

# Supplemental Items for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

**Thursday 4 December 2025 at 6.30 pm**  
in Council Chamber Council Offices  
Market Street Newbury

## Part I

Page No.

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| 7 | <b>Children's Scrutiny Board Report: Local Authority Statutory Duties Around Attendance</b><br>Purpose: To provide Children's Scrutiny with information on school attendance in West Berkshire. This report outlines how West Berkshire Council is meeting its statutory duties in relation to school attendance. It provides an overview of our strategic approach, operational delivery, and multi-agency collaboration to support children and families, with a focus on reducing persistent and severe absence. It draws on the approved Attendance Strategy 2025 and the Improving School Attendance Delivery Plan 2025–2026, demonstrating a strategic, multi-agency, and child-centred approach to improving attendance outcomes across the local area. | 3 - 8 |
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**Supplemental Items**  
**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to be held on Thursday 4 December 2025**  
*(continued)*

*Sarah Clarke.*

Sarah Clarke

Executive Director - Resources

For further information about this/these item(s), or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Gordon Oliver on 01635 519486

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Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at

[www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk)

West Berkshire Council is committed to equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation.

Improving School Attendance

DELIVERY PLAN 2025 - 2028

Vision

To ensure every child is supported to attend school regularly through a collaborative, inclusive, and child-centred approach that reflects lived experiences, removes barriers, and promotes wellbeing.

The plan will be reviewed annually each February, providing an opportunity to assess progress, reflect on emerging priorities and identify new tasks and enablers for the following 12-month period. This ongoing cycle of review and refinement will ensure that we remain responsive to the evolving needs of children, young people and their families.

We have a set of enablers to support the delivery of improving school attendance to ensure maintained momentum and effective delivery of actions outlined in this delivery plan.

The Enablers are:

No.	Objective Area	Timeline	Owner	RAG Status*	Commentary
1.	Collaboration and Communication		Lead Action Owner:		
1.1.	Establish regular multi-agency meetings Create secure platforms for effective sharing of information Develop joint planning protocols for early concerns	Immediate Implementation & then business as usual	EAT, Schools, Social Care, Health		ICCP ToR and Referral Form have been created.
1.2	Corporate Parenting Panel to be aware of attendance trends and add scrutiny Virtual School Extended Duties to support attendance planning and information to Social Workers Life Chances Meetings to include attendance	December 2025	CSC Corporate Parenting Panel Virtual School – engagement		In Progress
1.3	Ensure that all plans around Child and Family have a multiagency approach to include attendance – use as a strength or area of concern	Immediate Implementation & then business as usual	CAAS		
1.4	Attendance to be on the agenda for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Headteacher Forum</li><li>SENCO Forum</li><li>Parent Carer Partnership</li><li>SEN Team</li><li>Termly cafe catch ups</li></ul>	As per meeting schedule	All		

1.5	KIT emails weekly to Head Teachers to regularly contain Attendance information and training available, including DfE updates	Weekly throughout academic year	School Improvement		In place
1.6	Youth Justice Education Meeting includes Attendance information and discussion with SMART actions to improve	Termly	YTJS		In place
1.7	Creation & adoption of Educational Neglect Policy to support all partners understanding the thresholds	End of September 2025	All PEWO & Safeguarding Lead		Policy created. Progression through Corporate adoption process.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Child-Centred and Family-Focused Approaches</b>		<b>Lead Action Owner:</b>		
2.1	Embed child voice in all planning Develop personalised education and support plans Provide training for carers on educational advocacy	December 2025	Social Workers, Carers		
2.2	All plans to include the child's voice in relation to education and attendance All Child Protection Conferences to explore attendance and education matters Include non-attendance in all plans	Implementation to commence immediately and embedded over the year	CSC ISOs		
2.3	Training for Youth Justice Staff	As per training schedule	YTJS		Actioned with regular attendance of Education Attendance Team at meetings and in office.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Early Intervention and Prevention</b>				
3.1	Use attendance data to flag concerns early Hold regular school-based meetings	Immediate Implementation & then business as usual	Attendance Leads, Schools, Early Help		Actioned through TSMs and regular tracking of Early Help referrals with an attendance focus
3.2	SENCO Updates to include attendance information. SEN to be aware of attendance as key indicator and placement success monitor. SENCOs to be consulted as part of school attendance	Termly	SEN, SENCO, Attendance Leads		Scheduled training and input for the next Network meeting

	strategy. High expectations for ALL pupils				
3.3	Primary focus meetings x3 a year Secondary focus meetings x3 a year Attendance meetings in school PHF Intervention / input / training	Termly	School Improvement, Schools		A member of the SIA team attends and leads the meeting. Schools with poor attainment data or Ofsted judgement are discussed and attendance percentages feed into this.  The WBPHA put together an agenda with the Director of Education.
3.4	Use ETE data to do focussed diversion ETE data at allocation	As per meeting schedule	YTJS		In place – the Focused Diversion Pilot Programme is in place until 31/03/2026
3.5	Co-develop an Early Identification Toolkit for pupils experiencing Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) - with PCF	Spring 2026 – Spring 2027	SEMH Services (EPS; Promoting Inclusive Practice [PIP] Service; EHA; EBSA) & PCF		Proposal being co-developed with PCF.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Practical and Emotional Support</b>				
4.1	Deploy Family Support Workers for morning routines Provide uniforms, transport, and emotional support Address mental health and trauma through referrals	Family Support, CAMHS, Schools EHA, FGC, FSWs	In line with reforms and work around Family Hubs		
4.2	Ensure that this is embedded in any family plan Transport to be considered and stability of placement in line with statutory guidance and policy	Implementation immediate and embedding ongoing	SW, FSW,		
4.3	Aligned SEMH Services, Referrals from Schools to be streamlined in a graduated response with clear pathways of support available	December 2025	SEMH services, EPs, Schools		On track; Early Intervention Support funding launched in October; Early Intervention Support Services on track for Dec/January launch.
4.5	Youth Justice workers and FSW in Hubs to support families with practical and emotional support	Implementation immediate and embedding ongoing	YTJS, FSW		In place
<b>5.</b>	<b>Training and Empowerment</b>				
5.1	Deliver training on <i>Therapeutic Approaches in Schools: A Relational and Trauma-Informed Approach</i> , EHCPs, and inclusive language	Termly	Training Leads, SEND Teams, ALL staff		Therapeutic Approaches training scheduled for delivery for March and July 2026.

	Host workshops for parents/carers on navigating support				
5.2	All Staff Meeting Engagement Events	All staff	As per meeting schedule		
5.3	WB Therapeutic Networks (termly) Therapeutic approaches in schools training  School, Family & Practitioner training via EdPsychEd (EBSA Horizons): <a href="#">EdPsychEd   EBSA Horizons School Training</a>	Termly	SEMH services		Therapeutic Networks scheduled for November '25; February '26 and June '26. Virtual School also running 3 networks annually to complement PIP Service's Therapeutic Networks.  2-year training licence being used by 9 schools and 15 practitioners. Termly School meetings schedules as community of practice and termly practitioner meeting scheduled which include PCF.
5.4	SENCO Forum Parent Carer Forum SEN Team Termly Cafe Catch Ups	As per meeting schedule	SEN, PCF, SENCO network		Scheduled training in place for next year. Dates have been set.
5.5	PHF Training / intervention / input Ofsted support via SI Team Training on attendance New framework training	As per training schedule	School Improvement, Schools		SIA team provide support in the moment with Ofsted inspections. Wider discussions around attendance are happening due to the greater focus in the Ofsted toolkit. There will be training around the IDSR at the November meeting and part of this will be looking at attendance data for pupil groups.
5.6	Attendance Training for all youth justice staff including educational neglect	As per training schedule	YJST		Resident Education Attendance Team now in YTJS regularly and will deliver training
<b>6.</b>	<b>Accountability and Follow-Through</b>				
6.1	Assign clear ownership of actions Review EHCPs regularly and challenge funding use Monitor implementation of support plans	Monthly reviews	SENDCo, EWO, Case Leads		
6.2	Annual EHCP Reviews Termly School Reviews	Implementation immediate and embedding ongoing	SEN, SEN support		Strengthened SEN team to support duties. SEND & Inclusion strategy still being actioned.
6.3	Ofsted Accountability – attendance element of inspections		School Improvement		Development of Attendance Audit tool – PEWO completed Best Practice and learning from schools inspected on new framework.
<b>7.</b>	<b>Inclusive and Flexible Education</b>				
7.1	Promote inclusive practices for SEMH and neurodivergent pupils  Encourage flexible timetables and	Implementation immediate and embedding ongoing	Schools, EPS Inclusion Teams, Mental Health Services,		NAPEP: National Guidance for Educational Psychologists Supporting School Attendance drafted and soon to be published which provides a template from which to view school attendance for pupils experiencing EBSA/Barriers to Education.

	reintegration support  Address school-based anxiety with tailored strategies		Learning Support Team, Autism, EHA, MHST, PIP Service.		
7.2	Exclusion and Reintegration Team to promote inclusive practices and support inclusion and integration  Short term AP always striving for full time reintegration into a setting  EBSA Advisory Team support schools to better meet the need of pupils experiencing Barriers to Attendance  EHA Interventions & liaison with MHST; EPS; PIP Service offer of schools-based anxiety groups – Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries.	Implementation immediate and embedding ongoing	Exclusions and Reintegration team; Learning Support Team, Autism team, EHA, MHST, PIP Service, EPS, EBSA Advisory		Additional resource has been identified for EBSA Advisory team to support pupils facing barriers to education.
7.3	Ordinarily available provision and QF Teaching Clear LA expectations & policies – review of all Education Policies to ensure consistency Termly meetings Forums	Introduction Autumn term, embedding part of throughout 25/26	SEN		
7.4	Ofsted Inspection support for schools and support for success indicators	Academic year 25-28	School Improvement		This will be ongoing once the inspections begin from the 1 <sup>st</sup> December.

## \*RAG Status

Not started	Overdue/Unresolved Issue	Partial Completion	Started – On Track	Completed
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**Monitoring & Review**

- ½ **termly review** of attendance data and action plans from AWG.
- **Quarterly feedback** from families and young people.
- **Annual evaluation** of strategy impact and updates based on lived experience.

**References**

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#)

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