
ATTENDANCE ENVIRONMENT AND GOOD PRACTICE CHECKLIST*

Notes for Guidance on use:

- 1) The following checklist is designed for the joint use of staff in schools and the Education Welfare Service.
- 2) It is best to maximise staff involvement in the completion of the checklist and to involve governors, parents and pupils in the process.
- 3) The checklist will provide a basis for assessment of existing practice and will highlight where practice may be improved
- 4) The check list may be re-used as an evaluation tool.
- 5) Seek to answer each section by use of the 1-5 scale.

5 = Strongly Agree – no real room for improvement

1 = Strongly Disagree - very significant need for action

A Whole School Policy

- ◆ The school prospectus and related documents give clear statements of the value placed on high levels of school attendance and of the school's expectations in this respect. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school has a written policy on school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Governors have been involved in the development and agreement of existing policy. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ School staff have been involved in the development and agreement of the existing policy. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The Education Welfare Service has been involved in the development and agreement of the existing policy. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Parents have been involved in the development and agreement of the existing policy. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupils have been involved in the development and agreement of the existing policy. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

* Checklist devised by and used with the permission of Birmingham EWS

- ◆ There is an identified member of staff with overall responsibility for attendance issues. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school has a set target for attendance in the current academic year. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school has a written plan of action to improve attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is a collective responsibility for action on school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ All staff of the school are familiar with school policy on attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school has a clear anti-bullying policy. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Incidents of bullying are always addressed. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is a collective responsibility for tackling bullying issues. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Victims of bullying are encouraged and enabled to seek help. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Support systems are in place for victims of bullying (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Support systems are in place for bullies. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The INSET programme for the school includes training for all staff in respect of promoting attendance and preventing absence. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ INSET is provided for the governors of the school in respect to attendance issues. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The Education Welfare Officer is involved in the INSET programme relating to attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

B In-school Systems For Recording And Monitoring Of Attendance

- ◆ There are clear written procedures for staff with respect to pupil registration and recording of absence. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Attendance data for class and year groups is regularly shared with school staff. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Form tutors are provided with attendance monitoring resources. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The Senior Management Team of the school regularly review whole school attendance issues. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Governors of the school regularly review school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The Education Welfare Service is involved in the regular review of whole school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Staff have a clear understanding of policy and procedures. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Parents have a clear understanding of policy and procedures. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupils have a clear understanding of policy and procedures. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is effective communication between class tutors and senior staff regarding attendance issues. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is a clear working arrangement with the Education Welfare Service. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Parents receive prompt notice of any concerns regarding pupil absences. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Unexplained absence triggers immediate contact with parents. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Standard letters, and procedures regarding contact with parents, are established for use in cases of concern. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

C Partnership with Education Welfare Service

- ◆ There is a named Education Welfare Officer linked with the school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is an identified senior member of school staff responsible for direct links with the Education Welfare Officer. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is a up-to-date written partnership agreement with the EWS. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Regular review meetings between key staff and EWO are established. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There are clear established referral procedures to the EWS. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ A list of "cases of concern" is maintained and regularly reviewed which identifies priorities and plans of action with time scales. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is a shared responsibility for decision making regarding action in all cases. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Joint working between school staff and Education Welfare Officer is encouraged. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The management of workloads establishes clear levels of responsibility and accountability for action in relation to individual cases. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The Education Welfare Officer meets regularly with school staff and managers. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Education Welfare Officer and school staff are encouraged to work inventively within school to promote attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The Education Welfare Officer is involved in parents' evenings. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Group working with pupils is developed to address attendance issues where appropriate. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Group working with parents is developed to address attendance issues where appropriate. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Legal action is used where appropriate, to positive effect. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

D Networking, Other Agencies

- ◆ There are clear, established links and referral procedures to other relevant agencies (Health, Social Services, SENTASS, Psychological Services, Police etc.) (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Regular attendance updates are sent to pupils' key workers in other agencies. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Positive links are established with voluntary agencies in the community. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Alternative providers for pupils are working effectively in partnership with the school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

E Preventing Absenteeism

- ◆ Attendance issues are discussed with parents and pupil at the point of admission to school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupil previous attendance records are received and reviewed. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ School systems identify absences as soon as possible. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Absences are monitored each school day. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Post registration checks are undertaken regularly. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Unauthorised absences lead to prompt communication with parents. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ First day contact is established with parents. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Standard letters, with a response requirement, are sent to parents following a set number of days' absence. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Absence blitzes are undertaken periodically. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Continued absence triggers a review of each case between members of staff and the Education Welfare Officer. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupils returning from absence are welcomed back positively. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

- ◆ There is a system for reintegration and catch-up for returnees after absence. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ School assemblies are utilised to reinforce the value of education and the need for regular school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Each key stage spends time considering the purpose and value of education. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Parents' concerns are listened to and responded to sensitively. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupils' concerns are listened to and responded to sensitively. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Staff provide positive role models (including attendance). (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Teacher Training days are planned to minimise split weeks. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Parents required to advise school of any reasons for lateness. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Parents are informed of a clear policy regarding holidays during school time. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ All communications to parents are effectively designed to be accessible, understandable, sensitive, and interesting. All written communication is in plain language and translated where appropriate. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The curriculum is regularly reviewed to enhance pupil motivation and attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Flexibility is developed in Year 10 and 11 to ensure pupils are effectively engaged in study and work experience. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

F Promoting Attendance

- ◆ The school has introduced initiatives to improve attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Excellent attendance is given a high value in school policy statements and related communication to parents, pupils, and school staff. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school sets attendance targets. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Excellent attendance is rewarded (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Improvement in attendance is rewarded. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ All pupils are enabled to achieve through continuing or improving their attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Attendance certificates are used effectively to promote attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ “Campaigns” are introduced which include the promotion of attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Communications to parents are effectively designed to promote attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Incentives are offered for good attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupils’ views are sought on attendance issues. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Parents’ views are sought on attendance issues. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Staff views are sought on attendance issues. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Prizes are awarded for attendance achievement consistent with school policy on prize giving. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

G School Environment

The following issues have been considered in relation to providing a positive school environment, which will promote attendance:

- ◆ It is easy to find your way into the school building. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school is a working place to pupils, parents, staff and visitors. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school is easily accessible to all pupils, parents and others. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is a purpose designed reception area for parents and visitors. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is a welcoming and comfortable parents' room in the school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ There is a quiet and separate waiting area for parents/visitors. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Toilets are clearly identified and easily accessible to visitors. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school has prominent interactive displays focused on promoting school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Classrooms and other school areas are well resourced. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Décor is of a good standard. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Furnishings are of a good standard. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Classrooms are welcoming to pupils, staff and parents. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupils feel welcomed in all areas of the school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

H Immediate Community Environment

The following issues have been considered in relation to pupil school attendance. :

- ◆ Transport systems to the school are well established and effective. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ “Risk areas” are acknowledged and well managed. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Road crossings are adequately supervised. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Parents are able to park safely near to the school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school’s start and finish times do not conflict with other local schools or the needs of parents with pupils at other local schools. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The local community is supportive to school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupils feel safe travelling to school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Pupils feel safe in the surroundings of the school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

I The Broader Community

- ◆ The school has effective and positive links with the community. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The community is represented on the school's Governing group. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Local resources, which may act as attractions to truancy are working in partnership with the school to promote school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school reflects the community it serves. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The religious and cultural needs of the community are acknowledged in the planning and arrangements of the school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The broader community places a high value on school attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

- ◆ Community resources are used to promote attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)

J Resources

- ◆ The school has resources available to support direct work on attendance with: (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
 - a) Individual Pupils
 - b) Parents
 - c) Class Groups/Key Stage Groups/Houses
 - d) Assemblies
 - e) Whole School Campaigns
- ◆ The school has a range of attendance certificates for: (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
 - a) 100% Attendance
 - b) Excellence in Attendance
 - c) Good Attendance
 - d) Improvement in Attendance
- ◆ Certificates are available for: (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
 - a) Weekly Attendance
 - b) Half-termly Attendance
 - c) Termly Attendance
 - d) Year's Attendance
- ◆ The school has established business and community links, which can be utilised to support pupil attendance. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ The school library contains books and other resources, which relate to the value of education and attendance at school. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)
- ◆ Resources are available for work, which reinforce the value of educational outcomes. (5) (4) (3) (2) (1)