

**DO YOU KNOW  
WHERE YOUR  
CHILD IS TODAY?**

**ARE YOU SURE  
THAT YOUR CHILD  
IS IN SCHOOL?**

**DO YOU  
NEED TO CHECK?**

**FURTHER  
INFORMATION FROM**

**Westminster Early Help  
Service  
Tel: 020 7641 4000**

**Kensington & Chelsea Early  
Help Service  
Tel: 020 7598 4608 / 4601**

### **Important information**

If the local authority takes legal action in a magistrates court, an officer of the local authority **or** a member of school staff produces a witness statement that may refer to information taken from discussions with you as evidence in legal proceedings.

**Early Help Service**

**School attendance  
What parents and  
carers need to  
know**

**Information and advice for  
parents and carers**



## Truancy

Have you taken the time to find out what your child has been doing today?

- From time to time children skip school, often without the knowledge of their parents or carers.
- For a few it can turn into a habit, but with prompt action and care it can be prevented.
- Children who miss school, even for a short period, are running dangerous risks. If they hang around shopping centres or streets, they risk the temptations of crime or they may become easy targets as victims of others.
- If the child does not attend regularly, they often leave school with fewer qualifications, reducing their employment prospects.
- Children get into bad habits about reliability and time-keeping and as a result are less attractive to employers.

## The law

**The law states quite clearly that children between 5 and 16 years old must receive education.**

- Children are of school age from the start of term after they are 5 years old until the last Friday in June in the academic year when they are 16 years old.
- As a parent or carer, YOU are responsible for ensuring your child gets full-time education.
- Are you certain your child is at school when he or she should be, and on time?

- If your children do not attend, you and they risk having to go to court to explain your actions.
- Children who work during school hours are being exploited. Both you and their employer could be prosecuted and fined heavily if this happens.

## What can parents and carers do?

**You can help raise your child's achievement by the methods below.**

### Talking to your child about school

Every day, if possible. This means not only are you sure that your child has been to school that day, but you can also find out if your child is having problems at school such as bullying or difficulties with the work, and you can help deal with those problems. You can celebrate and reward any success your child has.

### Keeping in contact with the school

Do not wait for a problem. Send a note to a teacher or make an appointment to see teachers if you have any concerns. Be part of the parent-teacher association. Support events. The more involved you are, the happier your child will be at school.

### Being involved in your child's homework

Ask what homework he or she has each night. Have a look at what is to be done and offer help if it is needed. Ask to see the work when finished and be positive about what your child has done.

## If in doubt, find out

If you think your child might be missing school, talk to the staff. If you are not sure whether your child is allowed to miss school for any reason in particular, call and ask. Keep a note of term dates, holidays, teacher training days, etc.

## Help and advice

If you are having difficulty getting your child to go to school, you should speak to school staff directly in the first instance.

**PLEASE KEEP THIS LEAFLET IN A SAFE PLACE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE**