

Welcome and aims for the day

Networking: Meet key local authority (LA) staff and partners

Learn about our partners offer to schools and families

Understanding roles and responsibilities of parents, schools and the LA

Data insights: Hear about the current landscape in terms of attendance data

Hear what Ofsted will be looking for in terms of attendance

Best practices from schools: Discover best practices for attendance improvement from school leaders

Tool familiarisation: Become familiar with the Mapping tool used by FEH and understand how this tool is used to explore barriers to attendance,

Closing comments from the Jenny Brennan, Assistant Director for Family Early Help and Youth Justice.



Working Together to Improve School Attendance Framework

Expect, Monitor, Listen and
Understand, Facilitate,
Formalise, Enforce

Kym Winup Team Manager (Education Inclusion Team)



- Attendance is everyone's business yet it is important that as well as understanding our own role we understand the role of others.
- Today we are taking a brief look at the roles and responsibilities of schools, parents and the Local Authority (LA)
- It is the role of Academy trustees/Governing bodies to ensure schools are meeting their responsibilities and they also have their own roles and responsibilities in addition to that oversight.
- Fortunately, the DFE have produced a summary document with a useful table of responsibilities which you can find on their website.
- Today I am linking a snapshot of those responsibilities to the DFE framework, Family Early Help, the 3 Stage Approach, Targeting Support Meetings and Team Around the Schools.

EXPECT

Setting clear expectations for attendance is fundamental in establishing a school culture that prioritises regular attendance.

School Responsibility:

- Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, parents and pupils understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.

Parents Responsibility

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.

LA Responsibility:

- Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in the area who can support with queries and advice.
- Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.



MONITOR

Regular monitoring of attendance data enables schools to track patterns and identify students at risk of absenteeism. By keeping a close eye on attendance metrics, schools can respond promptly to emerging issues, ensuring that interventions are timely and effective.

Schools Responsibilities:

- Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence and cohorts of children who may need additional support

Parents Responsibilities:

- Work with the school to and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.

LA Responsibilities:

- Hold regular conversations with schools to identify, discuss, signpost/provide access to services for children who are persistently/severely absent.



LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND 1

Actively listening to and understanding the concerns of students and their families is crucial for building trust and rapport. This component of the DFE framework fosters open communication, helping identify barriers to attendance that may not be immediately apparent, and allows for more tailored support strategies.

Schools Responsibilities:

The guidance encourages schools to work closely with families. Understanding the unique circumstances and challenges a family may be experiencing.

Parents Responsibilities:

Be receptive to communications from the school regarding their child's attendance and any concerns raised.

Local Authority Responsibilities:

Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and partners.



LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND 2

Improving school attendance concerning protected characteristics, culture, and diversity involves understanding and addressing the unique challenges and barriers faced by students from various backgrounds or those with SEN

School Responsibilities:

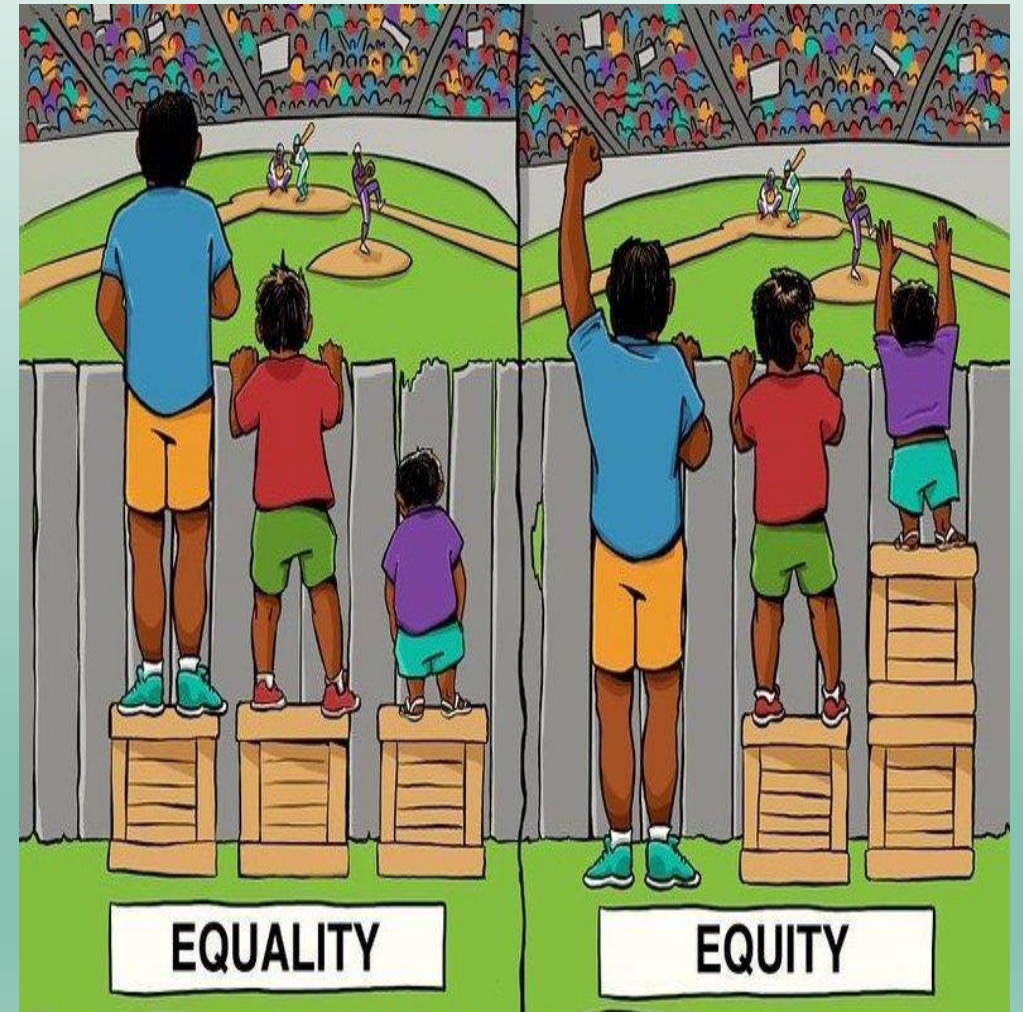
Create an environment that respects and values diversity, where students feel safe and supported, thereby encouraging regular attendance.

Academy trustees and Governor Panels Responsibilities:

Ensure the curriculum reflects the diversity of the student population and includes perspectives from various cultures and experiences, which can increase student engagement and relevance.

LA Responsibilities:

Collect data on attendance that considers protected characteristics and use it to identify patterns and address disparities. This helps in tailoring interventions to meet the specific needs of different student groups.



FACILITATE

Facilitating solutions and support for students and families is essential in removing obstacles to regular attendance. This involves providing resources, guidance, and creating an accommodating environment that encourages students to attend school consistently.

School Responsibilities:

Identify and address specific needs that may hinder attendance, such as learning difficulties or a need for emotional support and using resources available to them in the school effectively.

Parents Responsibilities:

Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need to the need for more formal support.

LA Responsibilities:

Local authorities to provide services to support families and address issues that contribute to poor attendance, such as accessing early help, social services or healthcare.



FORMALISE

Formalising attendance procedures and policies establishes clear guidelines and accountability. It ensures that everyone—students, families, and staff—understands the protocols related to attendance, which leads to consistency in enforcement and communication.

School Responsibilities:

Contact the Education Inclusion Team for an Attendance and Inclusion Consultation, consider a referral to support services such as Family Early Help

Parents Responsibilities:

Cooperate the the school to address the attendance concerns and engage with the support offered.

LA Responsibilities:

Stage 2 of the 3 Stage Approach and agree joint action plans for intervention and support with the school and family. Support the school/Lead Professional with implementing an attendance contract



ENFORCEMENT – PENALTY NOTICE

The new penalty notice framework creates a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England.

The threshold is:

- 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.
- These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.
- The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years.

A penalty notice should only be requested when:

- It is deemed likely to change parental behaviour
- The school can clearly demonstrate support has not worked or been engaged with, or,
- The 'support first' approach would not be appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g., an unauthorised holiday in term time)

Schools can use the quick reference guide below to ensure that they have successfully met the criteria prior to submitting a request.

<https://services.southwark.gov.uk/childcare-and-parenting/children-s-social-care/family-early-help-feh/education-inclusion-handbook>

CONCLUSION

Together, these components form a comprehensive framework for improving school attendance.

They interconnect to create a proactive and supportive environment that not only addresses attendance issues but also promotes a culture of accountability, engagement, and support for all students.

By emphasising the significance of each element, we can all work collaboratively with families and communities to foster better attendance and enhance student success.



RESOURCES AND LINKS

Resources Additional Resources and References Links to DfE guidelines, attendance resources, and support materials for further reading

ADVICE FROM HEALTH:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

DFE MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE FOR SCHOOLS:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-schools-and-colleges>

ADVICE FOR PARENTS;

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/09/02/back-to-school-week-everything-you-need-to-know-about-school-attendance/>

TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOLS:

<https://dfegovukassets.blob.core.windows.net/assets/Attendance%20campaign/Attendance%20campaign%20communications%20toolkit%20for%20schools.pdf>

FAMILY EARLY HELP:

<https://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/education/specialist-services-offered-by-the-council/family-early-help-feh/>

EDUCATION INCLUSION HANDBOOK:

<https://services.southwark.gov.uk/childcare-and-parenting/children-s-social-care/family-early-help-feh/education-inclusion-handbook>