

New attendance monitoring requirements for schools

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The Department for Education (DfE) has recently released their updated and now statutory guidance on improving school attendance. 'Working together to improve school attendance' aims to improve attendance rates in schools across the UK.

The guidance places a strong emphasis on the importance of attendance monitoring, compliance, data sharing, and interventions. The need for schools to be proactive is clear and the new requirement for a 'Senior Attendance Champion' reinforces this theme throughout the statutory guidance.

Updated attendance codes

One of the most significant changes in the new guidance is the updated and revised set of attendance codes.

The new codes aim to provide greater clarity and consistency in recording attendance. The codes have been expanded and cover a wider range of reasons for absence from school.

The updated codes provide greater flexibility in recording attendance, allowing schools to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absences more effectively, many codes now have sub-types so it can be as accurate and specific as possible. This, in turn, will enable schools to identify patterns of absence more accurately and intervene where necessary.

Improved compliance

The new guidance places a strong emphasis on compliance with attendance regulations.

Schools are required to have a clear attendance policy in place, which should be communicated to parents and carers. The policy should outline the school's expectations regarding attendance and the consequences of non-compliance.

Schools are also required to monitor attendance regularly and take appropriate action where necessary. This may include contacting parents and carers to discuss concerns, arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues, or referring cases to the local authority where necessary.

Data sharing

The new guidance also emphasises the importance of data analysis and sharing in improving attendance rates.

Schools are required to share attendance data with the DfE and local authority regularly. This will enable the schools and local authorities to identify patterns of absence across cohorts and Schools and intervene where necessary by putting in place effective strategies to support.

Effective and timely use and sharing of data is critical to improve attendance and the use of electronic MIS will improve accuracy and speed up sharing and analysing and making returns to the relevant bodies.

Interventions

The new guidance places a strong emphasis on early intervention to improve attendance rates.

Schools are required to identify patterns of absence and intervene where necessary. This may include contacting parents and carers to discuss concerns, arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues, or referring cases to the local authority where necessary.

Schools are also required to provide support to pupils who are experiencing difficulties with attendance. This may include providing pastoral support, mentoring, or counselling services.

A comprehensive framework for improving school attendance

The guidance provides a comprehensive framework for improving attendance rates in schools across the UK.

The updated attendance codes, improved compliance, data sharing, and interventions are all designed to help schools improve attendance rates and support pupils who are experiencing difficulties with attendance.

Schools must ensure that they have a clear attendance policy in place and communicate this to parents and carers. They must also monitor attendance regularly and take appropriate action where necessary.

Available support

Data sharing is essential to identify patterns of absence and intervene where necessary, so there is a lot for [schools](#) to consider and get in place this new academic year.

Look out for our [further articles on attendance](#) and [check out this webinar](#) where we'll be running through all the key changes and discussing what it means in practice.

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