



Department
for Education



Bexley SEND IASS:

Case Study on Pupil Missing Out on Education (PMOE)

The issue: Pupil Missing Out on Education (PMOE)

We have seen an increase in enquiries coming to the service regarding Pupils Missing Out on Education. This is a complex issue. Pupils may miss out on education due to a variety of environmental, attitudinal and organisational barriers.

Often, if families are facing school attendance issues, they are hesitant to seek advice from services. This may be due to fear of punitive measures such as fines for non-attendance or legal prosecution. Our service users may be approaching IASS as they can access impartial, confidential and legally-compliant advice on this topic.

A summary of the issue:

- Parent contacted in October 2023. YP started year 10 in September and has not attended since the beginning of the year. He has an EHC plan.
- Parent wanted to discuss support around her son with the school SENCO, but was getting no response.
- There was an annual review for the YP at the end of year 9, but parent was unsure of the EHC plan review process and had not contacted their child's EHC plan Case Officer at the Local Authority.
- Parent was unsure that school could meet YP anxiety needs. He finds it difficult to remain calm large environments with lots of noise (an environmental barrier). The YP also feels that the school does not understand him (an attitudinal barrier). Both YP and parent do not understand his EHC plan or the process of annual review (an organisational barrier).
- Parent was unsure of their rights and what to do next.

Support provided by IASS:

IASS gathered information from the parent, so that we could offer the appropriate advice. The parent was given information, advice and support on their rights around attendance, mental health, the EHC plan review process and working with professionals. The parent was reassured to return to the service with any questions, or if they needed information clarified. The parent's first enquiry centred around PMOE and the process of an EHC plan review. The parent returned to the service to request advice around amending an EHC plan.

The support provided by IASS is as follows:

- Helped parent to understand key government guidance on attendance: Working Together to Improve School Attendance and Summary of Responsibilities where Mental Health is affecting Attendance. This helped to show parent what to expect in terms of support from the school.
- Clarified EHC plan review processes for parent.
- Supported parent to understand their child's EHC draft plan.
- Supported parent to understand how an EHC plan is amended, through a process of an EHC plan review.
- Explained Preparing for Adulthood outcomes and provision.

- Identified barriers to attendance, such as possible Emotionally Based School Avoidance and options to support their son.
- Parent suggested a reduced timetable as a possible intervention to help their son re-engage with education. Helped parent to understand rights around reduced timetables i.e. must have parental consent, be time-limited and regularly reviewed.
- Parent suggested that, if a reduced timetable proves ineffective, a change of placement may be necessary. Clarified parent and young person's rights when requesting a change of placement.
- Advised parent to escalate concerns to headteacher, putting concerns in writing via email so that there is a record of correspondence.
- Advised parent on rights to a formal complaint if communication issue is not resolved.
- Gave information on attendance support services such as the Education Welfare Service.
- Gave information on mental health support services for young people.
- Gave information on local social prescribing services for further regular support.
- Gave information and advice on preparing for meetings with professionals.
- Offered support directly to the YP through phone, email, website, face-to-face or virtual 121(with a parent/carer or family in attendance) to discuss Post 16 options and their rights in education.

The outcome:

IASS seeks to give families the support that they need, to promote independence and self-advocacy. Although an issue such as PMOE is complex and can be ongoing, the family feel that they are moving forward. After coming to IASS, the parent was able to participate in a meeting with the school SENCO to discuss her sons barriers to attendance. The parent sent us the improved correspondence between the SENCO and the family, the meeting notes and the attendance plan that had been put in place. The parent then wanted to understand further about EHC plan amendments.

Some of the outcomes from IASS information, advice and support are as follows:

- Improved communication between school staff and parent
- Improved communication between parent and Local Authority EHC Plan Case Officer
- The family felt confident to attend a meeting to discuss attendance concerns.
- The parent was then able to clarify EHC plan review processes for SEND staff at the Secondary school, such as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.
- The parent felt confident to discuss attendance, from their understanding of relevant government guidance.
- As a result, a detailed attendance plan was put in place by school staff, with a review date for 2 weeks' time.
- Referrals to specialists such as an ASD Advisor and the Mental Health in Schools team were made by school staff, on parent's recommendation.
- The parent felt confident to contact the Local Authority, sharing their concerns with her child's EHC plan Case Officer.
- YP is re-engaging with education.
- Family was empowered with understanding of their rights.
- Family was able to participate in decisions about their child's education, being fully-informed.

Summary:

The impact of the IASS intervention was empowering the family with the knowledge to address a complex issue. It gave them the confidence to collaborate with professionals, to find possible solutions.

As a result of this case we were able to:

- Understand further about issues facing parents whose children are PMOE.

- **Update our resource library with relevant information, such as the information on Emotionally Based School Avoidance.**
- **Consolidate our advice given to parents regarding PMOE, updating the Bexley IASS School Anxiety Toolkit.**
- **Feedback what we have learned to the Local Authority, through forums such as the SEND Board.**