

The Education Welfare Officer

If the school has a concern about your child's attendance you will be contacted by letter. If there is no improvement then the Education Welfare Officer will intervene.

If the EWO is involved the education welfare service will contact you by phone or letter and may visit your home. The service is part of the school improvement services within Essex County Council's Children and Families Department. The EWO's have a statutory duty to ensure that children are receiving suitable education by attendance at schools or by other means.

The EWO will work with you to try to improve your child's attendance. They have access to other agencies and can offer support in this way. Unfortunately, in a small number of cases the matter has to be settled in court. There are 3 stages in the EWS casework procedures. The EWS has a statutory duty to uphold the law and prosecute parents whose children do not attend school regularly.

The Legal Procedures

Every effort is made to work with parents and support them. Most of the work of the EWO is at Stage 1.

STAGE 1

The strategies employed at Stage 1 could include:

- Letters concerning your child's attendance.
- medical certificates required relating to your child's attendance.
- Home visits.
- Meetings at school.
- Setting attendance targets.
- Agreeing a contract.
- Referral to another agency.
- Referral to social care.

If there is no improvement the case will move to.....

STAGE 2

If everything fails at Stage 1 the senior practitioner for the EWS becomes involved. They meet with parents and the EWO and review what has been put in place. A period of time will be given for attendance to improve, but if it does not then the parent is guilty of an offence and the case moves to.....

STAGE 3

This only happens in exceptional cases and when all the strategies of the school and the EWS have not resulted in improved attendance.

THE OUTCOME

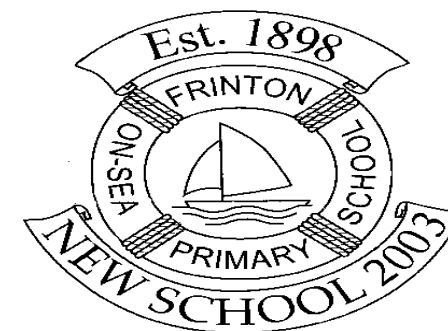
The EWS Court Officer will invite the parent and pupil to a meeting at the EWS office. There they are read their rights by the court officer and informed of the procedures for prosecution. The pupil will be given a date on which they are expected to return to full time attendance. If this is not adhered to then an application is made to the Magistrates Court for a summons and the parent is required to appear in court.

Each parent can be fined up to £2,500 and in some cases receive a prison sentence of up to three months.

Stages 2 & 3 are sometimes combined so that certain cases can be fast tracked. This is done when a parent has been prosecuted before or when a pupil is not attending school at all.

We would hope that at Frinton-on-Sea Primary School we will never have to take legal action against a parent and that our parents understand that we are trying our best to give their child the best possible education.

FRINTON-ON-SEA PRIMARY SCHOOL



*Believe, Succeed &
Grow Together*

ATTEND TODAY
ACHIEVE TOMORROW



Your child's attendance matters!

Head Teacher : Mrs A. Barlow

Please telephone the school between 8.30 a.m. & 9.30 a.m. on the first day of absence

WHY

There is clear evidence that a Child's school attendance has a direct effect on their education. Children who attend regularly and arrive punctually every day make better progress generally. Children who are poor attendees or who are consistently late for school often do not reach their full potential.

The law states:

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full time education suitable:

- to their age ability and aptitude.
- to any special needs they have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'

By compulsory school age it means the term following their 5th birthday until the last Friday in June in the year they turn 16.

At Frinton-on-Sea Primary School we provide an education between the ages of 4 to 11. We begin our provision from the Autumn Term in the academic year that children reach age 5.

Unless they are ill we expect them to attend every day the school is open.

School Gates open at 8.30 a.m.
Registration is 8.45 a.m.

If your child arrives after 8.45 a.m. they will receive a late mark—if they arrive after 9.00 a.m. they will receive an unauthorised absence.

SOME EXAMPLES

Amanda was in Year 2. Her attendance rate for Year 1 was around 95%. You would think it's really good, wouldn't you?

Let's have a closer look:-
95% means that she is missing one half day every 2 whole weeks of school lessons. If this is continued throughout her time at school she would miss a half of a year of school time!

Please look closely at the table below:-

%	weekly	yearly	School Career

WHERE WE NEED TO IMPROVE

If parents take 2 weeks term time holiday every year their child misses 1 tenth of their education. If a child is late 15 minutes everyday that is equivalent to 95% attendance. An unsettled start to each day impacts on your child's learning.

ABSENCE

Parents are responsible for making sure their child attends school. Parents who are willing to attend meetings, keep appointments, have a positive outlook about education and support the school rarely have

INTERMITTENT ABSENCE

This sometimes forms a pattern and attendance becomes erratic leading your child to miss out on initial instructions at the beginning of a concept or consolidation of an activity at the end. This means that your child may then not understand the teaching and learning and may not want to come to school as things get more difficult for them. Please help us to help your child by keeping them in school.

What if you are having problems with your child's attendance?

It is important that you cooperate fully with the school to improve attendance. It is never a good idea to ignore or cover up a problem.

Do not give in to pressure from your child if they do not want to attend school. This only gives the impression that attendance does not matter and education is not important.

Pupils have poor attendance for a variety of reasons and parents play an active part in these excuses for absence. Good attendance habits are developed at primary school and poor attendance at primary school nearly always continues into secondary school. Bring them to school everyday and help us to help them become secure and independent.

Reasons for Absence

Schools must make their registers (which are a legal document) available to the education welfare service (EWS) via the education welfare officer (EWO)

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school as authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the school has given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory justification for the absence. All other absences are unauthorised. It is important that you provide the school with the cause of the absence as soon as possible. A large number of unauthorised absences may cause legal action to be taken.