

# Attendance Connections Summary

## 25 September 2025

Lead Officer: Fliss Falconer

Topic: Strengthening Legal Attendance Processes & Avoiding Common Errors

### Key Points Covered

1. Social Media as Evidence:
  - Schools must tread carefully when using social media to investigate absences.
  - Only public posts may be used, and systematic searches are prohibited under RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000).
  - Evidence from personal accounts requires a separate witness statement and may involve court attendance.
2. Documentation Standards:
  - Headteacher's signature is mandatory on attendance certificates.
  - Witness statements must be clearly labelled, signed, and dated.
  - Schools must use the Capita One Module correctly and check for updates regularly to avoid delays.
3. Coding Absences:
  - Use G Code for holidays or absences for leisure-related purposes not authorised by the school.
  - Use O Code for unknown or **other** reasons – consider the reasons given by the parents for the absence. Is it reasonable to call it a holiday? Schools must justify their coding decisions clearly, especially when parental reasons are ambiguous.
4. Correspondence with Parents:
  - Letters must be professionally written, legally sound, and clearly addressed.
  - Individual letters are preferred over joint ones.
  - Emails must include the full letter content, not just attachments.
5. Policy Compliance:
  - Schools are asked to confirm their attendance policies are legally compliant by October half-term.
  - Resources and checklists are available on the SchoolsNet Attendance Connections page.

#### Tips & Tools:

- Use Copilot to draft clear, tailored letters and templates.
- Refer to the SchoolsNet Legal Intervention page for training, templates, and FAQs.

For further support, contact:

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