



School Attendance  
information for parents

# Don't let your child miss out

(on a good start in life!)

**TÚSLA**

An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

# Every child aged between 6 and 16 must receive an education.

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If you are a parent or guardian\* of a child aged between 6 and 16 this leaflet outlines the special role you play in ensuring that your child doesn't miss out on his or her education.

It also gives you information about the Child and Family Agency which supports regular school attendance and the education of children and young people through Educational Welfare Officers.

The job of the Child and Family Agency is to support families and make sure that every child receives an education as required by law. Almost all children do this by attending school.

\* Guardian – a person who has the legal authority and duty to take care of a child or minor

# Your child has a right to an education.

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A good education, combined with loving care and encouragement, will give your child a great start in life.

*“Having a good education means I will be more likely to learn more, develop skills and talents, make and keep friends, have more confidence, do better at exams, avoid getting involved in crime, have a wider choice of job options when I start working...”*



# What you need to know

## What you must do if your child cannot be at school

You must tell the school that your child cannot attend and say why. The school will tell you how to give them this information – usually, the school will ask for a note.

Very often, there will be good reasons for a child not being in school and these will be taken into account if they are explained to the school.

## What the school must do if your child misses a lot of school

The school must tell us, if your child has missed 20 days or more in the school year or if it is concerned that your child is missing too much school.

## What we must do if your child misses a lot of school

If a school tells us that your child is missing too much school, an Educational Welfare Officer of the Child and Family Agency may visit you to see how we can help to make sure that your child attends school more often.

## Protecting your child's right to an education

We will help you in whatever way we can to ensure your child gets an education. However, you can be taken to court and fined or imprisoned if you do not co-operate with the Educational Welfare Officer.

Legal action will be taken in exceptional cases if it is the only way a child's right to an education can be safeguarded.

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# What you can do

## How you can help your child to attend school regularly

- Make education important in your home and let your child know it is not okay to miss school.
- Listen to your child. Be interested in his or her news about school and ask about what he or she is doing.
- Help your child to be proud of a good attendance record.
- Build your child's confidence by praising him or her when he or she does well.
- Read letters and reports from the school and know the school rules.
- Go to school meetings and get to know the teacher, staff and your child's friends.
- Don't take family holidays during school term.
- Be alert for reasons why your child may not want to go to school. If your child finds school work hard, talk to the school right away.
- Encourage your child not to take on a part-time job during school term. A tired teenager will not be able to keep up at school.

## Home Education and Private Schools

Under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 you have a right to educate your child outside of a recognised school, for example, in a private school or in your home.

If you decide to do this you must apply to register your child with the Child and Family Agency who will then carry out an assessment of the education being provided. For more information contact us on [\(01\) 873 8700](tel:018738700).



# Top Tips from parents!

- ✓ *“Get your child to bed in good time on school days and Sunday nights. Plenty of sleep and rest will help a child stay alert.”*
- ✓ *“Remember to set the alarm clock in good time so that you can get your child to school on time.”*
- ✓ *“Help your child pack his or her schoolbag and prepare your child’s lunch the night before so you and your child have more time to get ready in the morning.”*



**What  
to do if  
you need  
support**

Contact the Educational Welfare Services of the Child and Family Agency by email at [ewsinfo@tusla.ie](mailto:ewsinfo@tusla.ie) or check out contact details of your local office on [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie).