

BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CURRENT GUIDANCE & STATUTORY GUIDANCE

- THE SEND CODE OF PRACTICE
- WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (DFE 2023)
- SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS AT SCHOOL (DFE)
- EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH HEALTH NEEDS WHO CANNOT ATTEND SCHOOL (DFE)
- SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES WHERE A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE IS AFFECTING ATTENDANCE (DFE 2023)
- REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR DISABLED CHILDREN
- EQUALITY ACT TECHNICAL GUIDANCE EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,
- PREVENTING AND TACKLING BULLYING
- KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION (2022)
- HOME EDUCATION GUIDE (2019)
- AND NHS EVERY MIND MATTERS

Authorising Absence

Schools must record absences as authorised where pupils cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). There is no need to routinely ask for medical evidence to support recording an absence as authorised.

Provide Learning and Connections While Absent

Children unable to attend school should be able to access a broad and balanced education suitable for their needs to enable them to maintain academic progression and allow them to thrive and prosper. Schools should welcome pupils back following an absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning. LAs must look at the evidence for each individual case, even when there is no medical evidence, and make their own decision about alternative education. The LA are responsible for arranging education for children who, because of illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education, as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more.

Respond to all incidents of Bullying and Assault

Schools, colleges and Local Authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Schools' anti-bullying policies should set out the actions which will be taken to prevent or address all forms of bullying.

Home Education

Parents have a right to educate their children at home. This works well when it is a positive, informed and dedicated choice. Pressure should never be put on parents to remove a child from a school roll as they then become solely responsible for their child's education.



Your Local Offer should provide information and contact details for support including [SENDiass](#) and local support groups.

Parental Mental Health and Self Care

Parenting or caring for a child or young person struggling with school attendance can be difficult. It is important to make sure you look after your own mental wellbeing and seek support for yourself.



DO YOU HAVE A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON STRUGGLING WITH SCHOOL DISTRESS OR BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE ?

PLEASE JOIN US AT DEFINE FINE



Define Fine is led by a small team of parents and professionals with lived experience of school attendance difficulties. Parent Carers are welcome to join our supportive [Define Fine Facebook group](#) where we share advice, signpost to support and coordinate our peer support training on how to use our resources. We also provide consultancy, training and case management to professionals in schools, Local Authorities, PCFs, SENDiass and other organisations.

