

- Further assessment of the situation will be carried out either during or following this meeting in order to more fully understand the nature of your child's non-attendance and inform supports or strategies to be put in place.
- A further meeting within the school may then be arranged with school staff to plan further support for your child.

Following the Maximising Attendance Meeting, if there is no sustained improvement within 4 weeks or no improvement at all within 2 weeks an **Integrated Assessment** will be carried out. This will involve all organizations involved with the child and the family including social work department and health services. This could indicate further support is required from either:

- East Ayrshire Support Team or Rathbone
- If the above is the case, school staff will be required to refer to Authority Screening Group to access these supports.

However if further support in the school or community is required, another meeting will be held in your child's school to coordinate this.



If there is no sustained improvement within 4 weeks of this meeting, or no improvement at all within 2 weeks then a high level of concern is reached regarding their persistent non-attendance.

If this is felt to be parentally condoned absence, the situation will be referred to the:

Attendance Review Committee

- Chaired by a Head of Service from East Ayrshire Council.
- Attended by you and your child, a Head Teacher from a school within the local authority and the Principal Officer responsible for Additional Support Needs. A member of East Ayrshire's Legal Services Department will also be present to provide advice as required.
- Outcomes of this meeting may include a referral to the Children's Reporter, continuation of the case for 6 weeks, Referral for a medical examination, to make an Attendance Order under Section 38 of the Act, proceed to prosecution through the Sheriff Court or report the circumstances to the Procurator Fiscal.

School Attendance: Summary of Policy and Procedures



THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDING SCHOOL

Non-attendance can impact adversely on a young person's self esteem, confidence and their achievement. It is also linked to a range of difficulties that may be encountered in adult life such as employment outcomes, the ability to settle into a routine of work, frequent job changes, isolationism, illiteracy, depression, delinquency, and mental health problems.

When considering your child's attendance rate it is worth considering that a 90% attendance rate is equivalent to missing half a day of school each week or four weeks of lessons over the course of a year.

REASONS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

It is highly likely that there is more than one factor causing a young person's non-attendance.



To avoid school-related situations that cause general distress.

To escape uncomfortable peer interactions and/or academic performance situations such as test-taking or oral presentations.



To receive attention from significant others, such as yourself, outside of school.

To pursue tangible reinforcement outside of school e.g. Watching TV, playing computer games.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP?

The earlier that patterns of non-attendance can be detected, the easier it will be to improve your child's attendance.

Through discussion with your child and the school it is important that the various reasons for non-attendance are explored. A shared understanding is needed of all the factors contributing to non-attendance so that these can be tackled.

It can be useful for you, your child and the school to think about and discuss:

History:

- Think about how your child's behaviour towards school has developed over their time in education.

Current situation:

- When does it happen? Is it related to specific days, classes or events within or outside of school? How is your child performing academically?
- Are there any recent school or family events that have influenced your child's behaviour towards school?
- Are signs of anxiety evident on weekends and school holidays? Are there any non-school-related situations where anxiety occurs?
- Where is your child when not at school? With you or their friends?

Through discussion with your child and assessment the various factors leading to their non-attendance should become clear. **Your role in tackling your child's non-attendance is paramount** and through close working with the school and your child a plan of support can then be put in place to address identified issues.

What will happen if my child does not attend school?

If your child has 3 days unauthorised absence over any 6 week period you may receive a letter raising initial concerns. You and your child will be invited to an **Assessment Meeting** in school to discuss the situation and outline any supports that can be put in place to improve your child's attendance.



If there is no sustained improvement within 4 weeks of this meeting, or no improvement at all within 2 weeks then you will be invited to a **Maximising Attendance Meeting**

- Chaired by a member of Senior Management Team from another school.
- Attended by pupil, parent and representative from your child's school.
- Factors contributing to non-attendance will be discussed covering both home and school environments