

## Why is regular attendance at school important?

Missing sessions means children fall behind, which not only impacts on their future achievement, but also adds additional stress and worry as the child attempts to catch up affecting their mental health and that of their family.

The evidence of the impact on non-attendance on achievement is very clear. The DfE release, Short breaks damage young people's futures - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) in 2015 outlined the following links:

- pupils with the lowest 5% of absence rates were more than four times more likely to achieve 5 good GCSEs, including English and maths, and 22 times more likely to achieve the English Baccalaureate, than pupils with the highest 5% of absence rates
- pupils with no absence from school were nearly three times more likely to achieve 5 A\* to C GCSEs, including English and Maths, and around 10 times more likely to achieve the English Baccalaureate, than pupils missing 15 to 20% of school across key stage four
- primary school pupils with no absence were around 1.5 times more likely to achieve the expected level (level 4 or above), and 4.5 times more likely to achieve above the expected level (level 5 or above), than pupils that missed 15 to 20% of key stage two

Covid19 has disrupted any progress made on pupil achievement since 2015 and so the correlation between attendance and achievement continues at the same, if not higher, rate.

However, school is not just a place for academic learning, it is a place where children make early, lifelong friendships, learn about themselves, find out what they are good at and passionate about. It's about shaping choices that help children make a positive contribution to society and live a happy, balanced life. It also provides structure and routine where this may be missing at home, and provides the care of other adults who they may learn to trust. School can be a safe, supportive environment where its focus is solely to ensure the success and wellbeing of the children in its care.

Children who do not attend school or any other educational provision not only miss out on the opportunity to do well academically but also on the wider supportive network that schools provide. There are strong links between children missing from school and child exploitation and involvement in criminal activity. 90% of young offenders have been persistently absent from school (A Ministry of Justice report published in June 2018)

There is also a strong correlation between poor attendance and the mental health of young people. Children of today face many challenges to their safety and well-being and the role of school has become an integral part in keeping children safe from harm and helping them navigate through the complexities of growing up in today's society.

In summary, going to school provides the right environment, for the majority of our children, to achieve the following:



- good educational outcomes in school and further/higher education
- a happier and positive view on life in and out of school
- good relationships, trust and a sense of belonging for marginalised children and their families
- improved confidence and resilience
- good mental health
- low risk of child exploitation, anti-social behaviour and other safeguarding concerns
- employability

*School Attendance Strategy  
Lincolnshire County Council 2023*