



Coronavirus Attendance Interventions

Introduction

In response to concerns raised by school leaders, Somerset County Council has been able to secure some additional COVID funding to commission targeted interventions for children whose school attendance has reduced significantly since the start of the pandemic.

Recognising that capacity in schools is limited, funding will be used to commission individual child-level interventions for those children whose attendance levels have dropped significantly since the Coronavirus Pandemic. The funding will be split across the 6 Partnership areas, using the same weightings as those used for the distribution of PRU funding.

Each area will use its funding allocation to commission interventions from two external providers, Young Somerset and Reach, who have worked with the LA and school leaders from all phases to design a flexible, child-focused offer which they can deliver across the county, broadly aligning to the following elements:

- Identify
- Locate
- Engage
- Transition

The intended outcome is to re-engage children with education where school-based interventions have been explored, exhausted and ineffective and significantly improve their attendance rates over the remainder of the 2021/22 academic year.

The Offer

Once a referral has been accepted, Young Somerset and Reach will work closely with the child, family and referring school to deliver a bespoke package of assessment, support and re-engagement activities with the aim of re-integrating the child back into a full-time timetable in their school.

To enable stakeholders to measure the success of this programme and whether there is merit in commissioning similar interventions in the future, the

Educational Psychology Service (EPS) will be carrying out an evaluation exercise and may contact referring schools in relation to that activity.

Area Allocations

Having calculated the likely duration and cost of individual interventions, the funding allocated to each area has been mapped to a finite number of interventions:

Frome Partnership	9
Mendip Partnership	22
Sedgemoor Partnership	22
South Somerset Partnership	26
Taunton Deane Partnership	24
West Somerset Partnership	7

Referral Criteria

Given the finite nature of this valuable resource, it is crucial that it is only available for children which meet the criteria agreed with school leaders:

- NCY 3 – NCY 10*
- Attendance Rate between 15% - 30% at the point of referral and is considered to be significantly below the attendance rates recorded in the 2019/20 academic year
- Schools have already attempted and failed to improve attendance using school-based interventions, including the use of PFSAs
- The child has been referred to Team Around the School (TAS) or equivalent in the 2020/21 or 2021/22 academic years for attendance concerns and any agreed packages of support have been implemented and not had the necessary impact
- Attendance issues are believed to be driven by the child's emotional wellbeing
- Concerns should not be related to provision outlined in an EHCP
- Parent(s), child and school are ready to engage with the intervention
- The child is not actively involved with CAMHS, MHST or SCC's EBSA programme
- A change of school placement is not being considered

****School Leaders were clear that this intervention will come too late for children in NCY 11 and that they should be referred to interventions such as Somerset Works which will focus on integration into Post-16 provision.***

Referral Process

Referrals for Coronavirus Attendance Interventions will be accepted after the February half-term break through existing partnership forums in each area and must be clearly identified as such.

Intervention Leads from Young Somerset and Reach will be present in these meetings and will assess each referral based on the criteria outlined above. On that basis, it is important that referring schools have the relevant evidence available to inform discussions.

Schools will also need to identify a designated point of contact who can:

- Engage with providers during the intervention to provide additional information and agree arrangements for eventual transition back to a full-time timetable
- Engage with EPS officers in relation to the evaluation exercise