

ONE MINUTE GUIDE

WeST Education Welfare Process



WESTCOUNTRY
SCHOOLS TRUST

Why are we doing this?

The Education Act 1996 places a duty on all parents to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives a full-time education.

Why is this important?

To bring consistency to our work across the Trust.

To affect positive change at an early stage.

To provide the appropriate levels of support for families to improve their child's attendance at school.

Referrals to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The EWO will work closely with all schools to monitor, advise and support staff, children and families to make improvements in attendance. When a case is referred to the EWO the school must be able to evidence within their chronology that they have offered plenty of support.

Please ensure that you have considered the following:

- Have you followed the escalation processes in a timely manner, and can you evidence this?
- Are there at least 8 sessions of absence over a six-month period?
- Have you held Supportive Attendance Meetings to address the concerns?
- Have you offered Local Authority Early Help at every stage of escalation (both in letters and at meetings)?
- Have you offered reasonable adjustments in school? For example, a phased return, class changes, offer to arrive 5 mins after everyone else, a part time timetable etc.
- Have you ensured that any adjustments mentioned in medical evidence have been implemented?
- Have you considered other support? For example, counselling, school nurse, CAMHS, GP referral etc?

IMPORTANT:

Support such as that outlined above **must** be evidenced even if the parent(s)/ carer(s) refuse to engage with what is offered.



Acceptance of a referral by WeST Education Welfare Officer

A set process will be followed, this is listed below in its simplistic form:

- EW WeST 1 introductory letter sent out.
- Attendance monitored over a 2-week period.
- If no improvement invitation to a legal meeting (EW WeST 2) sent. The date and time will be arranged between the EWO and school. It **must** be booked when a school representative that has worked closely with the family is available to work alongside the EWO.
- EW WeST 2 legal meeting takes place. Attendance monitored for 6-12 weeks.
- EW WeST 3 letter sent if parent/carer fails to attend the meeting with written warning. If no attendance after a 4-week period a final warning letter will then be sent to parent
- EW WeST 4 letter sent if attendance has improved over a 6-week period.
- EW WeST 5 letter sent if attendance has not improved. A further review meeting invitation is arranged to invite the parent/carer and pupil to discuss the plan.

- EW WeST 6 Letter sent at the 12-week mark if attendance has improved.
- EW WeST 7 Letter sent at the 12-week mark if attendance has not improved. This includes a warning regarding legal action that may be proposed by the Local Authority.

All the above actions will be logged onto the EWO system.

Other, non-compulsory, letters which can be used:

- EW WeST 8 Late Letter
- EW WeST 9 Home Visit Letter



The Education Welfare Officer WeST Legal Meeting (EW WeST 2)



WESTCOUNTRY
SCHOOLS TRUST

The West Legal Meeting is in two parts.

Part One informs the parent(s)/carer(s) of the legal implications and the responsibilities that they have. It also covers the possible statutory defences that could apply to them under the Local Authority.

Part Two of the meeting works with the parent(s)/carer(s) and school staff to understand the barriers, if any, to attendance. It explores ways in which the school can further support the parent(s)/carer(s) and the pupil to improve the attendance to a level at which legal action can be delayed. Attendance will still be closely monitored throughout the school year.

An **individual attendance plan** may be agreed at this meeting. This will be closely monitored by school staff and EWO over the next 12 weeks. If attendance remains a concern after the first 6 weeks, then the EWO may decide to invite the parent(s)/carer(s) and pupil to a **review meeting**.

The review meeting will explore if there are any further supportive measures that can be implemented. Attendance will then be monitored for a further 6 weeks before making a decision either to:

- refer to the Local Authority to instigate legal action if there has not been a significant change, or
- to monitor attendance for a further 12 months.

Applicable Legislation and Guidance

Education Act 1996:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/pdfs/uksi_20130756_en.pdf

Crime and Disorder Act 1998:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents>

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/38/contents>

Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/60/contents>

Code of Conduct for Crown Prosecutors:

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/publication/code-crown-prosecutor>



WeST One Minute Guides



WESTCOUNTRY
SCHOOLS TRUST