

Attendance Team Guidance

Working Together to Improve School Attendance

“Improving attendance is everyone’s business”

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Introduction to the Attendance Team at LCC

This guidance has been produced by the Leicestershire County Council's Attendance Team. It has been devised to help schools and other education settings maintain high levels of school attendance through the development of a rigorous, whole school, multi-agency approach.

The Team's aim is to provide schools throughout the county with advice and guidance in relation to children who are struggling to attend school on a regular basis

On 6th May 2022 the Department for Education (DfE) published [Working together to improve school attendance](#).

This set out expectations for schools and Local Authorities, parts of which will be summarised in this guidance. There is an expectation that the guidance will be made statutory **no earlier than September 2023**.

Until the guidance is made statutory schools and the Local Authorities are expected to continue to implement the changes introduced through the attendance guidance.

As with all government guidance, Local Authorities and Schools are legally obliged to take the new school attendance guidance into account when exercising their functions.

The Attendance Team at Leicestershire County Council consist of the Attendance Team Manager, the Attendance Team Co-ordinator and three Attendance Team Officers who carry out the many administrative processes required regarding referrals, the issuing of fines and preparation of statements.

The Attendance Team Manager and Co-ordinator will monitor and review referrals made to the team over a 6 month period. They will also conduct Targeted Support Meetings with schools in accordance with the new government guidance.

If you have any concerns in relation to a pupil's attendance and would like to discuss whether it should be referred to our team please contact the Attendance Team directly.

Any queries should be directed by e-mail to attendanceteam@leics.gov.uk or by telephone on 0116 3056743.

Our Rationale

At Leicestershire County Council we recognise that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school.

Therefore, to improve attendance at all stages of a child's life, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance. This can be achieved by

building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

Securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation – while regular school attendance is predominantly the responsibility of parents and carers, schools play a central role in ensuring that children and young people attend school regularly. This includes taking a positive and proactive role in the promotion of regular school attendance through strategies identified within the school attendance policy that will engage families.

In accordance with the government guidance the Attendance Team at Leicestershire County Council consider issuing Penalty Notices and Prosecutions as the very last resort and wherever possible we will endeavour to support schools to provide the child and family with help and assistance in accessing their education. Our aim is to ensure that the school has exhausted all avenues of support before proceeding down the legal route.

It will require schools to examine their own strategies regarding behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing and to ensure they are using resources, including pupil premium, effectively.

By attending school regularly children and young people ensure they reach their maximum life chances and academic potential. When attending school regularly, they are given access to new experiences, new opportunities to learn and develop new skills. These are not limited to academic skills, but social, emotional, and behavioural development too. Being in school with their peers will enhance their life skills in making friends, developing confidence and self-esteem, teamwork, inclusion and learning to be resilient. [DfE attendance statistics](#)

Persistent Absence and Severe Absence

A pupil becomes a ‘**persistent absentee**’ (**PA**) when their attendance **drops to 90%** or below for any reason whether the absences are authorised or not. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 school days; equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year). Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to a child’s educational prospects. A pupil becomes ‘**severely absent**’ (**SA**) when their attendance **drops to 50%** or below for any reason, whether the absences are authorised or not.

As **persistent absence** is often a symptom of wider issues in a child’s life, schools, local authorities, and their partners play a crucial role in overcoming barriers to attendance and ensuring all children can access the full-time education to which they are entitled.

Whilst the law states that it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to ensure their child attends school regularly, Leicestershire County Council recommends a collaborative approach between parents, schools, and other agencies to ensure that the appropriate support to resolve barriers to attendance is put in place.

Schools need to be aware of the factors that can have an impact on the initiatives they adopt to deal with poor school attendance. These include parental and pupil engagement, the age of the pupil, home circumstances and geographic location.

It is possible that a pupil has medical needs. Visit the [Inclusion Service's page](#) for advice about working with children who have medical needs.

It is important that individual schools tailor their attendance procedures to suit their school community; evidence shows that needs-led approaches are the most effective when dealing with poor school attendance.

Expectations for Schools

In line with the May 2022 DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance schools are expected to:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance. This includes having a clear vision for attendance improvement, evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes, oversight of data analysis and communicating messages to pupils and parents.
- Have a clear school attendance policy (see [Devising a Whole School Attendance Policy](#)) which all staff, pupils and parents understand, with a whole school approach where every staff member has a role to fulfil in improving attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow up absence.
- Robustly track, monitor, and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to, understand, and where possible remove barriers to attendance.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Facilitate support by removing barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school.
- Formalise support where absence persists, and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with. The use of a parenting contract can be discussed with the Inclusion Service or Attendance Team at LCC when meetings with parents, and discussions with the individual pupil have not brought around change (see [Parenting Contract](#)).
- Enforce support, when formal support is not bringing around change by discussing case with the Attendance Team at Leicestershire County Council.

Devising a Whole School Attendance Policy

It is important that a school attendance policy is tailored to the context of the school and the needs of its pupils.

At Leicestershire County Council we recognise that attendance is never “solved” and that it is a continuous process requiring regular reviews of progress, process, and strategies. The process of endeavouring to improve a child’s attendance continues even when a referral has been made to the Attendance Team or Inclusion Service.

To ensure that robust processes are in place to tackle absenteeism a school must have a clear Attendance Policy.

Your Attendance Policy should be reviewed annually and available to view on your website.

Leicestershire County Council would recommend reviewing your current policy and ensuring that you have included the following details:

School routines and monitoring attendance

- Reminders to parents about the policy and the new government guidance in newsletters, assemblies, staff meetings.
- Indicate the aim of the policy and the school's ethos regarding attendance.
- Include details relating to the importance of children attending regularly, punctually and being prepared for the day- indicate amount of learning lost by just a few days off school. Do you encourage parents not to schedule medical appointments during the school day if possible?
- How do you identify and follow up on unexplained absences?
- First day calling and home visits – indicate who does them, why they happen, and emphasise the link with safeguarding concerns and why a home visit will be carried out by the school if a child has not been seen.
- Include a visual representation of the escalation procedure if a pupil's attendance deteriorates.
- Information on the process for requesting leave of absence in term time attaching a request form for parents to complete.
- Names and contact details of school staff to contact about attendance – both on a day-to-day basis and to discuss any wider concerns.
- Details as to how you manage attendance on a day-to-day basis (action taken to follow up on unexplained absences, ongoing concerns) and what support is offered.
- Systems and processes for promoting good attendance (incentives).
- Clarify the start times and end of the school day – when does a pupil acquire a L code or U code?

- Details of any meet and greet, breakfast clubs, activities before school and areas that are open to the children before registration.
- Uniform- expectations of the school- is obtaining uniform a barrier. Are there any financial barriers to address with families?
- How do you identify concerns regarding attendance and share those concerns with a parent? Does the policy stress that the focus is on supporting a parent and child?
- Indicate how you will listen, review and work with parents to ensure their child is supported at school. Confirm how you will work with a parent to remove barriers to attending regularly.
- School Term dates- indicating school's stance of term-time holidays.

Attendance thresholds and escalation procedures and medical evidence.

- Indicate next steps if attendance concerns continue or if the child attends well.
- Your strategies regarding Persistently Absent children (those missing 10% or more sessions) or those with severe absence (those missing 50% or more sessions).
- Indicate how you will challenge and support parents and pupils to remove barriers before referring to the Attendance Team in respect of ongoing unauthorised absence concerns.
- Indicate when you will require evidence to authorise an absence? If there is a high number of absences for illness over a sustained period you may require a parent to provide medical evidence – this does not always have to be a GP letter - medical evidence could be an appointment card, a letter from the hospital regarding an appointment, or prescription details. However, schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence. Only where the school has a “genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness”
- Please note paragraph 220 of the Working together to Improve attendance states:-.

In the majority of cases a parent’s notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointments system particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Detail how staff review the data to spot trends, concerns regarding attendance – how data is shared with pupils and parents.
- How do school senior management review the implementation of the policy.

- Confirm that you will listen and provide support wherever possible but absence that is concerning i.e., Persistent or Severe will not be tolerated.
- Does the policy provide links to other pertinent statutory policies including safeguarding, behaviour, and bullying?
- Indicate what tailored support look likes at the school?
- Refer to formal attendance meetings, school attendance panels, who arranges and holds these meetings, who attends.
- Be clear that where there are safeguarding concerns, these will be referred to social care.
- Detail when the school will consider referring to the Attendance Team for possible legal intervention. State that legal intervention will be considered when there are not legitimate reasons for absences and the parent and child have not engaged with or taken up support offered by school or other agencies (i.e., Early Help).

Leave of absence in term-time (including holidays in term-time)

- Detail information required regarding individual requests for authorisation for leave of absence.
- Confirm that Leave of Absence in term-time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- Detail where the request is not agreed the absence will be unauthorised, and state that the case will be referred to the Attendance Team and parents will be issued with a Penalty Notice of £120 **per parent per child** (discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days).
- Refer to the Attendance Team [Code of Conduct](#)
- DfE Expectations for Local Authorities

Once schools have exhausted all voluntary support, they should work with the Local Authority to consider next steps to improving whole school, cohort, and individual pupils' attendance. The school can expect the Local Authority to:

- Track local attendance data. This data will be discussed with all schools during their termly targeted support meetings.
- Provide an Attendance Team to support schools offering:

Communication and Advice

- Webinars providing updates re best practice.

Targeted Support Meetings

- These will be held termly with the attendance lead with other school staff members welcome to join. Whole school, cohort and pupil level discussions will

take place for those who are severely or persistently absent (See Targeted Support Meetings below)

Multi-Disciplinary Support for families

- Schools to work with the Attendance Team to identify the barriers to attendance and intervene early to ensure appropriate support/referrals to outside agencies are provided (i.e., Inclusion Service or Early Help)

Legal Intervention

- Prosecution is used as a last resort where all other routes have been exhausted or deemed inappropriate. Where unauthorised absence continues to be a concern after schools have followed the expectations placed upon them, they should liaise with the Attendance Team to consider next steps.

Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker

- Good school attendance provides an additional safeguard for vulnerable pupils. It is therefore important that pupils with a social worker are identified, supported, and have their attendance considered at every opportunity. Schools are expected to notify the child's social worker of any unexplained absence, as part of the first day call. Attendance is expected to be on every child's plan, and where attendance of a child with a social worker remains a concern consultation will take place to ensure next steps are considered and adhered to.

The purpose of the **Targeted Attendance Support Meeting** will be to discuss:

- Your day-to-day processes for managing attendance
- Any current strategies you have for promoting and incentivising good attendance.
- Your attendance data and any concerns and actions resulting from this
- Your strategy for reducing persistent absence in the school including thresholds for accessing wider support services and legal intervention
- Pupils considered to be severely absent (less than 50%)
- Pupils accessing some of their learning off site, to ensure this is used as a short-term intervention to support a child re-engage in their learning
- Where time allows, pupils considered to the persistent absentees (90% or less)

Further information: [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Leicestershire County Council Attendance Team Strategy

Our Objective

The overall objective for the Attendance Team at Leicestershire County Council is for **every child to be in school every day, and on time**. However, we recognise that not every child is the same and that to reach this outcome we must support all children regardless of their background taking into consideration their particular needs.

The Attendance Team recognises the need to support pupils who attend between 99% to 97% to raise their attendance and get as close as possible to 100%.

It is also our wish for schools to challenge pupils who attend from 92%-97% reminding parents of their duty to ensure their child is in full time education and offering them support to prevent further absences in the future. This will be to ensure the best possible outcomes for those children when leaving school.

The Attendance Team will always recommend following a graduated approach in relation to pupils with low attendance, assessing why they are not attending regularly, creating a plan to support improvement in attendance, implementing the plan and reviewing regularly to see if improvements have been made.

Evaluation

The Attendance Team will always recommend that schools start by evaluating the barriers preventing the child attending regularly

The Team will ask a school the following:

- Has the child's voice been captured, what do they need to happen so they can attend?
- What has already been implemented to improve the child's attendance?
- What support is required to improve the attendance?
- What interventions may be required to improve the child's attendance?
- What further assessments may be required?
- Have time scales for assessments to be carried out?

Plan

The Attendance Team will discuss with a school:

- What next steps need to take place to help the young person attend every day, on time?
- Who will support and what their actions are?

- What outcomes do we expect to see?
- Has the plan been shared with all parties including the child where appropriate?

Do

The Attendance Team will endeavour to ensure that all agencies are clear on their responsibilities and work to improve attendance.

Review

The Attendance Team will review and assess:

- Does the child and family feel they have been supported?
- Is there a movement towards the desired outcomes, even small improvements?
- Has there been any party who hasn't carried out their actions?
- Has the child's voice been captured, how do they feel the last few weeks have gone, what difference has been made, what are they proud of, what could have been better?

When meeting with the pupil and the family members it is important to capture:

- What's going well – give some praise and encouragement
- What we are worried about – be open and honest, what are the concerns
- What are the next steps?

Attendance Team Referral Thresholds

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or being engaged with consideration can be given to formalising support through use of a Parenting Contract. The Attendance Team can offer guidance in relation to the contents of the contract. The Parenting Contract will require the engagement of a parent/carer

If a parent/carer is not engaging at all approach the Attendance Team for further advice.

Parenting Contracts - Formalising the Support

Attendance is often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing. All parties should work together to offer voluntary support to address the symptoms and bring around change. Where this voluntary support is not leading to improved attendance consideration should be given to formalising the support.

Under the current guidance schools are expected to meet with the parents, child and any other agencies involved and consider formalising the support through a parenting contract.

A contract is not legally binding and is not a punitive tool. It is intended to provide a formal route to secure engagement with support where voluntary engagement has not brought about change.

A Parenting Contract may not always be appropriate but should always be explored. **The LA would recommend contacting the Attendance Team for advice before drafting a Parenting Contract particularly if reference is to be made to the Local Authority and possible legal intervention if parts of the contract are not complied with.**

If a parenting contract is in place and not being adhered to, the school should contact the Attendance Team to consider next steps.

There is no minimum or maximum duration to a parenting contract, reviews should take place regularly with next steps considered at each review.

[Parenting Contract Template](#) (PDF)

Making a referral to LCC Attendance Team

As stated above the Attendance Team consider prosecution as the last resort and wherever possible we support schools to provide the child and family with help and assistance in accessing their education. Our aim is to ensure that the school have exhausted all avenues of support before considering a referral to the Attendance Team and the team can always be consulted in relation to a child if you are considering making a referral.

The Team would always recommend consulting [LCC's Code of Conduct](#) and [LCC's Protocol](#) before referring so that you are familiar with the Evidential and Public Interest Test.

As well as consulting these documents the Team would advise every school to consider the following checklist before making a referral. The [checklist can be downloaded here](#) as a separate document to be used as part of your processes.

The Attendance Team checklist has been devised to support Headteachers, Attendance Leads, Attendance Officers and Governors to review attendance practices and to ensure the school is compliant with statutory guidance.

Considerations	Evidence of compliance	Action required by school
Have you completed first day telephone calls/home visits?		
Have letters been sent to share attendance concern and has the parent responded with reasons for concerns?		

Considerations	Evidence of compliance	Action required by school
Do you follow a graduated process with regard to sending out warning letters to parents?		
Have you met with the parents/carers and asked why the child isn't attending school? Do the reasons match with the reasons the child has provided?		
Have you spoken to the child during registration times?		
Have you spoken to the form tutor/head of year/pastoral manager?		
Have you or any other staff member met the child outside of form/tutor time to capture the child's voice to establish a reason and put support in place?		
If regularly late, has the school start time been discussed with parents. What support or strategies could be put in place to address lateness? Incentives to improve. Breakfast club? Are they getting U codes on a daily basis? What are the reasons?		
Have family circumstances been considered and have you considered with the family what support may help them at this time? Have any referrals to other agencies been offered? - is obtaining uniform a barrier? Are there any financial barriers to address with family?		
Have you checked if siblings are having the same absences? Have you contacted the school the siblings attend?		
Is the child missing certain days, is there a pattern? Are they trying to miss certain lessons they are struggling with?		
Is the child a Young Carer, and is this having an impact on their attendance?		

Considerations	Evidence of compliance	Action required by school
Has the child experienced a previous trauma that could be affecting their attendance?		
Could the child have unmet learning needs that have yet to be assessed resulting in them being reluctant to attend school?		
If a EHCP in place are the outcomes being supported, when was this last reviewed by SENA? Have you contacted your caseworker in SENA for advice? Have you had a meeting with SENA and parent to discuss provision if child not attending?		
<p>Has the child's health been considered, have you received any medical evidence from the parent – could the parent seek further medical evidence to justify the absences? Could the school contact the GP/consultant with parents' consent to request further information? Have you sought the advice of the medical needs team under the Inclusion Service?</p> <p>Is the child suffering from anxiety – have parents been advised to seek a referral to CAMHs via their GP? Have you considered referring the matter to the Inclusion service?</p>		
Does the child have behavioural issues and if so, have you sought the advice of the Inclusion Forum/ Behavioural Partnership? Have you considered Alternative Provision?		
Have you considered entering a Parenting Contract with the parent with the assistance of the LA? If so have you sought the advice of the Attendance Team?		
Have you considered where the family live in relation to school and considered whether the journey to school is a barrier		
Have you considered whether the parent has a statutory defence to the offence of failing to		

Considerations	Evidence of compliance	Action required by school
ensure their child is attending regularly under s444 ss1 of the Education Act (set out in the Code of Conduct attached)		
Has an action plan been drawn up with the parent and pupil with a review date?		
Has the child received a diagnosis for ADHD or displayed ADHD traits, if so, have you approached ADHD solutions for further guidance or referred the parent to ADHD solutions for further support?		
If you have numerous pupils with regular L codes – have you considered amending your times for imposing L and U codes? At what time do you impose a U code? Are parents aware that they could receive a Penalty Notice for 20 U codes in a 12-week period?		
Is the child from the Traveller Community? Have you sought the advice of the Traveller Team at LCC? Are you T coding regularly – have you sought advice with regard to coding?		
Is the child suffering from anxiety – have parents been advised to seek a referral to CAMHs via their GP? Have you considered referring the matter to the Inclusion service?		
Do you consider the parent to be the barrier to attendance improving ? If the parent has asked for support, have you referred to the Inclusion Service or Early Help?		

Based on the measures school have undertaken the Attendance Team will assess the evidence provided to establish if parent/carer has failed in their duty to educate, and whether legal intervention is appropriate or not.

The key question to consider before referring being: – is the parent the barrier to the child attending?

If the answer is yes, then it is likely the matter needs to be referred to the Attendance Team. If the reasons why the child is not attending relates to the child, not the parent,

it is likely the matter is more suitable for a referral to the Inclusion Team. Clearly there will be scenarios when a referral will need to be made to the Inclusion service AND Attendance Team or Early Help AND Attendance Team

Before referring to the Attendance Team consider as well:

- Have you offered parents the opportunity to attend a meeting with the school?
- If parents have not taken up the offer of a meeting or support, have they been warned, in writing, that a referral will be made to the Attendance Team at Leicestershire County Council for possible legal intervention/action including a fine?

When sending the referral via the link:

- Ensure that you upload warning letters sent to parents with any referral.
- Send all paperwork via the referral link.
- Send in the referral as soon as the absence of leave has ended
- Ensure the following is supplied via the referral link:
 - Names and addresses of parents, including telephone numbers are up to date and correct.
 - Up to date attendance registers.
 - Copies of any correspondence sent to parents and responses, including e-mails.
 - Copies of any action plans agreed with parent.
 - Chronology of interventions carried out by school before referring.
 - If referral for absence of leave in term time – (holiday penalty notice) ensure the period of absence has ended before referring and the period was for 5 days or more.
 - Ensure you are referring for the parent/carer who took the child on holiday or absence of leave.
 - Provide copies of parents request for leave, if any, and school's response if the request is refused.
 - Provide copy of letter to the parent/carer confirming the matter will be referred to the LA if the leave is taken and the request has been refused.
 - Provide copy of letter to the parent/carer if the parent did not make the request for leave but you have reason to believe the child was on holiday and you have warned them that, as a result, you will be referring to the LA for a penalty notice.

If your school is considering the legal prosecution route for attendance you should always bear in mind the law surrounding attendance and the Statutory Defences prior to progression and referral to the Team. A school should also consider who is defined as the parent/carer in each case for the purposes of a prosecution or fine.

It is vital that any written warnings about a referral to the Attendance Team for possible Legal Intervention are sent to the parent /carer fitting the definition as set out under **s576** below.

What is a parent's responsibility in law?

Education Act 1996 (Section 7) states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

This means that the parent of a child registered at a school and of statutory school age has a legal duty to ensure the child's regular attendance. Failure to fulfil this duty is an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and could result in a penalty notice or prosecution.

The Statutory Defences (reasons why cases would not be progressed through the legal system) are as follows.

1. Authorised Absence - leave granted by the Head teacher.
2. Sickness - or any other unavoidable cause. Evidence presented will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
3. Religious Observance - Any day that is exclusively set aside.
4. Distance from School - The school that the child is registered is not within walking distance of the child's home and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority for either transport to and from school or enabling him/her to become a registered pupil at a school nearer his/her home. (Walking distance - Exceeding 2 miles for a child under 8 years old, exceeding 3 miles for a child aged 8 years and over).
5. Trade or business - The parent/carer can show that their trade or business requires them to travel, that the child has attended school as regularly as the nature of the trade or business allows and the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions during the preceding 12 months.

Compulsory School Age

A child is of statutory school age from the first full term after they reach their 5th birthday until the last Friday in June in the academic school year that the child reaches the age of 16.

Therefore, if a child turns 5 between:

- 1st January and 31st March, they are of statutory school age on 31st March.
- 1st April and 31st August, they are of statutory school age on 31st August.

- 1st September and 31st December, then they are of statutory school age on 31st December.

The legal responsibility for parents to ensure regular attendance at school or otherwise continues up to the last Friday in June in the academic year that the child reaches 16 years of age.

Who is a parent under Education law?

When addressing concerns about pupil attendance, it is also important that staff investigate and fully understand the family composition to ensure all parents as defined by the Education Act are identified. The Local Authority and school will need to decide who comes within the definition of parent in respect of a particular pupil when using the legal measures, but generally parents include all those with day-to-day responsibility for a child

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines a parent as:

1. All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
2. Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
3. Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child.

Who has parental responsibility?

- Parents married to each other at the time of a child's birth have shared parental responsibility.
- Fathers who are unmarried at the time of a child's birth prior to 2003, even if their name is on the birth certificate, do not have parental responsibility unless: (a) they have a parental responsibility order, (b) have a residency order or (c) become the legal guardian of the child.

From 2003 Fathers that are unmarried at the time of birth but are named on the birth certificate do have parental responsibility.

It is important that staff and parents understand that the definition of a parent under the Education Act 1996 is wider than the definition of parental responsibility.

School based attendance officers should continue to monitor attendance during and following any referral to the Attendance Team at the LA to ensure any changes are sustained, or any decline is explored in a timely manner and the Attendance Team alerted if required.

The Attendance Team will assess cases on a case-by-case basis, following voluntary and formal support offers, to make decisions as to what, if any, legal intervention is appropriate

using the range of legal powers available to us. These will be discussed during attendance meetings and assessed based on the evidence provided and in consideration of the [LCC Attendance Team Protocol](#) (PDF), as to how the parent/carer is failing in their duty to ensure a full-time suitable education for their child.

A referral can be made via the [online Attendance Team referral form](#)

[Template Warning letter samples](#) (PDF)

Sources of Further Information

Further information, including legal guidance, guidance on the marking of attendance registers and strategies for improved school attendance can be found in the following documentation.

DFE School Attendance: guidance for schools including coding

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

DFE Improving School Attendance: Support for Schools and Local Authorities

[Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

DFE Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance

[Children missing education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

DFE Keeping Children Safe in Education

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

DFE Ensuring a Good Education for Children who cannot attend school because of Health Needs

[Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Elective Home Education

[Elective home education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)