

# Truancy

## The brief

Today you are going to be an Educational Welfare Officer (known as the EWO).

You will be working on a case involving a girl in Year 10 of a secondary school who truant from school. The situation finally develops into a crisis and the girl is at risk of coming to serious harm.

(Look at the notes below – these will advise you about the roles of people involved in this case)

You will receive a series of messages on the computer which help you to understand what the problem is and how the problem developed.

You will use these messages to piece together what is happening but you will also have to make some important decisions on the way. Because you are an EWO these decisions may be very important ones which affect people's lives!

There will be people that you can ask questions for advice – we call these the experts. There will be:

- an EWO and
- police officers available to give advice.

You will not be able to talk to them but you can ask them questions live 'online' – you will get an answer fairly quickly! Make sure you use their expert knowledge.

At the end there will be a difficult problem to solve. Good luck!

## Roles

**Tanya and Sophie** are 15 years old and are in Year 10. They are generally good students but have good days and bad days! Tanya does not like to be criticised – she is insecure. A difficulty in class has led to missing lessons in the past. She and Sophie are good friends – what one does the other tends to go along with.

**The Educational Welfare Officer** is employed by the school to look after the welfare of students. This involves the following responsibilities:

- contact the home in the event of truancy

**The Community Beat officer** works from the local police station and is assigned to a specific local area so that he/she knows the area and the people, and is known by the residents of the area.

## Glossary

**Agencies** - outside organisations such as social services.

**Briefing** - giving instructions or information that is necessary to do a job.

**CCTV** - closed circuit television is used on major roads and town centres. They allow areas to be watched, and problems to be spotted.

**Community Beat Officer** - the local police officer, responsible for working in a specific area or beat.

**EWO** - Education Welfare Officer, works in a school to support students and work with other agencies.

**PC** - abbreviation of Police Constable, a law enforcement officer.

**Social Services** - local authority organisation to support people.

**Suspect** - someone who I thought to have committed a crime.

**Truancy** - not attending or leaving school without permission.

## Role of an Educational Welfare officer

### In brief

- School attendance
- Bullying
- Exclusion
- Alternative education provision
- Child Protection
- Child Employment, Performance & Chaperone Licences
- To link with agencies and support organisations for children of school age

## **In detail**

**Securing School Attendance** Close working partnership with school staff to ensure and promote high levels of school attendance. Also provides support to improve punctuality.

**Enforcing School Attendance** Taking legal action by prosecuting in a Magistrate Court in order to enforce the attendance of some pupils

**Regular School Visits** Guaranteeing at least one visit per week to every secondary school and one visit per month to all other schools. (Schools under special measures or those with a higher than average truancy rate receive additional visits and support)

**Response to School Referrals** The Education Welfare Service guarantees a first response within 5 working days to all school referrals

**Attendance Register Checks** Regular attendance checks and advice to improve approaches in the completion and monitoring of attendance registers.

**Parental Involvement** Providing advice, support and information to school staff and parents in order to increase involvement in school

**Education Legislation Advice** Providing advice and guidance to schools on legislation relating to school attendance, punctuality, family holidays during term time, permanent and fixed-term exclusion, work experience, child employment, performance licences, school leaving date her issues.

**Facilitating Referrals to other Agencies** Assisting schools to refer appropriate cases to other agencies including Children Social Work, Family Service Unit, Child & Family Clinics and securing agency response.

**Exclusions** Providing advice on LEA policy and procedures as well as support through the Exclusion Project in its overall aim to reduce exclusions.

**Performance & Chaperone Licences** Carry out investigations, interviews and issue licences within the statutory timescale of 21 days, ensuring the maintenance of computer and other records and ensuring that the education and welfare of each pupil is looked after.

