



New Attendance Support Service Virtual Consultation Process

Dear Colleagues,

To ensure that schools receive timely advice and support, and that referrals to the Attendance Support Service are appropriate and targeted, we are introducing a new Virtual Consultation Model.

Effective from **Monday 31 August 2026**, schools will be asked to participate in a virtual consultation with the Attendance Support Service before completing a Request for Assistance (RQA).

The purpose of the consultation is to discuss attendance concerns, review interventions already in place, and consider whether a referral to the service is the most appropriate next step.

Following the consultation, schools will be advised whether:

- The case meets the threshold for referral, and an RQA should be completed.
- Further school-based interventions are recommended before a referral is made.
- Alternative supports or services would better meet the family's needs, with appropriate signposting provided where necessary.

Consultation Arrangements

Consultation slots are up to **30 minutes** in duration and will focus on one pupil per consultation. These are intended to be one-to-one consultations between the school representative and the Attendance Support Service. Where additional staff members attend, the consultation then becomes a meeting and may require a different arrangement.

How to Book a Consultation

To request a virtual consultation, please email Kerry.Ward@dumgal.gov.uk and clearly state **"Virtual Consultation Request"** in the subject line. This will ensure that your request is directed to the correct mailbox and processed promptly.

We believe this approach will strengthen collaborative working between schools and the Attendance Support Service, while ensuring that resources are directed to pupils with the greatest level of need.

Kind regards,

Kerry Ward
Attendance Team Leader