

School attendance

Children must be in full-time education from their 5th birthday until they are 16 years of age.

Young people aged 16 and 17 must either:

- stay in full-time education, e.g. college
- start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- work or volunteer for at least 20 hours per week while in part-time education or training.

As a parent, you must make sure your child receives a full-time education from the age of 5. You can be prosecuted if you don't. You'll normally get warnings and offers of help from the local council first. You can be fined for taking your child out of school during term time without the school's permission.

You can only allow your child to miss school if either:

- **they're too ill to go in**

or

- **you've got advance permission from the school.**

You have to get permission from the head teacher if you want to take your child out of school during term time. The head teacher can decide how many days your child is allowed to be away from school. You need permission for anything that means your child will miss school, even family occasions such as weddings and funerals.

If you regularly travel to another area, your child can register in a local school there while still keeping their place in their home school.

If your family is travelling for a job, make sure you let the school know. Schools can put a 'T' in the register which records Gypsy and Traveller pupils' agreed absences from school if their parents are travelling for work.

You must ensure your child attends school on every day that the school requires him or her to do so. In TM's experience, most schools aim for a 95% attendance rate. If your child's attendance goes below 85%, the school will arrange a meeting with you and the Education Welfare Officer.

Missing one day a week for a whole year would be 80% attendance and would cause concern to the school.