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## Resources & Services

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK  
\(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)

[Arranging Education for Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School](#)

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## What to do

The Department for Education (DfE) has stated, 'persistent failure to send children to school is a clear sign of neglect'. Absence is a symptom; improving a pupil's attendance is part of improving the pupil's overall welfare. All agencies need to challenge parents and carers as to why their child/ren are not attending school. For any advice or queries please contact:

[schoolattendanceteam@bury.gov.uk](mailto:schoolattendanceteam@bury.gov.uk)

If you feel that a child/ren are at risk of significant harm, then contact [Bury Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub](#)

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## Working Together

### Attendance is everyone's business

The barriers to accessing education are wide-ranging and can be complex, both within and beyond the school gates. Where there are multiple issues requiring other service involvement, schools, LA's, and other partners should work together to provide more intensive whole family support to address them as soon as it becomes clear they would benefit from it.

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## Information

The School Attendance & Exclusion Team rigorously track local attendance data to devise an approach to attendance and prioritise support. They work jointly with schools to provide support options, e.g. Attendance Contracts or Education Supervision Orders. The team enforce attendance via statutory and legal interventions, such as penalty notices or attendance prosecution, when all other avenues have been exhausted, and support is not working / being engaged with.

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## Background

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of parents to ensure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have a legal duty to ensure their child attends every day, except in a small number of circumstances e.g. too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

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## Why it matters

Being in school is important to a child's academic achievement, emotional wellbeing, and wider development. Regular school attendance is a key mechanism to support children and young people's educational, economic and social outcomes

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and is the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and extrafamilial harms, including crime and exploitation.

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## Information

The School Attendance & Exclusion Team work closely with schools, providing support with queries and advice. Termly meetings are held with schools to identify, discuss and agree joint action plans for pupils who are severely absent and do not have a plan in place. The team also discuss/ agree approaches for persistently absent pupils, bringing together a multi-agency response. They also bring schools together via attendance forums, to communicate messages, offer advice and share best practice.

# Attendance

Bury Safeguarding Partnership

