



## Children & Young People's Services SERVICE STATEMENT

### EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

**Statement of Purpose:** To act as a gateway for success through working with schools and families to secure regular school attendance.

#### **Background**

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that all children receive a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. The Education Welfare Service in North Lincolnshire is responsible for carrying out these duties on behalf of the Local Authority. The Service works within a legal framework to promote and enforce regular school attendance. It does this by working closely with schools, parents, carers, children and young people and other agencies to provide support and resolve issues around school attendance.

School registers are legal documents and the Education Welfare Service carries out the duty of the Local Authority to undertake regular inspections.

Since February 2007, all Local Authorities have a duty to identify and track children who are missing education. The Children Missing Education Officer is part of the Education Welfare Service and carries out this duty on behalf of North Lincolnshire Local Authority.

Parents have a right to educate their children other than at school (elective home education – EHE). The Local Authority has a duty to satisfy itself that children who are educated at home are receiving an appropriate education. The Education Welfare Service and the Diversity Service jointly carry out this responsibility. Schools must inform the Education Welfare Service Manager within 10 days (max.) of a removal from roll.

Children who are employed must by law have a permit to do so. Children who are involved in performances are required to be licensed. The Education Welfare Service provides advice and guidance in order that users of this service are able to comply with the law. This is a duty of the Local Authority.

**Where are we based and how can we be contacted?**

Education Welfare Service  
Church Square House, Scunthorpe  
North Lincolnshire, DN15 6NL

Tel: 01724 – 297502  
Fax: 01724 – 296866

Monday to Thursday 0830-1700  
Friday 0830-1630

**Statutory Function**

We undertake our work governed by The Education Act 1996, The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 and 2007, The Children Act 1989, The Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003, The Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Children and Young Persons Act 1933, The Children’s (Performance) Regulations 1968. These are the key pieces of legislation. Our work is also governed by related DfE guidance, government requirements and strategies and the procedures and guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board.

The Education Welfare Service contributes towards the 6 priorities and CYPS excellence plan as set out below. Children who are absent from school can find themselves falling outside of each of these aims.

**Who does the work and which partners do we work with?**

The Education Welfare Team currently consists of an Education Welfare Team Manager, 2 full time Education Welfare Officers, 1 part time Education Welfare Officer, 4 part time, term time only Education Welfare Officers, 1 Child Employment Administrative Officer (part-time, term time) and 1 full time Legal Support Admin Officer.

**Specific Activities**

The Education Welfare Service partners with schools, parents and other agencies to support children and young people where there are concerns regarding school attendance. We determine through enquiries, analysis and judgement whether the concerns raised can be dealt with by the school with the support of an attendance plan, or if there are more complex needs that require more intensive support by the Education Welfare Service. We offer advice and guidance about problem resolution around the issues of school attendance and signpost to services to meet identified needs. When referrals evidence that a child or young person has additional needs, the Education Welfare Service will work within the context of the Common Assessment Framework to address additional needs and take on the role of Lead Professional and/or signpost to other services as appropriate. In relation to concerns that a child or young person may have suffered actual harm or injury, the Education Welfare Service will initiate a referral to Children’s Social Care (Duty Suite).

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that children receive appropriate education. This duty is carried out by the Education Welfare Service who will use a wide range of legal

measures to fulfil its role. The Service makes every effort to work with parents to resolve issues and avoid legal action wherever possible.

We have partnerships with all statutory or voluntary agencies and community resources to provide a comprehensive joined up service to meet the needs of children, young people and their families. Other agencies whom we work in partnership with are Children's Social Care, Police, Health Professionals, School Advisors, Education Psychology, Parent Partnership, Probation, Youth Offending Service, Locality Workers, Environmental Health. We also work with other local authorities and services provided by North Lincolnshire Council and are members of the National Network for Child Employment and Entertainment. In addition, information and good practice is shared with other Education Welfare Services both regionally and nationally.

#### **Who do we provide services for and how are we accessed?**

We are accessed Monday to Friday in person, telephone, email and fax at Church Square, Scunthorpe. All schools have an assigned Education Welfare Officer. This person can be available at the child's school by appointment. All Education Welfare Officers undertake home visits. Referrals from schools and agencies must be made using the EWS1 Referral Form which should be completed by the appropriate member of the school's/agency's staff. No referral can be accepted without this form being completed in full and any additional information/copy letters attached. If a CAF form has been completed it must be detailed with the referral.

Services are provided for children, young people, families, carers and schools in North Lincolnshire. We liaise with other authorities and exchange information as appropriate.

We prioritise children who are subject of a care plan, children with additional educational needs and have PA (Persistent Absentee) status. The service provides practical and strategic support to increase school attendance by using attendance data and statistical analysis.

#### **How do we contribute towards the six priorities of the Children & Young People's Service?**

Absence from school can be caused by a wide range of factors and is often an early indicator of problems in the home or at school. The service is pro active in assessing the needs of vulnerable children and working with schools in formulating action plans to ensure children are able to access the education to which they are entitled and to make the best of the opportunities available to them.

The Education Welfare Service contributes to the following priorities within the CYPS Plan 2010-2013:

##### **Raise Aspirations**

The Service seeks to raise the aspirations of pupils who are at risk of disengagement from learning through irregular school attendance and its associated issues by encouraging and supporting them to re-engage in education. It does this by:

- assessing needs and barriers to learning and participating in positive activities with the use of the common assessment framework
- identifying appropriate support packages for both children, young people and their

families

- working to support and promote good attendance and positive qualification outcomes
- monitoring the progress of children and young people in their school attendance, with priority given to children with a care plan, those with additional educational needs and those in PA Persistent Absentee) status
- building positive and effective relationships with identified children, young people and their family
- working directly with the child, young person and their family
- identifying and signposting to other services and agencies for specific support
- advocating on behalf of the child, young person or family to ensure their voice is heard
- be an active participant in the virtual team for looked after practice group

### **Children and young people feel safe and are safe**

Pupils who have irregular school attendance are more at risk of disengagement from learning, are at risk of becoming 'NEET' (Not in Education, Employment or Training) post 16 and are more at risk of engaging in risky, challenging and offending behaviour.

The service will:

- ensure that allegations that children & young people who are experiencing mistreatment, neglect, violence or sexual exploitation have their safeguarding & care needs referred to the Children's Social Care Duty Team without delay. We will contribute to any assessments which are requested by Children's Social Care and share information as required in line with national and LSCB guidelines
- will undertake truancy sweeps with the help of the Police and Safer Neighbourhoods to identify children and young people who are missing school without an acceptable reason and who are seen out and about in the local neighbourhood with or without adult supervision
- be an active participant in the MARAC process
- access help and advice through the Diversity Service and have access to interpretation services, should they be required, to ensure that the needs of children and families who language and culture is not English are assessed and prioritised as required

Those children and young people who are not attending school or being educated otherwise are particularly vulnerable. North Lincolnshire has a protocol with key agencies regarding missing children. The Children Missing Officer (CME) has responsibility for identifying and tracking children who are missing education.

Most young people are involved in part time working or performances. This can build self confidence and a sense of responsibility. The Service has a role in keeping young people safe from harm and exploitation by issuing permits and in providing advice to employers. It also has a duty to take action where young people are placed at risk and legal action may be taken against employers who persistently disregard their legal responsibilities. Child employment permits may be refused or have restrictions where there are concerns.

## **Close the gap in outcomes between vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people and their peers**

We do this by:

- aiming to help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people and their peers and in particular priority is given to those children on a care plan, those with additional educational needs and those who are in PA (Persistent Absentee) status
- support the parents/carers and the schools supporting these young people
- encourage all children and young people to be the best that they can be
- ensure that vulnerable children and young people receive the support they need to ensure they have the same life chances as their peers
- encourage children and young people to re-engage in learning
- carry out the statutory duties of the local authority in ensuring regular school attendance

## **Celebrate and engage children and young people**

The service will:

- ensure that children, young people, their families and carers are engaged in participation and consultation about their contact/referral, their identified needs, strengths and difficulties. Plans are agreed &/or understood with clear outcomes determined. Principles of making a positive contribution are considered in all advice, signposting and/or service provision
- encourage regular school attendance in order to develop self-confidence to deal with significant life changes and challenges and in making choices
- promote an environment where children and young people are positively promoted and celebrated
- ensure that children and young people are making a positive contribution to their own lives, to their peers and to the wider community by the use of partnership working to ensure our interventions support this outcome
- encourage all children and young people to be valued as members of their community
- celebrate the successes they achieve
- ensure children and young people from vulnerable and disadvantages groups do not experience stigma and receive individual support to access equal opportunities to achieve their potential and have support to achieve equal outcomes with their peers

The Audit Commission estimates that at least 10% of absent pupils are truanting or being kept off school by parents without schools' authorisation and the Youth Justice Board's research shows that two thirds of truants admit to having committed a crime within the past 12 months, many whilst truanting. The services will encourage positive engagement to reduce vulnerable young people's propensity towards criminal activity and other risky behaviours

## **Implementing one vision one workforce**

The service works in a truly multi agency context as part of the Specialist Services area of CYPs and is committed to improving working together and communication around the

principle the education and safeguarding of all children is everybody's business.

It does this by:

- recording all interventions electronically and managed using IT to assist in assessment and decision making, which provides immediate access to the network
- promoting a workforce that is skilled, trained and supported
- promoting the common induction programme to support the effective implementation of the Single Organisational Model
- ensure all staff are aware of and understand the needs of vulnerable and disadvantage children and young people and know how to use the service pathways that are used to navigate and access resources in the Single Organisational Model

### **How do we measure our progress?**

Progress is measured via targets around timescales, attendance data and attendance plans, repeat referrals/closures, feedback from other agencies, budget monitoring. We produce a casework progress route. We monitor our performance and effectiveness:

- by feedback from parents/carers/schools during and after case closure
- by feedback from colleagues and other professionals we work in partnership with
- through supervision and oversight of all activities by the EWS Service Manager
- oversight of activities by senior officers and managers
- by random sampling and evaluation of cases and case auditing
- through the complaints process
- through business monitoring, auditing and procurement management
- through audits by the proactive arm of the service
- through ensuring we have a system that reports on and manages training, development and supervision of our workforce
- outcome evidence on the effective of the provision such as attendance rates, pupil achievement and qualifications
- review of cafs/cwans/cins/sen reviews

### **What do we do well?**

- we have a clear value and shared vision. We are systematic, evaluate all activity and are accountable
- we have a good relationship with other agencies and schools and work to a partnership approach that seeks positive outcomes for children and young people
- we signpost to other agencies when appropriate
- we work proactively with schools and families and will only take legal action if or when other avenues have been exhausted
- we actively promote the use of the Common Assessment Framework within education settings and wherever possible will support other professionals in its use
- we recognise that early intervention is key to the support that we provide
- we maintain below average levels of pupils classed as PA (persistent absentees)

- we produce and continually update, easy to read and understandable information relating to school attendance issues
- we ensure that training is in place for staff and have clear priorities based on needs assessment. The Education Welfare Service has an exceptional reputation for performance by committed staff. Our entire system is IT based and accessible 24 hours per day
- we produce accurate and up to date statistical analysis and reports for SMT and QPR for the work we undertake

### Current Performance Data

<b>Primary</b>	% unauthorised absence	% authorised absence	% overall absence	%PA
England Average	4.3	0.7	5.0	3.9
Y & H	4.4	0.8	5.2	4.3
N Lincs	4	0.5	4.4	2.8
<b>Secondary</b>	% unauthorised absence	% authorised absence	% overall absence	%PA
England Average	5.1	1.4	6.5	8.4
Y & H	5.1	1.9	7.0	9.5
N Lincs	4.8	1.2	6.0	6.6
<b>All Schools</b>	% unauthorised absence	% authorised absence	% overall absence	%PA
England average	4.7	1.1	5.8	6.1 (2.6)
Y & H	4.8	1.3	6.1	6.8 (3.0)
N Lincs	4.4	0.8	5.2	4.7 (2.0)

NB – Figures in brackets refer to previous PA figure of 20% absence. The figure for persistent absence has recently been lowered to 15%. According to Ofsted guidance, these attendance figures put North Lincolnshire in the top 40% for both primary and secondary schools with grade descriptors as ‘above average’.

### How are we working to improve the Service?

By seeking to:

- reduce the repeat referral rate
- reduce the need for referrals by working with schools to ensure early intervention
- ensure a more robust register inspection process is in place
- continue to utilise strategies which support a reduction in the need for legal intervention
- offer ongoing training and support to the whole school community
- regularly update the website regarding the service and attendance issues
- support the continued promotion of Common Assessment and Children with Additional Need processes with other agencies
- continue and enhance the support we give to other agencies
- continue to build on our effectiveness in working with schools and other key partners

- ensure strategies are in place that continue to encourage swift and easy access to our services
- continue to gain the participation and feedback of parents, children and young people using our services

**What does our service user information tell us, and how are we using this to improve the service?**

- children and young people are encouraged to attend meetings and reviews in respect of their plans and the services they or their family receive
- parents, children and young people are asked for their feedback and their views on the services they have received during the referral and intervention process, particularly in respect of child with additional needs and the CAF process