of all ages need a nutritious breakfast. Snacks, sweets and drinks that are high in salt or sugar and additives are not a good enough start to the day.
- **Be on time** - lateness to school is upsetting for the child and disturbs the class and the teachers.
- **Be interested** - make sure you have time to talk to your child about school each day and find out what homework needs to be done.
- **Be positive** - from time to time problems in school may occur with other children or with the work but you need to reassure your child that the school and you will work together to give support.
- **Be firm** - unless your child is really too ill to attend school then he or she should be in school. Do not allow your child to stay at home.
- **Be aware** - that you should not take your child out of school for a holiday during school term time.
- **Be available** - let the school know how you can be contacted and any emergency telephone numbers where you and relatives or friends can be contacted.
- **Be clear with the school** - if your child is too ill to attend school then contact the school on the first day of absence and keep the school informed.

- **Be supportive to the school** - make sure your child follows the school rules and that you are clear about the school's expectations, policies and procedures about, for example, behaviour, uniform and attendance.
- **Be informed** - how would you know if your child was missing school and how will you find out about your child's progress in school? Find out the school's procedures and attend parents' evenings when they are held.
- **Be involved** - speak regularly to your child's tutor. Pupils need to know that there are good links between parents and the teachers.

For further advice please contact your child's school or the Education Welfare Service.



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

The Royal Borough of
Kensington and Chelsea
Education Welfare Service
108A Lancaster Road
London W11 1QS
Tel: 020 7598 4886
Fax: 020 7598 4895

Posters featured on the front of this booklet
'ATTENDANCE' POSTER COMPETITION 2003

Competition winners:

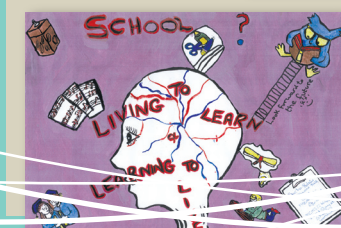
"School is Fun":
Ambre Battistella
KS1, St Francis of Assisi Primary School

"Every Moment Counts...":
Rudi Salmon
KS2, Fox Primary School

"School? Living to Learn, Learning to Live":
Sacha Baillie
KS3, Parkwood Hall School



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The Education Welfare Service

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - Advice for Parents



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Here to Help

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

The Education Welfare Service's main task is to help schools improve pupils' attendance and reduce unnecessary absence and truancy. Education Welfare Officers work closely with schools, children and their parents, and with other statutory and voluntary agencies to promote, encourage and enforce regular school attendance of children of compulsory school age who are resident in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

By law, all children aged between 5 and 16 must receive an education. Once a child is registered at a school, it is the parents' legal duty to ensure that the child attends school regularly and punctually.

If a school is concerned about the pattern of a child's attendance or punctuality, usually the school will first contact the parents to discuss the issue but if the problem continues or if there is no response, the school will also inform the Education Welfare Service.

Every school in the Royal Borough has a named Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who is in contact with the school and visits regularly to meet with the Headteacher and teachers to discuss any pupils who may have school attendance problems or other welfare issues. The EWO will from time to time go through the school's attendance registers and check these and also identify pupils with attendance patterns of concern.

Where a school has referred a case to the Education Welfare Service, the EWO will arrange to meet the parents and the child to make sure they are fully aware of the problem and to explain the importance of regular school attendance and

their legal responsibilities. The EWO will need to be informed about any problems or difficulties that may be affecting the child's attendance at school and discuss how these may be resolved.

The EWO will try to work with the child and with the parents to support them in meeting their responsibilities. Advice and assistance will be offered and information about other support services that may be accessed will be provided. In most cases, a short term plan and intervention by the EWO will lead to an improvement in the child's attendance at school.

If there is a lack of cooperation by the parents and the child fails to return to regular attendance at school, the Education Welfare Service may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice or take legal action by applying for an Education Supervision Order in the Family Proceedings Court or by prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

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The Education Welfare Service has other responsibilities in a number of areas connected with children's welfare:

CHILD EMPLOYMENT

The Education Welfare Service issues child employment permits for children of school age to be engaged in part-time work and also child performance licences for children to take part in television, radio, film or stage productions and modelling work. The Education Welfare Service is also responsible for issuing licences for chaperones who accompany children and young people working in entertainment. There are strict regulations covering child employment and infringements may be prosecuted.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Education Welfare Service may assist and contribute to the process of statutory assessment under the Education Act 1996 of children who have special educational needs.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Education Welfare Service works to reduce exclusions, unnecessary absence and truancy from school and assists young people who are at risk of exclusion from school or who are missing out on education for other reasons.

REDUCING YOUTH OFFENDING

The Education Welfare Service contributes to the multi-agency network seeking to reduce youth crime.

CHILDREN IN NEED AND CHILD PROTECTION

The Principal Education Welfare Officer is the designated person for child protection matters in the Education service. Education Welfare Officers link with colleagues in Social Care and other agencies in the child protection network and support plans to assist children in need and to protect children at risk. The Education Welfare Service is also a point of consultation and advice on child protection matters to schools and others within the Education service.

EDUCATION CONSULTATION SERVICE

Education Welfare Officers regularly provide advice and guidance to parents and other professionals who have queries about educational issues.