

What is the law on school attendance?

All schools, including independent schools, must maintain admissions registers and all schools except boarding schools must have an attendance register. **The Registration (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006** require a school to put the child's name on the admissions register on the first day that the child is expected to attend school. If the pupil does not attend they will be recorded as absent: this can be authorised or unauthorised.

A school will authorise an absence if:

- The child is too ill to attend and the school accepts this as valid. If the child is off for long periods the school might ask for proof from the doctor.
- The parent has got the advance permission of the school e.g. for religious observation.
- The child has been excluded.
- The child has a medical appointment.
- The child is on study leave.
- The child is being educated off-site.

Schools have to regularly inform the local authority of any pupils who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or have missed 10 school days or more without the school's permission.

Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under **section 175 of the Education Act 2002** to investigate any unexplained absences.