

Education Welfare Service (EWS)

Information for Parents, Pupils and Schools



“Working in partnership with parents and schools to maximise every pupil’s educational opportunities”



Education Welfare Service

The Education Welfare Service is a specialist service that seeks to support children of compulsory school age and their families to get the best out of the education system.

It is part of the directorate of Children and Young People's Services within the Education Authority (EA). It is a regional service across Northern Ireland led by a Head of Service who is assisted by Deputy Chief Education Welfare Officers, and locally based teams of Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) and Senior Education Welfare Officers.

Partnership Agreements are in place with all schools to clarify roles and responsibilities (Appendix 1).

All staff are registered with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC).

The Education Welfare Service discharges the statutory responsibility of the Education Authority in relation to school attendance.



Strategic objectives of the Education Welfare Service

- To improve pupil attendance at school.
- To empower parents to meet their legal responsibilities regarding school attendance through a partnership approach.
- To operate within agreed criteria for referrals from schools and others and to respond appropriately.
- To assist schools develop mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing attendance.
- To engage with children and families in a structured and purposeful way with a view to improving attendance at school, to include capacity building.
- To engage in efficient and effective partnerships in the best interests of the child or young person
- To establish effective working relationships with appropriate external bodies, statutory, voluntary and community in the best interests of children and young people.

School attendance

Regular attendance ensures that pupils get the best possible outcomes from their period in compulsory education.

www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/sites/niao/files/media-files/niao_pupils_attendance.pdf

Equally, poor attendance at school can have an irreversible and long-term impact on the absent pupil.

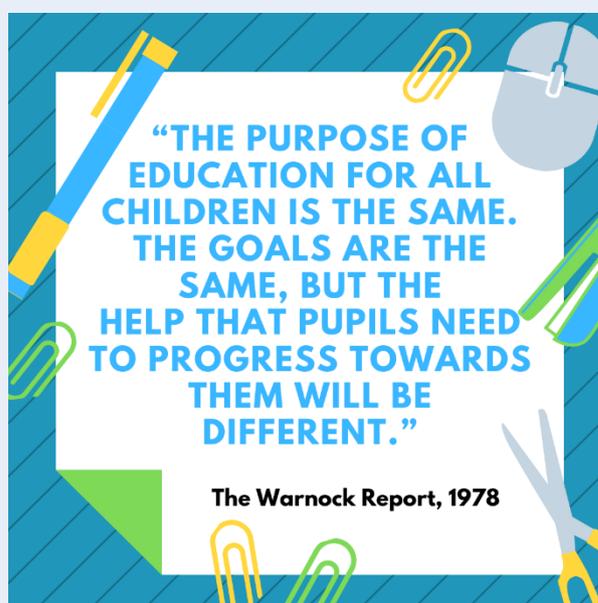
Young people who regularly miss school without good reason are more likely to become isolated from their friends, to underachieve in their examinations and may become involved in antisocial behaviour.

Key reasons why it is important to attend school

- 1 To learn**
- 2 To build confidence**
- 3 To have fun**
- 4 To develop new skills**
- 5 To achieve and gain qualifications**
- 6 To experience new things in life**
- 7 To have the best possible start in life**
- 8 To meet friends and make new ones**

Absenteeism also impacts on the learning of other pupils as it can disrupt the teacher’s ability to deliver lessons in a sequential and organised way.

Through education, our young people are supported to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal attributes they need to thrive in childhood and to go on to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.



Factors affecting attendance

Going to school can and should be an enjoyable experience for most pupils, there are however many reasons why some young people don't want to go to school and quite often there exists a combination of factors impacting on a young person's ability to engage in education. It is important therefore to understand and address the underlying issues when supporting children and families.

www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/miss-school-miss-out-improving-pupil-attendance-strategy

Miss School Miss Out (Video)

<https://www.eani.org.uk/services/education-welfare-service/miss-school-miss-out>

School-based factors



There may be difficulties during periods of transition, for example when moving from primary school to post-primary school or from one key stage to another. Peer difficulties, social isolation, relationship issues and cultural differences can often lead to reluctance to attend school resulting in underachievement.

Not settling in

Bullying

Work too difficult

Cultural differences



Falling behind with school work

Feeling isolated in school

Peer difficulties

Relationship issues

Home-based factors



For some pupils, attendance at school can be largely affected by home based or family factors. This may be attributed to a lack of parental input in their daily lives or a home environment that doesn't support their learning. Poor routines at home can often result in disrupted sleep patterns, tiredness, poor concentration levels and a lack of organisational skills. Family break-ups, competing family responsibilities, bereavement, caring for others, domestic violence, substance misuse, employment or unemployment can all affect a young person's ability to engage fully in education.

Mental Health Issues

Domestic Violence

Cultural Differences

Caring for parents

Over exposure to social media

Alcohol/drugs at home

Relationship breakdown

Bereavement

Personal factors

Illness

Behaviour

Anxiety

Poor mental health

Poor social skills

Poor sleeping patterns

Poor self-esteem

Lack of concentration

Personal factors impacting on attendance may include mental health issues such as depression or anxiety, poor self-esteem, poor social skills, poor communication skills, behaviour and developmental difficulties or disorders.



Sickness

We are mindful that young people will become sick from time to time however they should only be kept at home if genuinely ill and parents should follow the school's policy and procedures for reporting their child's absence.



Absence Note	
Dear _____	_____ was absent
From School on	due to:
<input type="checkbox"/> Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor/dentist appointment
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Parent Signature _____	Date: _____

If there are frequent absences due to illness then the EWO may refer you to the School Medical Service.

You should only be absent if you are genuinely ill and unfit to attend.

If you are genuinely too ill and unfit to attend school, your parent/carer must provide a note for the school.



Punctuality

Poor time keeping can also impact on a pupil's attendance at school.

Understandably there are a number of unavoidable factors which might impact on a young person being on time for school e.g. poor weather, transport issues, traffic etc. however other factors such as not being



organised, sleeping in, playing consoles, watching TV or walking slowly to school are often avoidable and not acceptable.

Being late for school can affect learning and outcomes. Poor time-keeping can set a negative attitude and pattern for later life and employment.

Be on time – Every second counts in school

Being on time can improve learning and your grades.

You'll not miss out on important instructions for the day.

You'll not be disrupting the class.

You'll not feel embarrassed walking into class late.

You'll not miss out on pairing up for group activities with your friends.

You will be setting a positive attitude and pattern for later life and employment.

Referral process

Pupils whose attendance at school falls below 85% and where there is a concern, may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. The majority of referrals are made by schools. These referrals must evidence all the interventions/supports that the school has put in place to address their concerns (Appendix 2).



Referrals are also accepted from other sources such as parents, social workers and other agencies e.g. family support hubs and other Education Authority services.

A parent/carer must always be informed that a referral has been made to the Education Welfare Service.

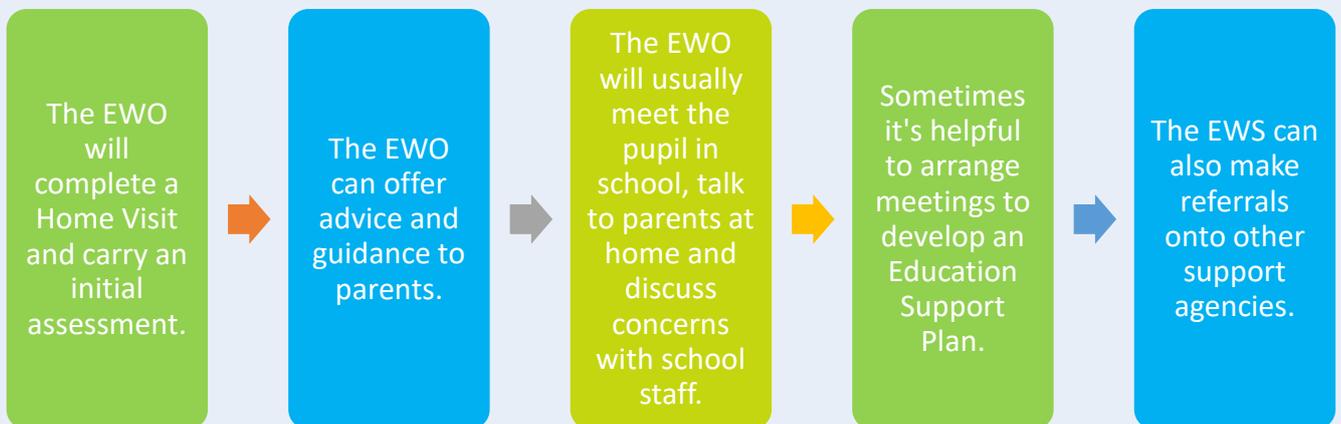
Assessment

The Education Welfare Officer will complete an assessment with the child and their family to establish the factors impacting on school attendance.

An Education Support Plan will be created and shared with the relevant school personnel and will be reviewed regularly.

It may include onward referrals and consultation with other agencies.

The EWO will continue to offer support, advice and guidance to the child/young person through school interviews and home visits.

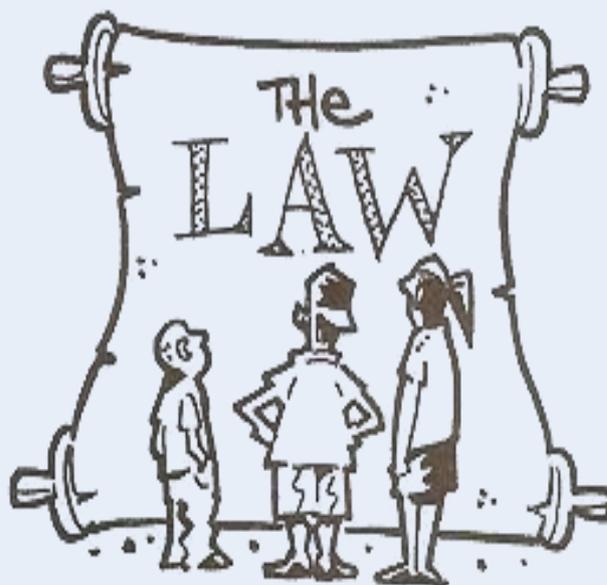


Legislation in relation to school attendance

Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986
Article 45

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive an education "...suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special needs that they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise" (Article 45 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

Parents must therefore either register their child at a school or provide an alternative form of education.



"Subject to the provisions of this Article, any person guilty of an offence against Article 45 Schedule 13 of this Order shall be liable on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding one thousand pounds (£1,000)"

The Education Authority may decide that the only way to secure a child's education is to initiate legal proceedings.

This may occur where parents:

- Avoid any contact with the EWS and do not respond to letter/invitations to meetings.
- Refuse to work in partnership or co-operate with intervention suggested for their child.

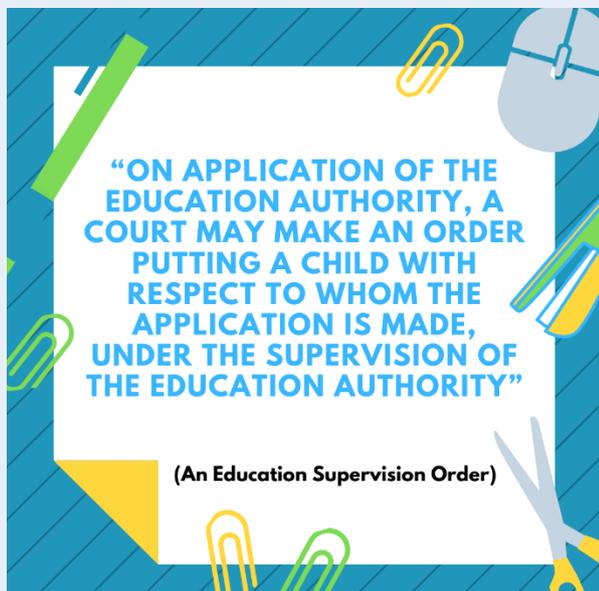


The Court Process:

- Parents will receive a written summons which requires them to attend Court.
- Children are not required to attend but should be made aware of the seriousness of the action.
- A senior EWO representing the Education Authority will provide the magistrate with a copy of the child's attendance and relevant facts.
- If convicted at a court hearing, the court can fine each parent up to £1000 for each child.
- After the court hearing, the school attendance of the child is expected to reach an acceptable level and be maintained. If this does not happen then further legal action may be taken by the Education Authority.

Education Supervision Order (ESO)

(Article 55 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995)



- The EWS may apply to the Family Proceedings Court for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) to further support parents in fulfilling their legal responsibility in ensuring their child has full access to education.
- The EWO will prepare a comprehensive report for submission to the court.
- When the ESO is granted, the EWO takes responsibility to ensure the directions of the Order are followed.
- When deciding whether to make an Order, the paramount consideration will be the welfare of the child.
- Education Supervision Orders may also require Social Services intervention.



CHILDREN ORDER

Days off school add up to lost learning

175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR					
175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs, dental/medical appointments					
0 days absence	10 days absence	19 days absence	29 days absence A term missed	38 days absence	47 days absence
190 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR 190 days for your child's education	180 DAYS OF EDUCATION	171 DAYS OF EDUCATION	180 DAYS OF EDUCATION	152 DAYS OF EDUCATION	143 DAYS OF EDUCATION
100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%
Good Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start		Worrying Less chance of success. Makes it harder to make progress		Serious Concern Not fair on your child. COURT ACTION!	

Please don't let your child miss out on the education they deserve.

Every school day counts.

What the Education Welfare Service can offer:

Young People

Advice/Guidance
Home-School links
Individual work
Group Work- Transition
Primary Attendance Matters
Self-esteem

School Aged Mothers (SAMS)

Advice/Guidance from a dedicated
School Age Mothers Co-ordinator
Peer support
Home Tuition
Childcare
Transport
Links to other agencies
Careers advice

<https://www.eani.org.uk/services/education-welfare-service/school-age-mothers-sam>

Children receiving additional support

Support from a dedicated
officer and a Regional Project
Team
Build Multi-Agency Capacity
Implement and embed new
learning
Personal Education Plans
(PEPs)

Frequently asked questions for Young People



Do I have to go to school?

Yes, every young person has a right to receive an education between the ages of four and 16.

Can I leave school at 16?

You must attend school until the end of June during the school year in which you turn 16. E.g. if you turn 16 during May of your Year 12 you must attend school by law until the end of June. If you turn 16 in September of your Year 12 you still must attend school by law until the end of the following June.

What happens if I am sick or have other reasons for not going to school?

If you are unable to attend school your parent/guardian should contact the school to explain why. If your school is concerned that you are missing too many days, the school may inform the Education Welfare Officer.

My school attendance is 85%, is this not good?

If you receive 85% in a test this would be a great result, however 85% attendance is very concerning. Look at the table below, if you have 85% attendance you have missed half a term of school.

100% Attendance	0 Days Missed	Excellent
95% Attendance	9 Days of Absence 1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Satisfactory
90% Attendance	19 Days of Absence 3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Poor
85% Attendance	28 Days of Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Very Poor
80% Attendance	38 Days of Absence 7 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Unacceptable
75% Attendance	46 Days of Absence 9 Weeks and 1 Day of Learning Missed	Unacceptable

Do I have to do homework?

Each school sets its own rules and policies for homework and as a pupil you are responsible for following the rules and policies of your school.

Do I have to do tests and exams?

You must follow school rules or policy which may include sitting tests and exams.

What happens if I get into trouble at school?

Schools have a **Behaviour Management Policy**, this policy explains what will happen if you do not obey the school rules. If you cause trouble in school, the school may consider a number of options such as: detention, confiscation or suspension.

What happens if I am suspended?

Suspension means you are not allowed to attend school for a set number of days. A school may suspend you if you have seriously misbehaved. The school's decision must be reasonable and reflect the seriousness of what you have done. Schools must have procedures in place which outline what steps must be taken before you can be suspended.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-12/2015-0513%20Approved%20EA%20Scheme%20for%20the%20Suspension%20and%20Expulsion%20of%20Pupils%20in%20Controlled%20Schools%20%2812%29.docx.pdf>

What happens if I get expelled?

Expulsion means you cannot attend your school again. Schools have procedures in place which outline the steps to be taken before you can be expelled. If you are expelled, the Education Welfare Service will assist you and your parents in finding another school placement, if possible.

What is bullying?

Bullying is negative behaviour by a person or groups against you which is repeated over time. Bullying can be verbal, psychological or physical. Bullying behaviour can take many forms, including:

- Physical assaults (pushing, hitting etc);
- Deliberately excluding you from a group or activity;
- Nasty gossip about you;
- Placing an offensive or hurtful message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum or website where it can be viewed or repeated by other people;
- Bullying based on your identity (that is bullying because you are gay or transgender, of a different race, a Traveller, have a disability or have special educational needs).

If you are being bullied, you have a right to be protected. No one should bully you for any reason.

www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/dealing-bullying

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016

www.legislation.gov.uk/ni/2016/25/pdfs/ni_20160025_en.pdf

What should the school do if I am being bullied?

First, you should tell your teacher, school principal or other trusted adult about the bullying. Schools must have a policy for dealing with bullying. This should state clearly that bullying is unacceptable. The school should have:

- Procedures (instructions) for investigating and dealing with bullying;
- Procedures to help those affected by bullying;
- Strategies to prevent bullying happening in the first place; and
- A record of measures in place to tackle bullying.

Parents

When a young person refuses to attend school it can be distressing for parents and can cause conflict within the home and disrupt routines. Early intervention is essential and parents should discuss any concerns with their child and the school. There are many key members of staff in schools and parents should make a point of knowing who to contact should they be concerned about their child's education. Parents can also refer directly to the Education Welfare Service.

Parents can look out for:

Frequent tearfulness. Upset stomach.

Headaches.

Worried a lot.

Bedwetting or signs of distress.

Change in mood.

Attachment issues.

Frequent phone calls home from school re: sickness or behaviour.

Upset following school holiday or the weekend.

Friendship issues.

Poor sleep patterns.

Truancy.

Poor organisational skills or pre-occupation with being organised.

Advice for Parents



- Remain calm.
- Take an interest in your child's school day.
- Talk to you child about their day, their friends, their school work.
- Listen and encourage your child. Let them know you understand.
- Reassure your child.
- Talk about the importance of regular school attendance and future choices.
- Don't allow your child to remain at home unnecessarily.
- Communicate effectively with your child's school/EWO.
- Sign off your child's day book/planner if they have one.
- Be mindful of your child's perception of situations. Listen to all sides.
- Praise your child for their achievements and commitment.
- Encourage and maintain good routines and boundaries within the home.
- Monitor your child's usage of games consoles and the internet.
- Appropriately reward good behaviour.
- Encourage your child to complete homework in a timely manner.

Schools

Every school has a responsibility for the attendance of its own pupils. Prior to considering a referral to the Education Welfare Service, schools should endeavour through their own processes to deal with problems which arise in regards to pupil attendance (Appendix 1).

Schools can look out for:

Sickness and illness during the school day.

Frequent signing out of school.

Easily distracted.

No homework.

Numerous referrals to the School nurse.

Late to class or avoidance of class.

Unexplained absences.

Persistent tiredness in class.

Behaviour outbursts.

Poor communication from home.

Isolation from peers.

Advice for Schools



- Every school should have an attendance policy in place (Appendix 3).
- All absences should be recorded accurately and in accordance with “Attendance Guidance and Absence Recording by Schools”
www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/recording-pupil-absences
- Monitor and establish if there are identified patterns of non-attendance.
- Identify, where possible factors, affecting school attendance (school, home, medical, personal).
- Discuss your concerns with the young person/their parents.
- Consider making reasonable adjustments to the young person’s learning environment.
- Consider referral to appropriate EA Children & Young People’s Services, eg. behaviour support, education psychology, special education and/or health & voluntary services.
- Is a referral to the Education Welfare Service the most appropriate at this stage?
- Discuss potential referrals with your link EWO.
- Convene multi-agency support meetings to consider relevant supports available.

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS



Miss School = Miss Out

Appendices

- (1) - Partnership Agreement- Service Level Agreement
- (2) - Referral Form
- (3) - Attendance Policy (Sample)

References & Links

Education Authority- Education Welfare Service

<https://www.eani.org.uk/services/education-welfare-service>

Moving Forward Me-

www.movingforward.me/

Miss School Miss Out Attendance Strategy-

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/miss-school-miss-out-improving-pupil-attendance-strategy>

Miss School Miss Out (Video)-

<https://www.eani.org.uk/services/education-welfare-service/miss-school-miss-out>

Managing Attendance –

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201914-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools-updated-february-2020>

School Age Mothers (SAM's)

<https://www.eani.org.uk/services/education-welfare-service/school-age-mothers-sam>

Children Order (NI) 1995

Education & Libraries Order NI 1986



**EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH SCHOOLS**

**‘Working in partnership with parents and schools to
maximise every pupil’s educational opportunities’.**

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

ACADEMIC YEAR: _____

Regular school attendance is a prerequisite of effective schooling. Every school has a responsibility for the attendance of its own pupils and one of the tasks of the Education Welfare Service is to support the school’s efforts on behalf of the Education Authority.

Close liaison between school staff and the Education Welfare Service is reflective of good practice and is essential to the success of agreed interventions to achieve shared targets.

The purpose of a Partnership Agreement is therefore to help clarify roles and responsibilities between schools and the Education Welfare Service.

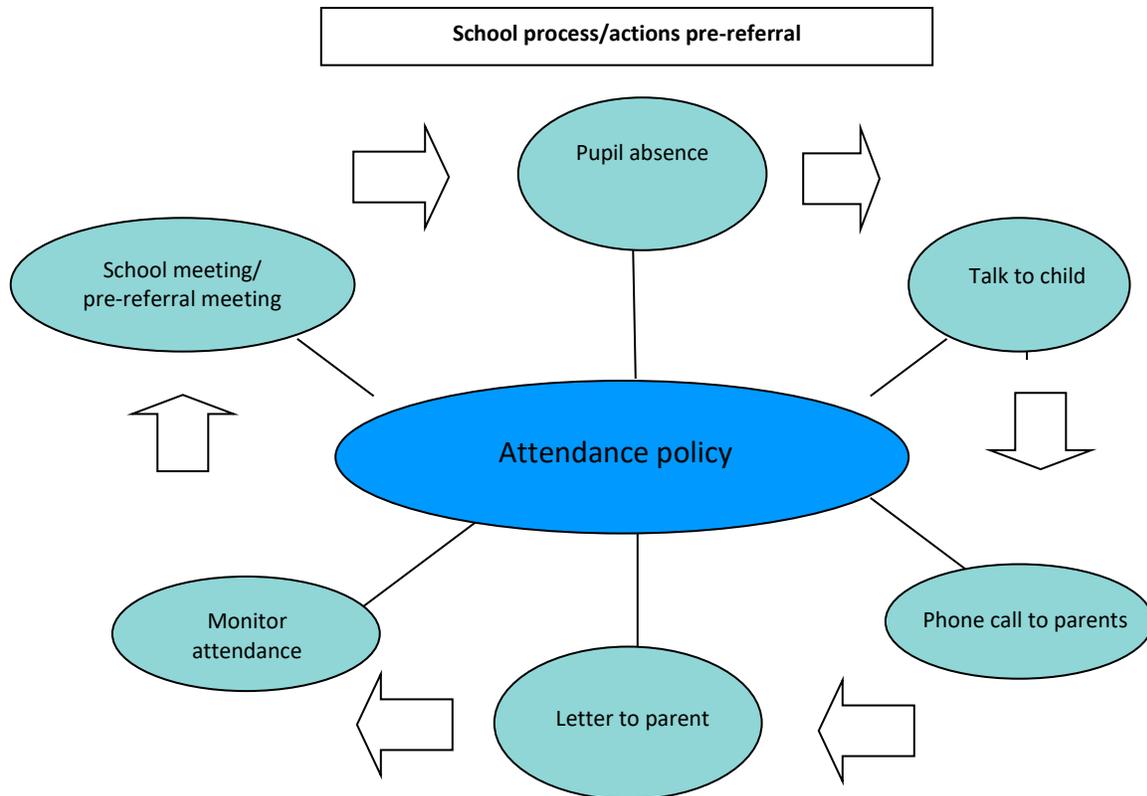
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Adrian Nugent'.

Adrian Nugent
Head of Education Welfare Service

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE & THE SCHOOL PROCESS

The key to success is an effective working relationship between schools and the Education Welfare Service.

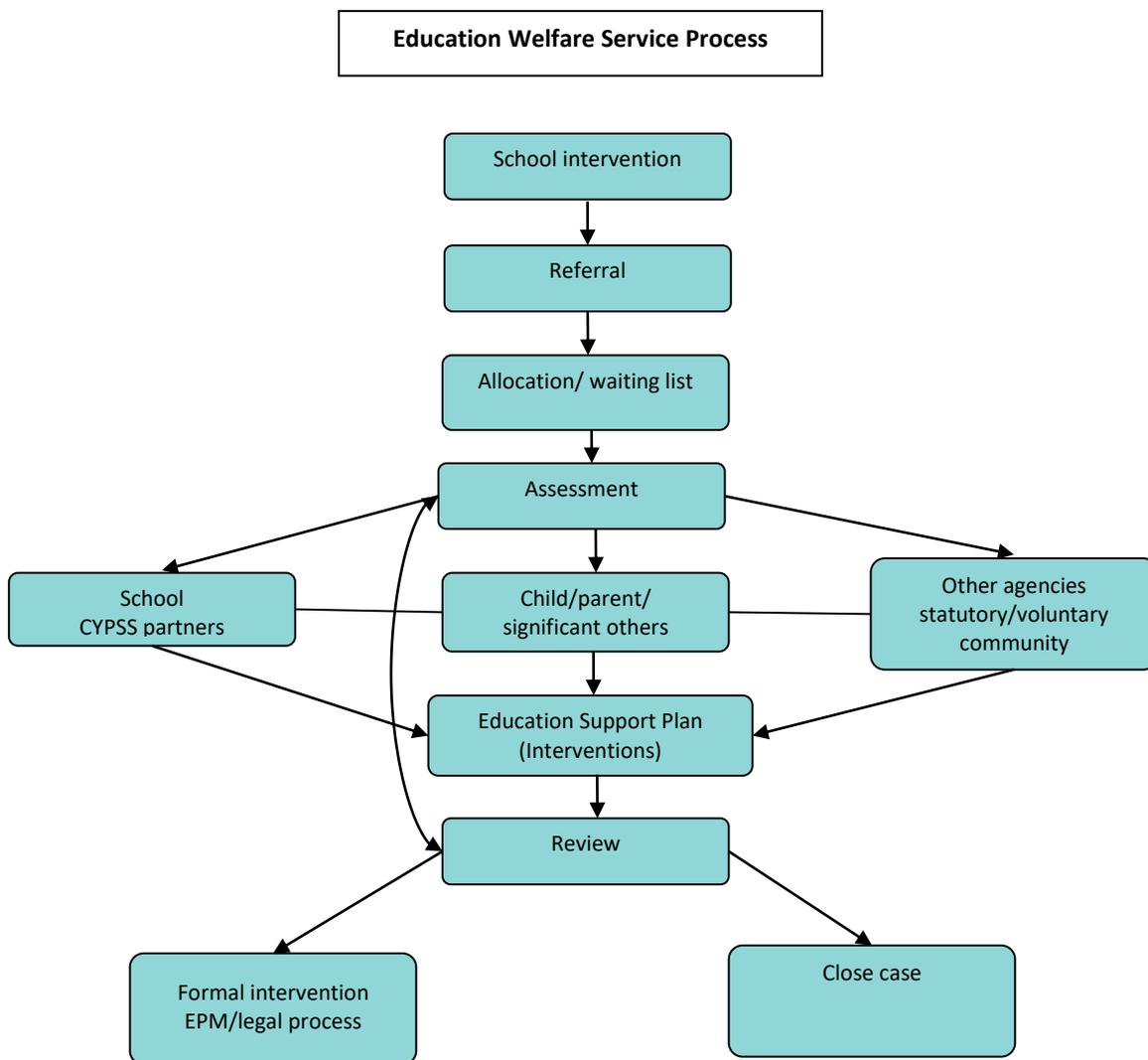
The following chart highlights the process that the school should use in working to resolve difficulties.



The Education Welfare Service would acknowledge that the pastoral care system within schools will deal initially and effectively with problems which arise in regard to pupil attendance. Where additional support or alternative intervention is needed, then a referral to the EWS may be appropriate. It is important that all interventions prior to referral are shared on the referral form: **(Incomplete referrals will be returned.)** Details of other EA/statutory/voluntary services who are involved with the young person/family should also be included. A parent/guardian must always be informed that a referral has been made to the Education Welfare Service.

The referral will take place within the context of:

- DE guidance circulars (2017/15).
- Shared policies and operational practices between the Education Welfare teams and the schools in their area.
- Clearly defined roles of school staff who can make decisions and receive and share information.
- How much time the Education Welfare Officer will allocate to the school.
- Arrangements for referral, regular review, monitoring and evaluation.
- Procedures for resolving difficulties.





EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

NAME OF EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER: _____

NAME OF DESIGNATED SCHOOL CONTACT: _____

LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS:

DAILY

MONTHLY

WEEKLY

ONCE A TERM

FORTNIGHTLY

BY REFERRAL

DAY: _____

TIME: _____

DURATION: _____

Signed:

Education Welfare Officer: _____

School Contact: _____

Senior Education Welfare Officer: _____

Date: _____

Further information can be sourced: www.eani.org.uk/schools/education-welfare-service

Where necessary, information provided to the Education Welfare Service may be shared with other departments/agencies within and outside of the Education Authority. Any such sharing will adhere to the provisions of GDPR and the Children (NI) Order 1995.

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE REFERRAL FORM

Before making the referral to the Education Welfare Service please ensure that you have discussed the referral with the link Education Welfare Officer for the school or the Senior Education Welfare Officer for the area.

Have you read the Partnership Working Agreement and guidance prior to making this referral? Yes/No

Is this a re-referral? Yes/No

Is this child Looked After (subject to care proceedings)? Yes/No

Referred by: School Parent/Carer Other (details) _____

School Name:				Year Group:	
Child's Name:			SEN: Y/N	Date of Birth:	
Gender:		Ethnicity:		Language:	
Address:				Postcode:	

Name of those with parental responsibility and their relationship to the child	Name	Relationship
	Name	Relationship
Details of main contact	Mobile	Email
	Home	
Known communication difficulties, e.g. language. Is a translator required and if so, for which language?		

Please provide details of any other services or agencies involved with the pupil. This includes statutory, voluntary and support services as well as other Education Authority services such as the Education Psychology Service or pupil support services. Also include the child/young person's GP details.

GP name		Address/contact details	
Agency	Contact Name	Address/contact details	Length of involvement

Parent must be notified that referral is being made.

Please note that referrals will not be accepted without the family having been informed.

How/when was parent notified?

Date: _____ Letter Phone call Other (please specify) _____

“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”

For this referral to be accepted by the Education Welfare Service you must have exhausted all procedures to address concerns regarding attendance within the school's attendance policy.

Please provide evidence below of the engagement (or attempts to engage) with parents/carers and work that has been carried out to address the pupil's attendance. Registration certificates must be up to date and accurate.

Please give details of the contact the school has had with the parents regarding the current low attendance.

(Dates of meetings, letters sent, attempts to telephone etc.)

Please identify the concerns you have regarding the poor school attendance. (Welfare concerns, bullying, transition, social and emotional, school age mother etc.)

Please provide any additional information you feel is useful. (Identify any special needs, known to SENCO or Education Psychologist, code of practice, social difficulties or child protection concerns etc.)

If the majority of the absence has been recorded as illness, has the school asked for medical evidence? Yes/No

Checklist.

Registration certificates	Yes/No
Evidence of interventions	Yes/No
Letter/contact informing parent of referral	Yes/No
Referrals to other agencies	Yes/No
Medical evidence	Yes/No

Signed: _____ Print Name: _____ Designation: _____

Date: _____

Date received: _____ Date Allocated: _____

EWO: _____

“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”

School details and crest

SAMPLE PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY (For use by schools)

Introduction

Regular school attendance¹ is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

(Name of school) will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

(School should also include their own mission statement)

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at *(Name of school)*.
2. To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
3. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
4. To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

(Suggested roles – schools should provide own roles and responsibilities)

Role of the School

The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance; *(teachers/designated staff)* should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his/her attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration sessions.

To accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2018/12, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/DE%20Circular%202018%2012%20-%20Attendance%20Guidance%20%26%20Absence%20Recording%20by%20Schools%20-%20Updated%20for%20Sept%202018.pdf>

¹“regularly” means “in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school” – Lady Hale - Isle of Wight Council v Platt 6 April 2017

(Name of school) is committed to working with parents/guardians to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Role of Parent/Guardian

Parents/guardians have a legal duty² to ensure their child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.

If a child is registered in school, their parent/guardian has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school.

It is a parent's/guardian's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence. This should be confirmed with a written note when the pupil returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

(Each school can decide what it feels is the most appropriate way to be informed of a pupil's absence such as emails, letters, phone calls, text messages etc)

Pupils are expected to be in school at xxxxx for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on your child's attendance record.

If your child appears reluctant to attend school please discuss the matter promptly with the class teacher or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

Role of Pupils

(Schools should insert their own roles for pupils)

Each pupil at *(Name of School)* must attend school punctually and regularly.

(Example) If you have been absent from school, a written note from a parent/guardian must be provided to your teacher when you return.

Absence Procedures

(Each school should insert own procedures for reporting absence, monitoring, medical appointments etc)

(Example) All parents/carers are required to complete the attached absence notification form which provides a clear reason for any absence.

Family holidays during Term Time

² Article 45(1) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986

(Name of school) discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

(Each school should insert own procedures for managing non-attendance)

Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) have a legal duty to make sure that parents/guardians meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

If a pupil's absence causes concern, and/or if their attendance falls below 85% and there is also a concern, they will be referred to the EWS, if appropriate. EWS will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

Signature – Principal

Signature – Chair, Board of Governors

Date

Useful Contacts

Ballymena Office

Ballee Centre, Ballee Road West, Ballymena, BT42 2HS

028 2566 1266

Armagh Office

3 Charlemont Place, The Mall, Armagh BT61 9AX

028 3751 2386

Omagh Office

1 Hospital Road, Omagh, County Tyrone, BT79 0AW

028 8241 1289

Dundonald Office

Grahamsbridge Road, Dundonald, Belfast BT16 2HS

028 9056 6498

Belfast Office

40 Academy Street, Belfast BT1 2NQ

028 9056 4347