

MODULE 6

Witness Statements

The case and its supporting exhibits



Why this matters

The witness statement is the main narrative; the exhibits support it. Build it right and the case moves.



Remember this

“Write every line as fact you could stand behind in court: who, what, when, and how you know it — who said what, when, how it was communicated, and where it was recorded. If a sentence starts with “I think” or “Mum said” without a record behind it, it is hearsay, not evidence.”



What good looks like — the ten building blocks (1–5)

- 1. Witness and school details
- 2. Statement of truth and the legal warning (Criminal Procedure Rules)
- 3. Pupil and parent information — one parent per statement; list the relevant children together; full names used consistently
- 4. The attendance record and percentage over the 10-school-week period
- 5. The attendance policy and its definitions



The ten building blocks (6–10)

- 6. Dated support history
 - 7. Pupil voice and parental engagement (responses, or the lack of them)
 - 8. Threshold met, NTI issued, PN requested, and any safeguarding referral (MARF)
 - 9. Exhibits labelled (initials + 01, 02) and referenced in order — the statement itself is not an exhibit
 - 10. Signed and dated, with the statement of truth
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- G-coded (term-time leave) cases need: the parent's leave request, the school's response, and the covering correspondence



Common mistakes

- Hearsay and opinion instead of recorded fact
- Events out of chronological order
- Exhibits not referenced from the statement
- Missing statement of truth, signature or date
- Over-redaction that removes the evidence; writing for the school, not the court
- Fragmented sentences or poor grammar or proofreading skills; cases are returned to the school for changes which reduce the proceeding to court timeframe



In practice

- Replace 'they never engage' with: offers made, the dates, and the recorded response
- Remove the exhibits — does the statement still tell the whole story?

Independent schools: For an independent school, the statement supports a s444(1A) request. The structure, statement of truth and exhibit rules are the same; the offence framing is the aggravated offence under s444(1A).



Your takeaway

Witness statement structure sheet

Ten building blocks, in order; then the final checks before you sign.



Before you submit

“Would this stand up in court?”

Offence proven · chronology clear · escalation justified · every line fact.

