

Appendix 8. Absence intervention and support for attendance in basic education



It is important for the pupils' learning to support attendance and intervene in absences. Absences impact the pupils' learning, which is why they need support and encouragement to attend school. A positive atmosphere at school, caring encounters, and stopping of bullying are what create the foundation for attendance and attachment at school. Good cooperation between homes and school helps to reinforce school attendance.

The model for absence intervention and support for attendance is set up in phases that try to stop a pupil from staying absent, with measures and the required partners. The model focuses on facing the pupils as individuals, discussions about education, consultation with student welfare, and multidisciplinary cooperation.

Schools monitor absences constantly and review them four times per year. In the model, "Raising the issue" refers to everyday interactions with the pupil. Teachers should ask "how are you" and listen to the pupil. This creates a safe and caring contact between teacher and pupil.

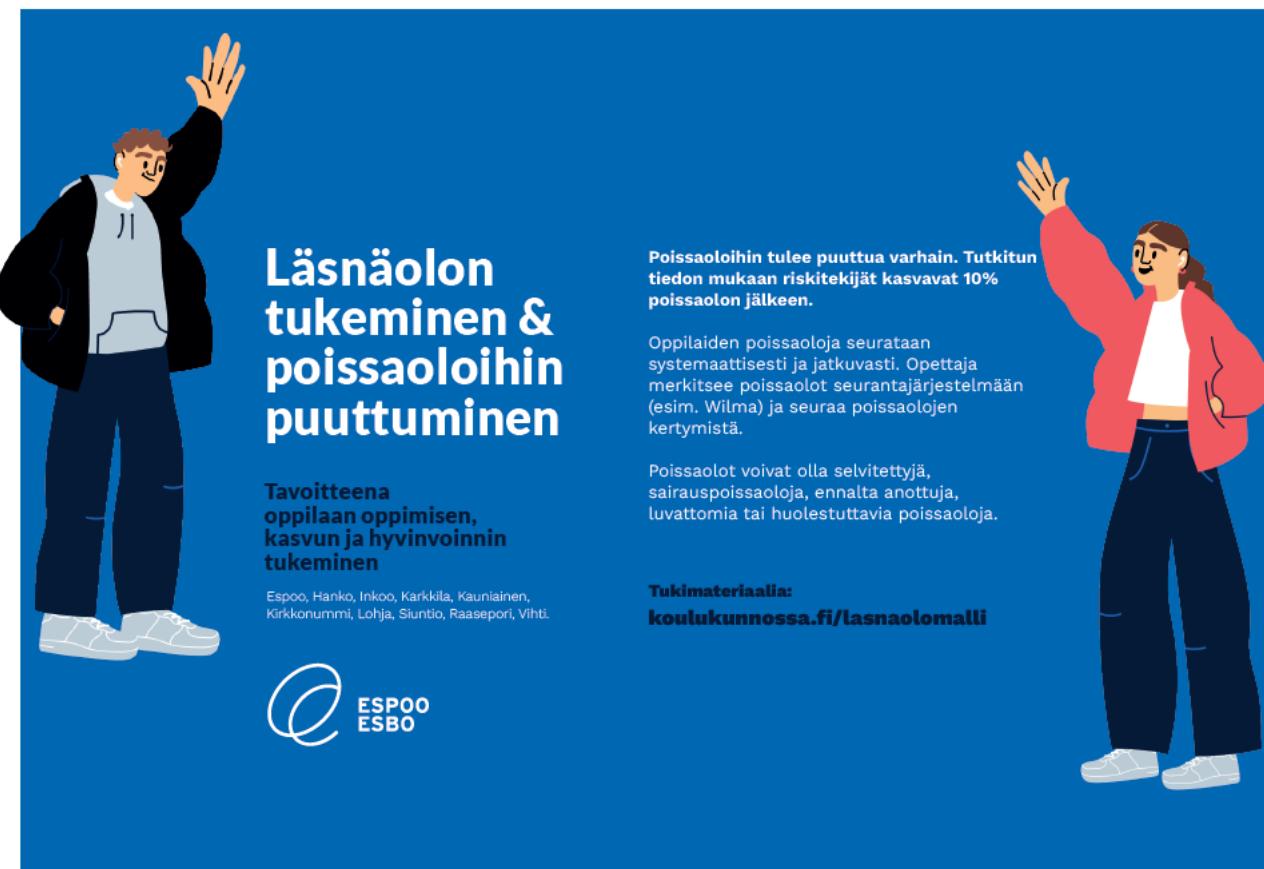
Absences should always be brought up if there is a rising concern, but no later than:

- When the pupil's absences mount up to 10%, which in primary school is 30–50 hours and 40–70 hours in secondary school, the teacher must contact the pupil's guardian(s). The

teacher must talk to the parents about their child's situation and decide if they need to meet and find out if the child needs further support. This phase is the *Early intervention phase*.

- When the pupil's absences mount up to 20%, which in primary school is 50–70 hours and 70–90 hours in secondary school, the teacher must call for a meeting. This meeting should include the pupil, their guardian and the teacher, as well as multidisciplinary experts, such as a social worker, psychologist, nurse and/or a special needs teacher. At the meeting, the participants agree on a person in charge and decide what to do and what kind of support is offered to the pupil. The matters agreed at the meeting are recorded. This phase is the *Strong measures & support phase*.

If the absences continue beyond this, the pupil receives active support for returning to school from different parties. It is important to find out why the pupil does not attend school and if the agreed support measures are sufficient. It is possible to consider different teaching arrangements.



Espoo's primary and lower secondary schools use a model for absence intervention and attendance support. The model is for both monitoring absences and intervening in them. The aim of the model is to support pupils' wellbeing, growth and learning.

Absences must be addressed as early as possible. All authorised and unauthorised absences count. Teachers mark absences in Wilma and actively keep up with them.

Further material is available at: <https://www.koulukunnossa.fi/>



Review a pupil's absences every three months. Always contact the guardians if you find a cause for concern. It is important to listen to the pupil when keeping up with their absences.

In the Strong Support phase and when you convene the multidisciplinary group, it is important to record and document the agreed measures.