

Education Welfare Service - introduction

The Education Welfare Service works with Schools and Academies to provide support to children, young people and their families in connection with school attendance and accessing education.

Support to families can take a range of forms including proactive support, individual work, advice and guidance, and in extreme cases legal action.

The Education Welfare Service also has a responsibility for monitoring children missing from education, elective home education, child employment and entertainment licences.

The Education Welfare Service has a range of statutory and discretionary responsibilities. Not all services may be available in Academies as the same responsibilities do not always apply.

School attendance

Enforcing school attendance is the main role of the Education Welfare Service, but in practice Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) will work closely with schools and families in an attempt to avoid legal measures.

It is recognised that the causes of irregular school attendance can be varied and complex and in some cases EWOs will undertake an important role in other related areas of work which may have a bearing on school attendance.

Education Welfare Officers will not undertake the role of a legal advocate.

Education Welfare Officers will:

- Encourage parents to visit the school and discuss any concerns
- Offer support and advice on a variety of educational matters
- Make parents aware of their legal responsibilities
- Assess areas of difficulty and bridge any gap between home and school
- Interpret particular situations and needs to the school
- Work with the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Child Protection Process to support children where appropriate

Irregular school attendance is usually associated with a range of personal problems experienced by the child or family concerned. The role of the Education Welfare Officer is to:

- Identify, in conjunction with schools, cases of irregular school attendance which necessitate further action
- Assess the circumstances which have led to the breakdown of school attendance and identify causes and other significant factors which can assist in resolving the problems

- Assist schools in the interpretation and use of attendance data through closer analysis and monitoring
- Analyse the extent and incidence of intermittent and persistent absence
- Plan appropriate action in conjunction with the school, appropriate agencies, the child and the family
- Implement action plans to support the child and family in overcoming their difficulties with irregular school attendance, often done through the CAF process
- Take court proceedings on behalf of the local authority

Contact us

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