



**Doncaster
Council**

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The Graduated Approach

To

Manage Pupil Attendance & Attainment

Local Authority guidance for schools, academies, and
alternative providers

September 2022

The Graduated Approach to Manage Pupil Attendance & Attainment

[About this guidance](#)

Since the release of the Department for Education guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' in May 2022, the focus changed to ensure pupils who are facing barriers to achieving good attendance or who are not in school, receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time. The government aim for the guidance to be statutory by September 2023.



Working Together
to Improve School A



Summary Table of
Responsibilities for

Following consultation in June 2022 with schools and education providers within the Doncaster City Council this local authority guidance was produced to improve school attendance and attainment and ensure the requirements of the guidance are met.

Support and intervention are the major factors to improve pupil attendance and this guidance follows a graduated approach model. The best outcomes are achieved by adopting a whole school approach to manage attendance, with everyone across the organisation aware of their role and responsibility.

[Universal Support](#)

Monitoring and Promoting Positive Attendance

1. Quality Teaching First

It is worthy of the first mention within this guidance as every school agrees the quality of the teachers and support staff in the delivery of first-class teaching will always yield the best results. Children and young people attend school wanting to learn, even if that is not always evident, our thirst for knowledge is within all of us.

Despite our varying experiences of school, a common factor is we always remember those who inspired us, challenged us and was there for us when it was needed.

1. Advice & Guidance

The availability of information for parent and pupils are a key factor in engagement and excellent attendance. We all know that providing copious amounts of information does not ensure the information was read, or even followed. Whatever format is used, ensure you review the approach to demonstrate impact.

Useful resources can be:

- Leaflets, posters
- School website with links to national websites, local authority and government websites and child law advice
- Social media, Facebook, twitter etc.
- Pupil progress reports and parents' evenings
- Sam & Sammie resources
- Pupil planners
- School assemblies
- Celebration events – Reward programmes for excellent, good, or improved attendance

Establish what medium is best for your school, pupils, and families.

2. Attendance Monitoring

Quality data is a major factor to identify areas of concern and provide a firm evidence base for future strategies and interventions. All schools have developed their own tracking tools to identify pupils from vulnerable categories such as:

- Children in Care
- Children in need or subject to child protection plans
- SEND and HI/VI
- Young carers, young parents, and pregnant schoolgirls
- Minority ethnic
- Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller
- Service children
- Migrant and asylum-seeking children
- Domestic abuse

The main factor in all these categories will be the daily attendance and patterns across a pupil's individual attendance register (certificate). An increase above the school average for pupils is the first indication of a potential problem. Be careful not to solely rely on percentage absences as a threshold for any intervention, but consider the number, duration, and frequency of absences. This should be considered alongside the parent's explanation for the child's absence from school.

Thresholds and intervention will be explored in a later section of this guidance.

3. Practice & Procedures

Universal support should not be seen as any detailed intervention taking place but an opportunity for children, young people and families navigating their way through school life and managing the usual trials and tribulations along the way and celebrating any successes. Some key practice measures can improve pupil attendance, these are:

- a) First day absence calling//Home Visits – Direct contact will result in positive outcomes, and it is advisable for someone to telephone parents directly when a child has not arrived at school and registered. This is to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupil, should they have set off for school but not arrived. These calls also ensure a reason for a pupil's absence is requested from parents and provide an instant challenge should there be any concern the explanation is not genuine.
- b) Class Teachers and Pastoral – Are best placed to be 'attendance champions' by regular monitoring of every class and year groups attendance and absences on a weekly basis. Be able respond positively to pupils returning from any absence by making the pupil feel welcome. Any negative comments may provoke a response resulting in further absences. It is advisable for Class Teachers to discuss any absence during tutor periods and communicate regularly with parents. Pastoral teams and Teachers are advised to contact the parents of any pupil who has been absent for more than two days. The calls are aimed at building good working relationships with the pupil and parents, with an aim to encourage a return without delay.
- c) Any pupil that is becoming a minor concern, consider writing to parents to raise their awareness.
- d) If a parent is continually claiming the absences are due to illness, a request for confirmation the child was not well enough to attend can be requested.

[Universal Support Plus](#)

Early Identification of Pupils at Risk of Poor School Attendance

Identifying when a pupils absence starts to decline is the key factor at all levels and all schools must have effective monitoring and tracking systems in place. Management information systems vary across schools and academies but have the functionality to analyse attendance data.

Early intervention is the major factor for making a change to a pupil's attendance, also the question of when to escalate for support from other services and organisations. Please refer to the section 'Thresholds of Intervention' for further guidance. Most decisions will be because of supervision via the senior leadership team representative, headteacher or principal.

It is also important to remember the offer of support to any pupil or family is purely voluntary unless the threshold for specialist or statutory services is met. Assessment of need is paramount for identifying the underlying cause of poor attainment and irregular attendance.

Often pupils and families require support from other sources to improve overall well-being and ultimately attendance. The following are examples of issues affecting many families across the authority.

Pupil	Parent
Well-being/Counselling	Well-being/Counselling
Health/GP	Health
Attainment and Learning	Finance
SEND	Housing
Personal development	Food/healthy living
Routines and boundaries	Work & benefits
	Parenting (Routines & boundaries)

Parenting Contracts

When a parent meets with a school and agrees to an Attendance Support Plan (ASP), this is a voluntary agreement between all parties involved. It is not legally binding, but should a parent not comply with the agreement it can demonstrate the parent has knowingly failed to secure school attendance.

Various parenting programmes are available through local authority child and family services, and other independent services.

Further information is available through the local authority.

Education Penalty Notices

It is a legal requirement for the local authority to have a 'Penalty Notice Code of Conduct' for issuing penalty notices and this must be adhered to by all schools, Police and LA. A copy of the revised code will be available to all schools.

The code will provide details of the criteria for when a penalty notice may be appropriate and what evidence is required before a request is made. All requests are made through the schools 'My Doncaster' account under the category of: **Raise FPN**

Children Missing Education (CME)

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. This does not include pupils with poor or irregular school attendance.



CME Policy January
2020.doc



CME Procedures
June 2020.pdf

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Regulation 8 (amended 2016) governs when a pupil can be removed from the admission and attendance register. For section 8(1) (g) and (h) all subsections must be adhered to and confirmed by a local authority officer.

All requests are made through the schools 'My Doncaster' account under the category of: ***CME Referral***

Elective Home Education

The decision by a parent to educate their child other than at school should not be taken lightly and the LA will respond to any notification without delay. Schools must not encourage parents to remove a child from school as a way of improving attendance and avoiding legal action, or to support mental health concerns. Where a school has encouraged the parent to do so, the LA will refer the matter to Ofsted and the Regional Schools Commissioner.

Schools must follow the local authority policy and discuss any potential notifications with the EWO allocated as the single point of contact:



01. EHE Policy
January 2020.docx

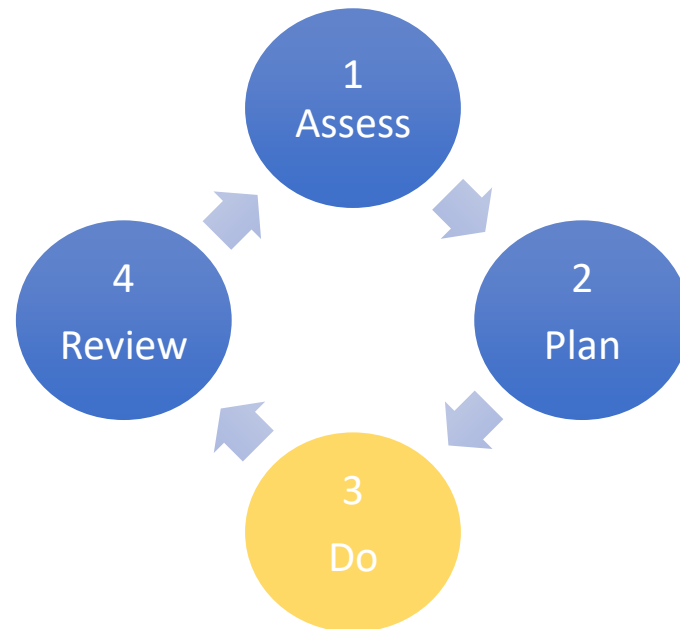
All requests are made through the schools 'My Doncaster' account under the category of: ***EHE notification***

Guidance for Practitioners.

The practice is built around established protocols for working with children, young people, and families, but adapted to meet the diverse requirements of the attendance management. The primary objective remains meeting the needs of pupils with a further focus on achieving good educational outcomes, both in the short term and the long term.

Any support plan must be agreed and signed by all parties involved with review periods agreed. The timeframe must allow for any change to occur.

The system follows the 'assess, plan, do, review cycle' familiar within SEND practices and procedures.



The format covers the three areas of education, health and care with sections only included where necessary. Not every section will be appropriate for each case, for example a generic attendance case may not have any unmet needs under health or care, but if it does, the assessment will identify this. The overall system can be as short or long as necessary.

1.0 Assess.

When commencing an assessment on a pupil it is important to consider the following areas:

- Attainment – Is the pupil meeting own and age-related expectations?
- Attendance & punctuality – Is the pupil identified as a persistent absentee? Does this impact on attainment?
- Behaviour – Does the pupil adhere to schools and parents expected levels of behaviour?
- Social interaction – How does the pupil interact with peers, staff, and family?
- Enrichment – Does the pupil participate in any extra-curricular activities or youth groups?
- Health & well-being – Does the pupil have any underlying medical needs that impact on daily life?
- Aspirations – Does the pupil have ambitions and aspirations for their future?

This list is not exhaustive, and it is the responsibility of the officer to be thorough for the duration of the assessment. The scope of the assessment will be dependent on information disclosed at the referral, but the minimum consulters are:

1. Pupil
2. Parent or guardian
3. School (including teachers and pastoral team)

Additional services or agencies may need to be consulted which are dependent on the initial disclosures. Further information may be disclosed at the latter stages of the assessment, and this must be followed up without delay.

Key Point – It is important to emphasise that practitioners are encouraged to adopt their own methods of ascertaining the information required for the assessment. Explore the use of different assessment tools that are the least invasive to gain the maximum information necessary.

At all times ensure the information received is credible and preferably backed with evidence. Anecdotal information can be problematic if challenged by the pupil or parents.

Establishing what needs to be achieved for the pupil and what the best outcomes are both in the long and short term is a vital component of any assessment and plan. Without knowing where the pupil needs to be, or what needs to be achieved, will prevent any effective plan being put into place.

There are key generic outcomes that must be included in every plan, but also may be achieved over different periods of time for example, the long-term outcome is dependent on other goals being achieved at the earlier stages and this can be described as follows:

Long Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	Short Term Outcomes
<p>Pupil achieves good GCSE qualifications</p> <p>Pupil enrolls in further or higher education</p> <p>Pupil is employed</p>	<p>Pupil is engaged in learning</p> <p>Pupil is making progress</p>	<p>Pupil is punctual and prepared to learn</p> <p>Pupil attends school regularly and is not a persistent absentee</p> <p>Pupil behaves appropriately in school</p>
<p>Pupil has a healthy lifestyle</p>	<p>Pupil is socially active</p> <p>Pupil attends social groups and activities</p> <p>Pupil regularly enjoys a healthy balanced meal</p>	<p>Pupil engages with peers</p> <p>Pupil participates in family activities</p> <p>Pupil is experimenting with different foods and textures</p>
<p>Pupil is self-reliant and can find solutions to their own problems</p> <p>Pupil has plans and ambitions</p>	<p>Pupil finds solutions to problems with advice and guidance</p> <p>Pupil is exploring own future options</p>	<p>Pupil finds solutions to problems with support, advice, and guidance</p> <p>Pupil talks about future</p>

With the outcomes established the next stage is to identify the barriers that are preventing the child or family from achieving them. Without the barriers being identified it will not be possible to determine the actions required for the plan. If the pupil or parents are unable to identify any barriers, further discussions will be necessary and consider the possibility that they are the barriers.

2.0 Plan.

The plan needs to focus on specific actions (objectives) that must be undertaken to overcome the barriers to success. These must be S.M.A.R.T –

S – Specific

When setting an action, be specific about what needs to be accomplished. This isn't a detailed list of how you're going to meet the action, but it should include an answer to the popular 'w' questions:

- Who – Consider who needs to be involved to achieve the action?
- What – Think about exactly what is trying to be accomplished and don't be afraid to get very detailed.
- When – Get more specific about this question under the "time-bound" section of defining actions, but at least set a time frame.
- Where – This question may not always apply, especially if setting personal actions, but if there's a location (such as school), identify it here.
- Why – What is the reason for the action?

M – Measurable

What are you going to use to determine if you meet the outcomes? This makes the action more tangible because it provides a way to measure progress. Most of the school specific actions such as attainment or attendance are measurable, with other outcomes it may be via feedback and reports.

A – Achievable

This focuses on how important an outcome is to the pupil and what you can do to make it attainable. The action is meant to inspire motivation, not discouragement. Think about how to accomplish the outcome.

R – Relevant

Relevance requires focus on something that makes sense with the broader outcomes. For example, what needs to be done to improve attendance rather than saying 'must improve attendance.'

T – Time-Bound

Anyone can set outcomes or actions, but if it lacks realistic timing, chances are you're not going to succeed. Providing a target date for deliverables is imperative, so ask specific questions about the action deadline and what can be accomplished within that period.

The issues can be directly transferred from the assessment with the SMART actions agreed in partnership of the pupil, parent or organisation providing support.

Knowing when the actions will be achieved is dependent on the earlier preparation and focus on the outcomes. Within the generic outcomes many can be directly measured through schools' management information systems and teacher assessment, with the lifestyle outcomes reliant on observations and evidence from other parties.

Key Point – Ensure any reports or feedback can be backed with empirical evidence that could withstand cross examination in a court of law, should any legal intervention be necessary to secure a good outcome for a child or young person.

A further '**Academic Progress Monitoring**' section is included within the plan section to allow closer monitoring of the pupils' progress. This shows a pupils age related expectations and can focus the plan on specific subjects where necessary. Attendance targets can be set over a smaller period to facilitate reintegration timetables.

Key Point – Reduced or part-time timetables must not be used indiscriminately as a method of improving school attendance but only for reintegration following a long illness or absence from school. Percentage targets can be agreed to support improved attendance with an agreement on the authorisation of absence where appropriate.

A target-setting calculator is provided to show what is achievable across the remainder of an academic year or specific period.

3.0 Do.

Of all the sections within the Assessment, Intervention and Support Plan this is the most easily explainable part, but possibly the most important. Each identified action has someone attached to it and it is the lead professional's role to ensure they complete the actions within the set time frame.

Leads should set reminders in their diary on when to contact clients and professionals to check on progress. Any issues must be addressed without delay.

4.0 Review

When initiating a review ask all involved to be open and honest with any feedback with an emphasis to 'accentuate the positive' for the pupil. Comment on what was achieved and look at what further actions may be required to maintain the achievement. What must be avoided is a return to previous behaviours or practise that will result in a deterioration of engagement or learning. Remember, the idea is to build self-resilience in pupils and not become dependent on support or services.

Focus on any actions that have not produced the required outcomes and identify any potential barriers to success as these will form the actions for the next plan.

Key Point – It is important to emphasise that practitioners are encouraged to adopt their own methods of reflection and reviewing.

5.0 User Views

User views are important for reflection and useful to inform future practice, ensure this is completed periodically or at the request of the senior leadership team.

Targeted Support

Any outcome is dependent on partnership working from the pupil, parent, school and services engaged to support an improvement in attendance and attainment. Pupils referred for targeted interventions will require continued involvement from the referring school.

Referrals will be addressed by the Local Authority Attendance Panel for consideration of further actions, such as:

- Further assessment from specialist services such as Health, CAMHS, Educational Psychologist etc.
- Parents subject to a specified warning period and further planning to improve pupil attendance.
- Use of parenting contracts and referral to evidence-based parenting programmes.
- Progression to a Parenting Order (S8 Crime & Disorder Act 1998)
- Consideration and progression to an Education Supervision Order (S36 Children Act 1989).
- Consideration for prosecution under S444(1a) Education Act 1996 with an interview Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984 conditions.
- Referrals for a penalty notice for cases compliant with the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct (September 2022)

For consideration of any enforcement through the Magistrates' Court it is important schools have followed the DfE and local authority guidance for managing pupil attendance. Any cases progressing to prosecution will be placed before the courts under S444(1a).

Referrals for Panel

Referrals are submitted via the schools own 'My Doncaster' portal under the category of:

Prosecution under S444 Referral

All information must be attached except for a witness statement. Failure to disclose all information will result in the referral being declined until provided.

The panel will consist of a minimum of three members from the following category:

- A senior manager from the local authority Attendance & Pupil Welfare Service (Chair)
- A member of the schools' senior leadership team
- A member of the referring schools governing body
- A member of the schools' academy trust
- A senior member from local authority children's social care

Panel members must have the delegated responsibility to agree and support any decision made by the panel. Cases cannot be adjourned until a later date or have any decision pending further approval by a Head or Principal.

The case will be presented to the panel by the schools referring officer and will be supported by the APWS EWO attached to the school.

Panel outcomes will be subject to:

- a further Local Authority 30-day warning and possible PACE* Interview
- a PACE Interview without delay
- commencement for proceeding for an education supervision order
- further school action and support
- a penalty notice to be issued

****PACE – Police and Criminal Evidence***

Specialist Support

There are situations where support is required from specialist services and consideration must be given to ensuring the best outcome for a child or young person. For pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) follow the SEND Graduated Approach.

Pupils who may potentially be absent for a long period of time due to health needs schools must follow the relevant government guidance:



Supporting pupils
at school with medi



Ensuring a good
education for childr

The local authority will perform its statutory duty and progress to enforcement through the Magistrates' Court for cases where all other avenues are exhausted, and it is the best interest for the child's educational outcomes.

Thresholds of Intervention

What is an intervention?

An intervention is:

- Any action or support to improve engagement and attendance
- Any action that will challenge a pupil and parents

The type and level of any support varies considerably and is wholly dependent on the level of unmet need and cannot be provided without some form of assessment. This can be an informed decision based on current information or a more detailed or specialist assessment.

Schools must demonstrate the level of support offered to pupil and parents before any case can be referred to the local authority for enforcement through the Magistrates' Court.

When to Intervene

- When the level of absence becomes a cause for concern
- When the level of absence becomes a serious level of concern

When to De-Escalate

- When engagement and attendance reach an acceptable level for each individual case
- When attendance is 'regular' as defined in the Education Act 1996

Percentages are commonly used as a threshold, but this method can often be misinterpreted due to the number of possible sessions for each individual pupil. Before the commencement of any intervention ensure there are enough absent sessions to warrant involvement, and any actions are justified.

The DfE publishes school absence rates termly based on the previous census returns and are available following the link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-pupil-absence>

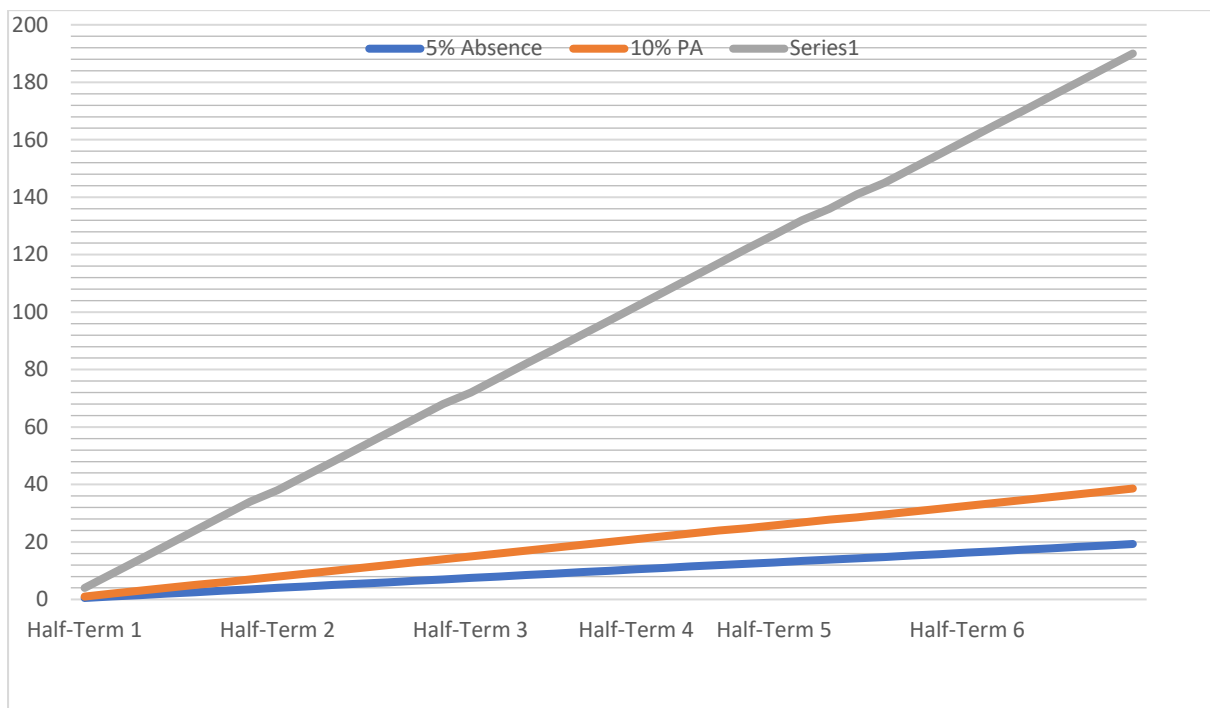
Key performance indicators are the level of absence and the percentage of persistent and severely absent pupils. The definitions are:

Persistent Absentee (PA) - A pupil is identified as a persistent absentee when they have been absent for 10 percent of the total session possible for that individual pupil.

Severely Absentee (SA) - A pupil is identified as a severely absentee when they have been absent for 50 percent of the total session possible for that individual pupil.

Any pupil who is identified as PA or SA must be subject to be targeted for an intervention at either school level or for the more severe at local authority level. This is dependent on the reasons for absence and to be discussed with the EWO or local authority representative as part of the targeted meeting each term.

Many pupils enrolled at a school remains constant and this can be reflected within the threshold criteria. The diagram below shows absentee levels across a typical academic year. Pupils identified early within the academic year have the opportunity to make improvement, but those added to or removed from, the school admission register outside the normal transition periods will remain a statistic against the school.



This can be further demonstrated as follows:

Absence Sessions	Terms	Average Absence 5% or Less	Persistent Absence 10% or More	Severely Absence 50% or More
Half Term 1	Autumn Term	3	7	35
Half Term 2		7	14	70
Half Term 3	Spring Term	10	20	95
Half Term 4		13	26	125
Half Term 5	Summer Term	16	31	150
Half Term 6		19	38	190

A pupil identified as SA in half-term 1 can improve to an extent, they are no longer SA or PA by the end of the academic year, but beyond 38 sessions they will always be identified as PA but not SA. It is not possible for an SA pupil identified at HT1 to reach the national average for pupil absence.

When to intervene:

Half-term 1 Pupils identified as PA or SA from the previous academic year should be targeted from the start of the academic year. It is advisable to meet with pupils and parents at during the last term to assess level of need and agree a suitable support plan.

Attendance Support Plan to be reviewed at the end of the half-term unless there is no significant improvement to justify an earlier review.

Any pupil who is absent for family holiday can be referred to the local authority for a penalty notice to be issued (must be a minimum of 10 sessions unauthorised absence).

Pupils who accrue 10 sessions absence or more at any time during this period should be targeted and initial communication with parents established.

Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.

- Half-term 2** Pupils targeted during HT1, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.
- Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT1 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT2 unless no significant improvement is evident.
- End of the term signifies a targeted support meeting should be held with a local authority officer.
- Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.
- Half-term 3** Pupils identified as SA from the previous academic year and remain a significant concern during the Autumn term should be referred to the LA Attendance Panel and considered for a targeted or specialist level intervention.
- Pupils targeted during HT2, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.
- Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT2 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT3 unless no significant improvement is evident.
- Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.
- Half-term 4** Pupils identified as SA during the Autumn term and remain a significant concern during the Spring term should be referred to the LA Attendance Panel and considered for a targeted or specialist level intervention.
- Pupils targeted during HT3, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.
- Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT3 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT4 unless no significant improvement is evident.
- Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.
- Half-term 5** Pupils identified as SA during the Spring term and remain a significant concern during the Summer term should be referred to the LA Attendance Panel and considered for a targeted or specialist level intervention.
- Pupils targeted during HT4, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.
- Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT4 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT5 unless no significant improvement is evident.
- Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.

Half-term 6 Pupils identified as SA during the Spring term and remain a significant concern during the Summer term should be referred to the LA Attendance Panel and considered for a targeted or specialist level intervention.

Pupils targeted during HT5, and the review shows some or slow improvement should continue through the APDR model and update the support plan. Pupils with no significant improvement should be discussed with the EWO or local authority officer for consideration for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Panel.

Pupils who are identified as PA or SA from HT5 results should be targeted for assessment and support. Support plans are reviewed at the end of HT6 unless no significant improvement is evident.

Pupils who make significant progress are praised and stepped down for monitoring.

Pupils identified as SA and PA during the Summer term and will continue to be enrolled at school should be targeted for assessment and support from the start of the next academic year.

Any transition pupils identified by the primary schools as SA and PA should also be targeted for assessment and support from the start of the next academic year.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do we have to accept a parent's explanation for absence?

No. Schools must always use their own judgement when deciding whether to accept a parent's explanation for an absence. Should you believe it is not genuine, it must be challenged, and the parent informed the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, unless a parent subsequently demonstrates the pupil was not well enough to attend.

What is the difference between a parenting contract and a parenting order?

A parenting contract is a voluntary agreement between a school or service providing support to make improvement to a child's attendance and well-being. This is to ensure the parent or carer is aware of what actions need to be taken to secure the best outcomes for the pupil. This must not be confused with generic home school agreements.

Parenting contracts may be because of a parenting assessment undertaken by experienced parenting practitioners. These explore specific areas around parenting capacity and will outline what support will be provided to show the appropriate boundaries are adopted within the family environment. Parenting interventions and courses are available through the local authority or other organisations.

Should any parenting contract not be adhered to, and outcomes achieved, the evidence can be used to apply to the court for a parenting order. This order will be for a specific period and include details of expectations and outcomes. Any case laid before the Courts under S 444 Education Act 1996 may be considered for a parenting order.

What is an Education Supervision Order?

Where a voluntary early help plan, or formal parenting contract has not been successful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be a useful alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. In deciding whether to progress to an ESO, the school and local authority should have exhausted voluntary support and be clear that making the order would be beneficial for the pupil and parent. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner should also discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and children's social care services and agree an ESO would be a more suitable option than a s.17 (Children in Need) or s.47 (Child Protection) plan. In all cases, local authorities must fully consider using an ESO before moving forward to prosecution.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parents to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the parent's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given by the local authority under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

Any case referred to the local authority for 'Targeted and Specialist' support will be placed before a Local Authority Attendance Panel and an ESO will be considered.

What is a School Attendance Order?

Despite the reference to attendance, the order is used to ensure parents who are not providing their child a suitable education appropriate to age, ability and aptitude other than at school, either do so or enrol the child at a school. The local authority issues the order to the parent with a school named and failure by the parent to comply is an offence.

Schools are not expected to place a child on the school admission register until a start date is agreed with the LA and parent. Schools will not suffer absences that are not necessary and the EWO will ensure the full reintegration of a pupil.

Relevant government guidance

- Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour
- Children missing education
- Keeping children safe in education
- Working together to safeguard children
- Elective home education
- Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities
- Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges
- Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying

Graham Batty, Service Manager
Attendance & Pupil Welfare Service
September 2022 (Review August 2023)