



Services for
Children
Young People
& Families

Education Welfare Service

A Guide for Parents and Carers
Is Your Child at School Today?



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CORNWALL
COUNTY COUNCIL

Many pupils go to school every day and enjoy it. Some children may experience difficulties in attending school for many reasons. A parent or carer may not be aware that this is happening.

Cornwall County Council Education Department recognises that regular school attendance is essential. Children need to enjoy their time in school and make the most of the opportunities available to them.

If a pupil misses one day a week for their entire school career they would lose the equivalent of two school years. The time missed at school can lead to gaps in knowledge that become difficult to fill.

The Education Welfare Service is aiming to reduce truanting within Cornwall through anti-truancy schemes operating in certain areas in the county. This is a joint initiative between Cornwall County Council and Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. Through this initiative the police will have the power to take truants back to school.

The Education Welfare Service can also offer support and help to pupils, parents, carers and schools who may be having problems with attendance.

Remember, if your child is not in school

- They may be putting themselves or others at risk
- They are missing out on educational opportunities
- Parents and carers can be fined up to £2500

What can you do to help?

- Make sure that your child arrives at school on time
- Be aware of the school's rules and routines
- If your child is ill contact the school on the first day they are ill. When the pupil returns to school send an explanatory note of absence
- Ask the school's permission in advance if you wish your child to miss school for an exceptional reason. These are:
 - Approved parental holiday
 - A day of religious observance
- Above all, show interest in your child's schoolwork and maintain contact with your child's school.

Unacceptable reasons for absence

- Shopping
- Birthday treats and trips
- Non-urgent medical and dental appointments

Holidays in term time

Wherever possible holidays should not be taken during term time. Holiday request forms are available from your child's school office for those who must take unavoidable holidays during term time. Holidays of up to ten days may be taken at the Head Teacher's discretion. If your child's attendance is poor it is unlikely that the school will grant permission for a holiday.

How can the Education Welfare Service help?

Each school in Cornwall has a nominated Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who visits regularly to check registers and discuss pupils about whom the school is concerned. The EWO can provide help and advice on:

- School attendance issues
- Bullying
- Exclusions
- Child Protection procedures
- Advice and information about other agencies

What the Law says

The 1996 Education Act makes it very clear that parents must ensure that their child of school age receives regular full-time education. For most parents this is in school. Where children are registered in school they must attend. Only the school can authorise a child's absence. If a child is not registered or does not attend Cornwall County Council may take legal action against the parents or carers where appropriate.

Devon and Cornwall Police involvement

Patrolling officers may speak to children who are truanting from school. In addition, Section 16 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 empowers the police to remove truants from a public place and return them back to school; the police can only remove those children who are of compulsory school age.

If you are worried about your child's attendance please try talking to your child's school first. If you feel unable to do this or you would like further help please contact the Education Welfare Service.

Where to find us

For further information please contact the Education Welfare Service Offices.

LISKEARD

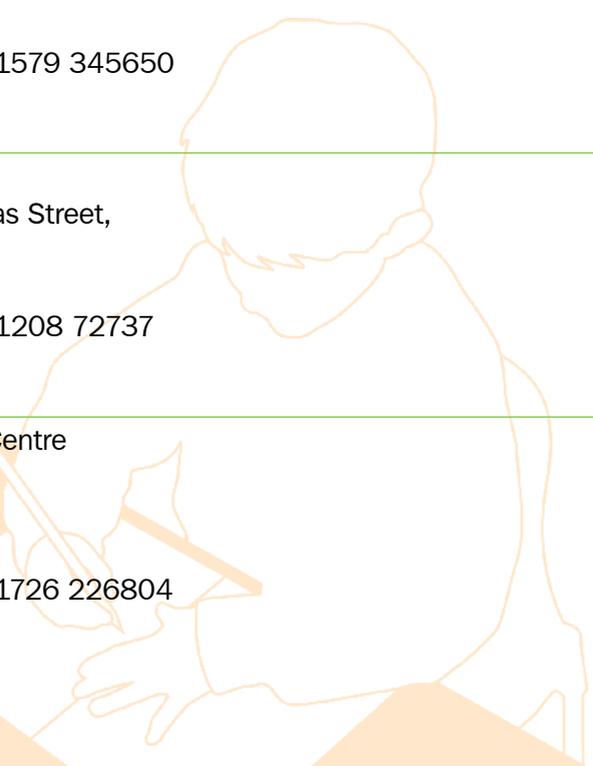
Loveny House,
10 Miller Business Park,
Liskeard
PL14 4DA
Telephone: 01579 345650

BODMIN

Lyndhurst,
66 St Nicholas Street,
Bodmin
PL31 1AG
Telephone: 01208 72737

ST AUSTELL

Sedgemoor Centre
Priory Road
St Austell
PL25 5AB
Telephone: 01726 226804



TRURO

Gannel House
9 Treyew Road
Truro
TR1 3AN
Telephone: 01872 322000

REDRUTH

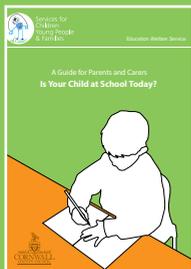
Trengweath Cottage,
Penryn Street,
Redruth
TR15 2SP
Telephone: 01209 881828

PENZANCE

Bolitho House,
Laregan Hill,
Penzance
TR18 4NY
Telephone: 01736 575422

Unhappy about the Education Welfare Service?

If you have a complaint about an area of our work, we would like to hear from you so we can put matters right.



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