



Department  
for Education

## Local authority School Attendance Support Teams – trading services with schools

To improve the consistency of support provided to pupils and parents across the country, section 4 of [Working together to improve school attendance](#) includes a set of core expectations that local authorities are expected to be provide free of charge to all schools in their area. These are:

<b>Core offer to be provided free of charge to all schools in the area</b>	
<p><b>Communication and advice:</b> regularly bring schools together to communicate messages, provide advice and share best practice between schools and trusts within the area.</p>	<p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidance on how partners will work together</li> <li>- Named point of contact for each school</li> <li>- Answering queries from school based staff</li> <li>- Bringing schools together to share best practice</li> </ul>
<p><b>Targeting Support Meetings:</b> hold termly conversations with schools, using their attendance data to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions and access to services for those pupils.</p>	<p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting at least termly with each school in the local authority area (either through an existing meeting such as a team around the school, or as a standalone attendance led meeting)</li> <li>- Signposting schools to relevant services and voluntary sector partners</li> <li>- Agreeing joint action plans for severely absent pupils (where there are out of school barriers)</li> <li>- Agreeing joint actions for persistently absent pupils (where necessary)</li> <li>- Agreeing any legal action to be taken forward</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
<p><b>Multi-disciplinary support for families:</b> provide access to early help support workers to work intensively with families to provide practical whole-family support where needed to tackle the causes of absenteeism and unblock the barriers to attendance.</p>	<p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing access to existing support systems where appropriate – including early help, social care, SEND etc</li> <li>- Advising the family’s lead practitioner on any attendance elements of the family’s plan</li> <li>- Acting as lead professional in the single family plan where an LA team is the most appropriate to do so (e.g. a housing issue)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Legal intervention:</b> take forward attendance legal intervention (using the full range of parental responsibility measures) where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with.</p>	<p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parenting contracts</li> <li>- Education Supervision Orders</li> <li>- Building attendance into child in need or child protection plans where relevant</li> <li>- Issuing fixed penalty notices</li> <li>- Parenting Orders</li> <li>- Taking forward attendance prosecutions (including for persistently breaching any</li> </ul>

	Education Supervision Order or Parenting Order in place)
--	--

Where it will not impact delivery of the core offer, and there is demand and capacity for it, the guidance does not prevent local authorities from trading other attendance activity above and beyond the core offer with its schools and academies. This may include:

<b>Examples of areas of practice that local authorities could continue to trade above and beyond the core offer</b>	
<b>School processes:</b> acting on behalf of the school to fulfil their day to day expectations as set out in section 1 of <i>Working together to improve attendance</i> .	For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First day calling</li> <li>- Home visits, calls and/or sending out letters from the school</li> <li>- Late gates</li> <li>- Parent drop ins or attendance services</li> <li>- Providing advice and support on attendance at parents' evenings</li> <li>- Running attendance reward and recognition systems</li> <li>- Attendance assemblies</li> <li>- Analysing the school's data</li> </ul>
<b>Casework on behalf of the school:</b> delivering the attendance work with individual pupils and families that is expected of the school (rather than of the local authority and other partners as defined in section 4).	For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contacting families and understanding what the barriers to attendance are</li> <li>- Setting up and leading attendance meetings with families</li> <li>- Developing in school reasonable adjustments and initial attendance action plans</li> <li>- Completion of referrals to other services, including early help assessments</li> </ul>
<b>Training:</b> one off or ongoing training delivered to school staff on attendance.	For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training for school based staff on attendance law, casework or application of guidance</li> <li>- Training for governors on their responsibilities</li> <li>- Training on how to analyse data and make use of attendance data in day to day practices</li> <li>- Professional supervision of attendance staff employed by the school or trust</li> </ul>
<b>Audits and attendance management support:</b> ad hoc work with schools to support development of new systems, policies and processes	For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intensive work with a school to develop a whole school strategy</li> <li>- Help developing an attendance policy</li> <li>- Policy reviews</li> <li>- Support with developing day to day processes</li> <li>- Register audits</li> </ul>