



## SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Education Department

### Circular No 5/03 - Addendum

To: Chief Executives of Local Authorities

Copy to: Directors of Education  
Directors of Social Work

For distribution to:

Area Offices  
Headteachers  
School Boards  
Other interested organisations

3-A North  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Telephone: 0131 244 0076  
Fax: 0131 244 7943  
ruth.campbell2@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

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Dear Sir/Madam

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE CIRCULAR 5/03 - ADDENDUM**

1. **This addendum clarifies a number of issues raised by education authorities in relation to Scottish Executive ED Circular No 5/03, issued on 26 June 2003.**
2. The guidance in this addendum relates to the general classification of attendance and absence rather than decisions on the determination of individual cases. Any enquiries regarding the addendum should be directed to Rod Burns, Scottish Executive Education Department, 3-A North Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ (0131 244 0949, rod.burns@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

### **Medical and Dental Appointments**

3. As drafted at 26 June 2003, Circular No 5/03 classified medical and dental appointments as both attendance (paragraph 5) and authorised absence (paragraph 10). The current addendum rectifies this situation.
4. Medical and dental appointments should be included within the category of attendance. The listing of such appointments under the definition of authorised absence at paragraph 10 should be disregarded.

### **Alternative/Off-site Provision Related to Indiscipline**

5. Where a pupil attends alternative and off-site provision which is arranged because of indiscipline, that pupil's attendance should be recorded as at paragraph 5 of Circular No

5/03. The provision forms part of the pattern of ongoing education, as with other forms of flexible curriculum arrangements.

6. However, if a pupil has been formally excluded by the school, attendance at alternative and off-site provision should be recorded as at paragraph 14 of Circular No 5/03. If an authority makes alternative provision available during the period of exclusion (as required in SEED Circular No 2/98) a school cannot record this as attendance. In addition, authorities should monitor the number of days that alternative provision is made for excluded pupils.

#### **Alternative/Off-site Provision as Part of a Learning Programme**

7. Pupils attending alternative/off-site provision as part of a learning programme (not necessarily in relation to indiscipline) should be marked either present or absent within that provision, and information transferred to the school. This means that schools should liaise with alternative providers to ensure that attendance is recorded and monitored for the entirety of each pupil's learning programme, as it is for pupils whose learning programme is entirely within the formal school curriculum. This will involve periodic collection of attendance data from alternative providers to update schools' own records for these pupils.
8. This form of recording will ensure greater accuracy than if schools simply categorised pupil attendance at alternative provision as authorised absence.

#### **Off-site Provision for Children of Travelling Families**

9. In keeping with paragraph 5 of Circular 5/03, the category of attendance should further include off-site provision for children of travelling families, provided they are on the roll of the school. Participation in lessons outside school premises should therefore be classified as attendance, and the children marked present.

#### **Authorised Absence in Relation to Children of Travelling Families**

10. Circular No 5/03 included sanctioned extended absence in relation to the children of travelling families within the categories of both authorised absence (paragraph 10) and extended leave with parental consent (paragraph 11). This addendum rectifies this situation.
11. Sanctioned extended absence in relation to children of travelling families should be included in the category of authorised absence. The inclusion of such sanctioned extended absence in the category of extended leave with parental consent should be disregarded.

Yours faithfully

**RUTH CAMPBELL**