

Welcome to the Achievement for All Attendance Conference

Every Child Present: *Addressing Attendance Gaps in Key Groups*



Order of the Day

9.00 am	<i>Registration & refreshments</i>	
9.30 am	Introduction & context	Michael Hawkins, LA
9.50 am	Building a culture of belonging & family engagement & tabletop exercises	Dr Keven Bartle
11.15 am	<i>Break</i>	
11.25 am	School showcase	Ben Jane, Oak Wood School Rena Madar, Grange Park School
12.15 pm	<i>Lunch in hall</i>	
1.15 pm	How to monitor & evaluate data to target interventions on identified groups & tabletop exercises	Dr Keven Bartle
2.35 pm	School showcase	Gilly Hare, Swakeleys School
3.00 pm	Closing remarks & next steps	Michael Hawkins, LA
3.30 pm	Finish	

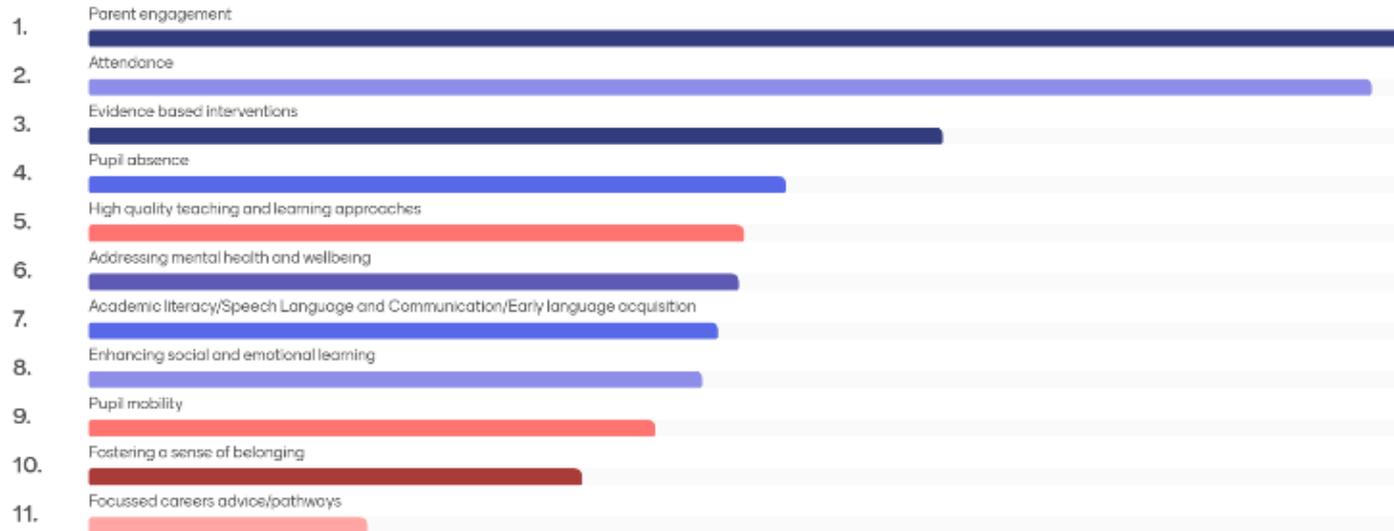
Achievement for All Young People in Hillingdon

- Disadvantaged: eligible for Pupil Premium
 - White British, Black Caribbean, Gypsy, Roma & Traveller
- SEND/ EHCP
- Known to Social Care



Achievement for All Young People in Hillingdon

What focus areas would you like to explore with other settings in future sessions?



Conference Objectives

- Explore the barriers to school attendance
- Explore what is working in improving school attendance
- Good practice case studies
- Generating ideas through sharing your own practice

Attendance and Absence: Primary

93.43

Attendance % All Pupils

Characteristic	Average of Absence %	Average of Attendance %
All Pupils	6.55	93.43
Black Caribbean	7.38	92.62
FSM Eligible: False	5.74	94.24
FSM Eligible: True	9.26	90.72
Gypsy / Roma	13.88	86.12
SEN Provision: EHC Plan	11.10	88.90
SEN Provision: None	5.74	94.23
SEN Provision: SEN Support	8.56	91.44
White - British	7.81	92.19

Persistent Absence: Primary

93.43

Attendance % All Pupils

Characteristic	Average of Persistent Absentee %	Average of Attendance %
All Pupils	18.34	93.43
Black Caribbean	22.68	92.62
FSM Eligible: False	14.71	94.24
FSM Eligible: True	30.57	90.72
Gypsy / Roma	36.45	86.12
SEN Provision: EHC Plan	32.84	88.90
SEN Provision: None	14.62	94.23
SEN Provision: SEN Support	26.08	91.44
White - British	22.88	92.19

Severe Persistent Absence: Primary

93.43

Attendance % All Pupils

Characteristic	Average of Severe Persistent Absentee %	Average of Attendance %
All Pupils	1.54	93.43
Black Caribbean	3.01	92.62
FSM Eligible: False	1.35	94.24
FSM Eligible: True	2.25	90.72
Gypsy / Roma	5.20	86.12
SEN Provision: EHC Plan	5.02	88.90
SEN Provision: None	0.86	94.23
SEN Provision: SEN Support	2.02	91.44
White - British	1.83	92.19

Attendance & Absence: Secondary

89.62

Attendance % All Pupils

Characteristic	Average of Absence %	Average of Attendance %
All Pupils	10.31	89.62
Black Caribbean	13.16	86.83
FSM Eligible: False	9.08	90.86
FSM Eligible: True	13.24	86.65
Gypsy / Roma	12.95	87.05
SEN Provision: EHC Plan	15.84	84.13
SEN Provision: None	8.40	91.50
SEN Provision: SEN Support	13.63	86.27
White - British	13.19	86.78

Persistent Absence: Secondary

89.62

Attendance % All Pupils

Characteristic	Average of Persistent Absentee %	Average of Attendance %
All Pupils	28.30	89.62
Black Caribbean	38.74	86.83
FSM Eligible: False	24.54	90.86
FSM Eligible: True	38.04	86.65
Gypsy / Roma	49.79	87.05
SEN Provision: EHC Plan	38.49	84.13
SEN Provision: None	23.43	91.50
SEN Provision: SEN Support	39.13	86.27
White - British	35.01	86.78

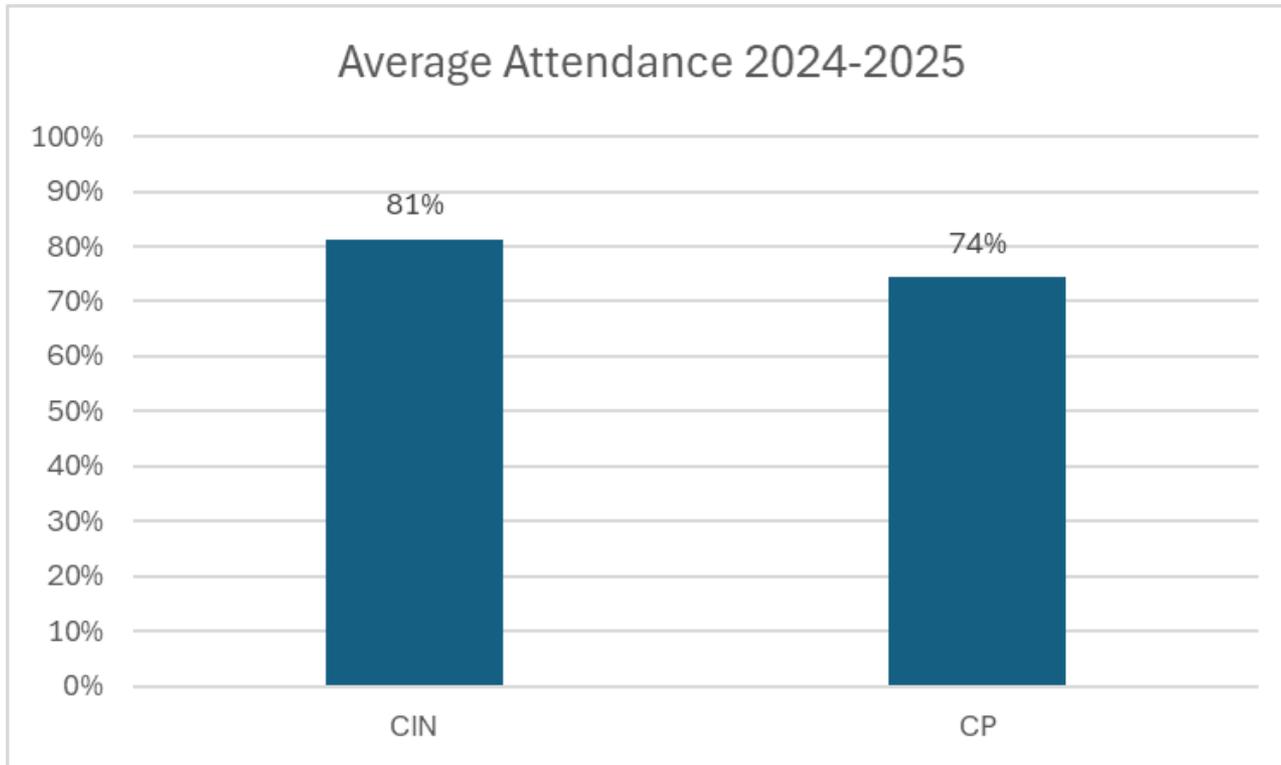
Severe Persistent Absence: Secondary

89.62

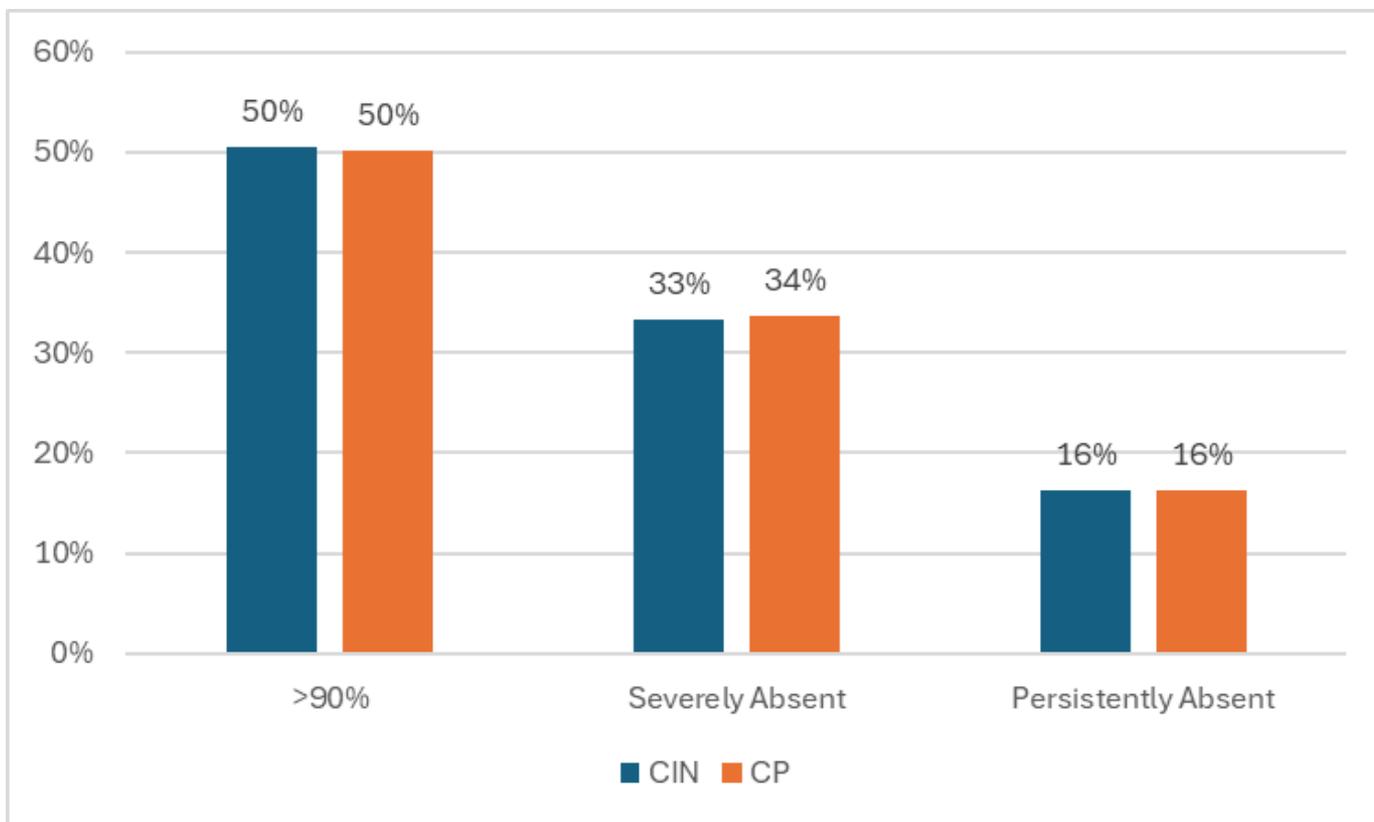
Attendance % All Pupils

Characteristic	Average of Severe Persistent Absentee %	Average of Attendance %
All Pupils	4.67	89.62
Black Caribbean	7.19	86.83
FSM Eligible: False	4.28	90.86
FSM Eligible: True	5.90	86.65
Gypsy / Roma	0.00	87.05
SEN Provision: EHC Plan	11.14	84.13
SEN Provision: None	2.96	91.50
SEN Provision: SEN Support	5.73	86.27
White - British	6.88	86.78

Known to Social Care



Known to Social Care





Hillingdon Achievement for All Attendance Conference

Building a culture of belonging and family engagement

Dr Keven Bartle – SSAT Senior Education Lead



Session Outline

- Attendance data
- Recent research
- Reframing school culture
- Communicating with families
- Ten quick-ish wins



Keep Calm and Carry On: You are not alone!



Absence since 2018-19: A Long Journey?

	2018-19	2021-22	2022-3	2023-24	2024-25
Absence Rate	4.5%	7.4%	7.3%	7.2%	6.9%
Persistent Absenteeism	10.5%	22.3%	21.2%	20.7%	18.7%
Severe Absenteeism*	0.8%	1.5%	1.7%	1.97%	2.04%

Back to 2019: Persistent Absence and Absence Trajectories

July 2032

June 2032							August 2032						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

July 04 Independence Day

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July 2042

June 2042							August 2042						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30						29	30					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

July 04 Independence Day

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Ofsted Inspection Handbook – September 2024

“Inspectors will expect schools to do **all they reasonably can** to achieve the highest possible attendance, while **recognising that the context in which schools operate has changed.**”

Key expectations of schools:

- Fine-grain, comparative analysis with comparisons to local and national.
- Data analysis feeding into the whole-school approach.
- Strong understanding of issues/causes and clear strategy.
- Effort to engage multi-agency work for PA and SA.

- High priority: “Improving towards and beyond national, pre-pandemic levels”.
- To be judged “favourably”: Strategy, record of improvement, capacity to continue.

SSAT Inspection Tracker: Top 10 'Need to Improve' comments

All Schools 2023-2024

Assessment for checking understanding	13.8%
Implementation of the curriculum	11.5%
Curriculum planning	9.2%
Subject content, knowledge, sequencing	7.9%
Phonics and/or reading	7.7%
Support for pupils with SEND	4.8%
Attendance and/or punctuality	4.7%
Prior knowledge recall	4.4%
Evaluation of curriculum impact	3.9%
Staff knowledge for curriculum delivery	3.2%

All Schools 2024-2025

Assessment for checking understanding	15.8%
Implementation of the curriculum	11.9%
Subject content, knowledge, sequencing	6.9%
Writing skills are not taught or learned	6.7%
Adaptations to challenge/support pupils	5.5%
Support for pupils with SEND	5.5%
Attendance and/or punctuality	5.4%
Prior knowledge recall	5.0%
Phonics and/or reading	4.6%
Evaluation of curriculum impact	2.5%

Secondaries 2023-2025

Assessment for checking understanding	16.1%
Implementation of the curriculum	13.0%
Attendance and/or punctuality	9.5%
Support for pupils with SEND	6.6%
Phonics and/or reading	5.2%
Adaptations to challenge/support pupils	4.4%
Application of behaviour policy	4.1%
Curriculum planning	3.1%
Monitoring and evaluation processes	3.1%
Pupil behaviour and conduct	3.0%

Ofsted 2025: Attendance and Behaviour Toolkit (expected standard)

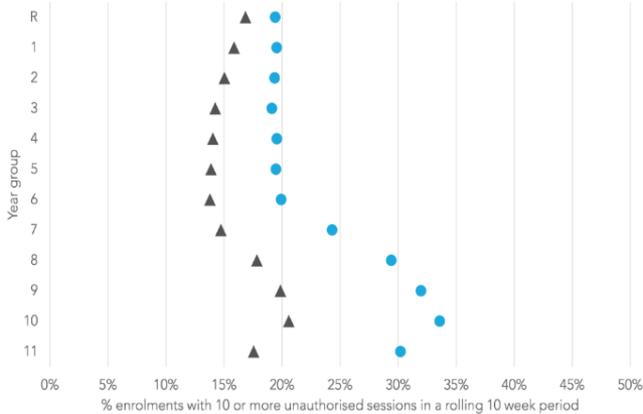
In gathering evidence about attendance, inspectors consider the extent to which:

- High priority on improving attendance and punctuality
- Pupils attend well [or] attendance is improving towards national averages/school's pre-pandemic levels
- Close attention to the needs of [key] groups of pupils
- Striving for whole-school improvement once attendance reaches national averages
- Communicate expectations about attendance clearly, strongly and consistently to pupils
- Staff understand the importance of paying close attention to pupils' attendance
- Attendance registers and processes to follow up on absences are established and effective
- Work with parents, LA and other agencies to communicate attendance expectations and improve it

Disaggregating the Data: Pupil groups and intersectionality

% of pupil enrolments falling below proposed attendance threshold by year group and SEN, 2022/23

▲ Not SEN ● SEN Support or EHC plan



% of pupil enrolments falling below proposed attendance threshold by year group and disadvantage, 2022/23

▲ Not disadv. ● Disadvantaged

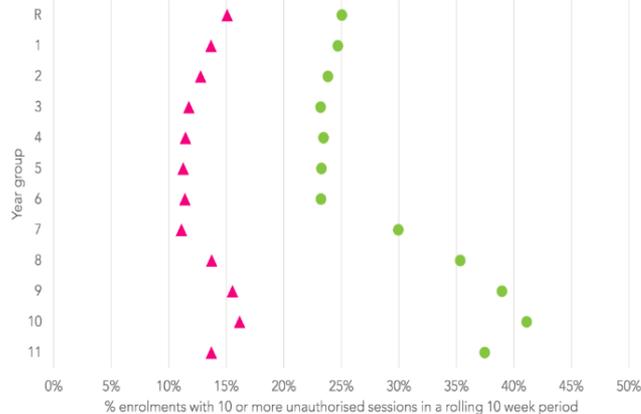
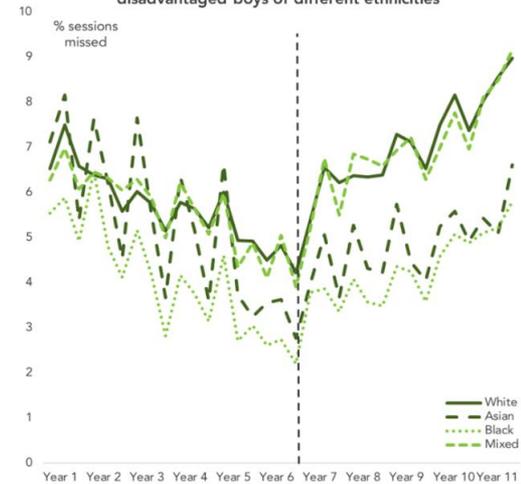


Figure 2. Absence rates amongst high-achieving disadvantaged boys of different ethnicities



Ofsted 2025: Attendance and Behaviour Toolkit (expected standard)

Inclusive approaches to attendance and behaviour

- Staff expertise, confidence and support
- Reasonable adjustments and adaptations...while maintaining high expectations
- *Timely, well-chosen, targeted interventions to support those who need additional help*
- Monitor, evaluate and amend approaches, adjustments, adaptations and interventions
- Part-time timetables are short term and have defined end points, and clear plans for pupils' return
- Monitor pupils' AP attendance carefully...and take swift and effective action
- *Relationships between adults and pupils are open, respectful and harmonious*
- Pupils who need support...show improvements over time

Inspection Tracker: Frequency and Risk of Attendance 'Needs'

Frequency of attendance 'needs'

	2023	2024	2025
Attendance and/or punctuality	4.1%	5.6%	5.4%
Vulnerable attendance and/or punctuality	0.2%	0.4%	0.6%
Absence coding and data analysis	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Lack of support for pastoral barriers	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
Part time timetables used inappropriately	0.0%	0.02%	0.03%

Relative risk of attendance 'needs'

	O	G	RI	I
Attendance and punctuality	2%	75%	18%	5%
Disadvantaged/SEND attendance and punctuality	2%	78%	17%	3%
Absence coding and data analysis	6%	45%	20%	29%
Lack of support for pastoral barriers	7%	66%	20%	7%
Part time timetables used inappropriately	0%	60%	20%	20%
For any identified need	2%	74%	20%	5%

17th December 2024 – Ofsted Reports on Attendance Needs

“Some families who need support with their children’s attendance do not benefit from the school’s positive work early enough. This means that for some pupils, they continue Inspection report to miss school or become persistently absent. **The school should consider engaging with these families sooner**, to avoid pupils developing poor attendance.”

Improved **GGGG**, Previously Inadequate

24th January 2025 – Ofsted Reports on Attendance Needs

“The school **does not do all that it reasonably can** to improve attendance. The school, including governors, **does not have a secure analysis** of the school's attendance rates. There is **no clear strategy** for raising the profile of attendance further. Consequently, pupils' attendance is not as high as it could be.”

Graded **RRRR**, Previously Good

7th May 2025 – Ofsted Reports on Attendance Needs

“Approximately a third of disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent. This means that they miss vital learning and fall behind their peers. The school should **continue to work closely with parents** of pupils who do not attend regularly to raise attendance and increase these pupils' outcomes.”

Previously Good (**Maintained**)



1st July 2025 – Ofsted Reports on Attendance Needs

“Sometimes, the school is slow to address gaps in pupils’ knowledge and skills caused by absence from lessons. As a result, some pupils struggle with more advanced learning because they lack the necessary foundations. The school should ensure that pupils who miss lessons, whether due to illness or disengagement, are given timely support to catch up.”

Previously Good (Maintained)



The Evidence Base

SSAT Research Summary and Synthesis

Post-2019 Research on Attendance and Punctuality

February 2024



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Public First – <i>Listening to, and learning from, parents in the attendance crisis</i> – September 2023	19
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ImpactED – <i>Understanding Attendance: Findings on the drivers of pupil absence</i> – January 2024	22
Selected academic research papers on attendance since 2019	23-26

Moodley, R. et al. (2020) 'Using data mining in educational administration: A case study on improving school attendance'. *Applied Sciences*, Vol 10(9), p.3116.

Finning, K. et al. (2020) 'Secondary school practitioners' beliefs about risk factors for school attendance problems: a qualitative study'. *Emotional and behavioural difficulties*, Vol 25(1), pp.15-28.

Eklund, K., et al (2022) 'Addressing chronic absenteeism in schools: A meta-analysis of evidence-based interventions'. *School Psychology Review*, Vol. 51(1), pp.95-111

Keamey, C.A. et al (2022) 'School attendance and school absenteeism: A primer for the past, present, and theory of change for the future'. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 7)

Klein, M. & Sosu, E. M. (2023) 'School attendance and academic achievement: understanding variation across family socioeconomic status'. *American Sociological Association*, pp.1-18.

McDonald, B. et al (2023) 'School attendance problems in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic – A multiple stakeholder qualitative study with parents and professionals'. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 93(1), pp.386-401.

SSAT's 'best bets' for school attendance leads: *What schools can learn from recent research findings on attendance and punctuality*

27

Reframe school culture around the surplus of good attendance and punctuality rather than the deficit of problematic absence and lateness.

- a) Emphasise belonging, relational activity, connectedness of school life, and wider outcomes than exam success, in all discussions about attendance and punctuality.
- b) Utilise student voice and leadership to evaluate the value and effectiveness of curriculum and enhance wraparound provision for better personal development opportunities.
- c) Focus less on sanctions and consequences for missing school and more on benefits of attending. Greater focus on recognition of attendance and (even small) improvements.

Recognise how family/parent attitudes to school have changed since the pandemic and seek to engage them with empathy for their position.

- a) Discuss with parents and pupils the context-specific barriers to attendance and punctuality, including how your school finds families “easy to ignore” (rather than “hard to reach”).
- b) Provide explicit guidance for staff interacting with families about attendance, ensuring high quality professional learning for all, especially those with most frequent contact.
- c) Ensure communication with families is rooted in the school culture emphasising good attendance and punctuality, informed by accurate and timely data analysis and evaluation.

Education Endowment Foundation: Supporting School Attendance



Evidence and resources

1. Build a holistic understanding of pupils and families, and diagnose specific needs

Get to know your pupils, their families, their influences, and their specific challenges.



Evidence and resources

2. Build a culture of community and belonging for pupils

Make sure pupils feel seen, understood, and safe.



Evidence and resources

3. Communicate effectively with families

Design effective communication strategies.



Evidence and resources

4. Improve universal provision for all pupils

Utilise teacher professional development.



Evidence and resources

5. Deliver targeted interventions to supplement universal provision

Personalise approaches to meet the needs of individual pupils.



Evidence and resources

6. Monitor the impact of approaches

Determine the effectiveness of an approach.



Research from 2024–2025 about culture and family engagement

- *Strathclyde Uni 2024*: Foster strong family partnership through programmatic content.
- *IPPR 2025*: Working with families and local communities as a domain of practice in schools.
- *Child of the North 2024*: Culture of belonging via peer support, extra curricular, MH focus.
- *Centre for Young Lives 2025*: Widen access to high-quality enrichment activities.
- *Education Policy Institute 2025*: Fostering belonging crucial to addressing absence for PP.
- *NFER 2025*: Personalised support, positive encouragement, strong relationships.



Building a culture of belonging

- Attendance is everyone's business?
- Embedding culture in policy
- Recognition, recognition, recognition



“Attendance is everyone’s business”

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Safeguarding is Everyone's Business

A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is the primary person responsible for child protection and safeguarding in an organization. They advise and support staff, volunteers, and the senior leadership team.

Responsibilities

- Develop and review plans: Create and maintain the organization's safeguarding plan
- Coordinate resources: Distribute policies, procedures, and safeguarding resources
- Provide advice: Offer advice and support on safeguarding to staff and volunteers
- Manage concerns: Handle safeguarding concerns, allegations, and incidents
- Make referrals: Refer incidents and allegations to the police or social services
- Train staff: Advise on training needs and provide training where appropriate
- Promote quality: Promote quality and care, and appropriate learning and development



Designated Attendance Lead: Attendance is Everyone's Business

A designated attendance lead (DAL) is the primary person responsible for children's attendance and punctuality in an organization. They advise and support staff, volunteers, and the senior leadership team.

Responsibilities

- Develop and review plans: Create and maintain the organization's attendance plan
- Coordinate resources: Distribute policies, procedures, and attendance resources
- Provide advice: Offer advice and support on attendance to staff and volunteers
- **Manage concerns: Help key staff members to handle attendance concerns**
- **Make referrals: Refer high level attendance concerns on to other key agencies**
- Train staff: Advise on training needs and provide training where appropriate
- Promote quality: Promote quality and care, and appropriate learning and development

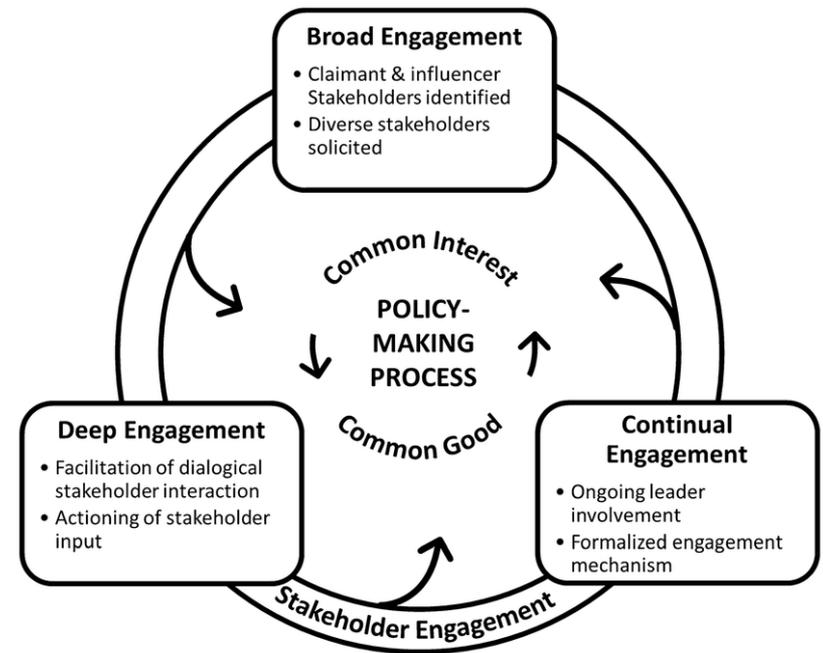


Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 1: If you had a 'designated attendance lead' what would be in their job description?

Every Policy Matters: Seven Key Reasons

1. Consistency and Fairness
2. Compliance and Risk Management
3. Clear Expectations and Accountability
4. Streamlined Operations and Efficiency
5. Enhanced Decision-Making
6. Organisational Culture
7. Effective Communication



Audit Tool Question

The following stakeholder voices have contributed their insights in the formation of our attendance policy:

- Governors
- Senior leaders
- Middle leaders
- Standard scale staff
- Pupils
- Families

SSAT's Attendance and Punctuality Audit Tool



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Case Study A: Policy and Practice

Legislation

The Education Act 1996 states that:

“If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence”.

There are two offences relating to parental responsibility for ensuring regular attendance at school or alternative provision:

1. If a registered pupil is absent without authorisation then the parent is guilty of an offence under **Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996**. A conviction for this offence can result in a fine of up to £1,000.
2. If the parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails to cause him/her to do so, he/she is guilty of an offence under **Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996**. This is known as an aggravated offence. A conviction for this offence may result in a substantial fine up to a maximum of £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months and/or a community penalty.





Attendance Policy: Why should children attend your school?

At Kings Langley School we want students to attend school every day to ensure they benefit from experience and opportunities the school offers. Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to fulfil their potential. There is a clear link between good attendance and students achieving the top grades in public examinations.

At Holly Lodge High School, we believe that regular attendance at school is crucial in ensuring that every student can reach their full potential. Good attendance helps to build good habits of reliability and timekeeping needed for future study and employment. We want all students to make the most of school by attending regularly, enjoying and achieving.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more enjoyable and satisfying.
- Regular attenders settle into High School more easily.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.



Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 2: *What do you think your students would have as the top five reasons for coming to school every day? What would be your families top five reasons for sending them?*

Student reasons	Family reasons

Prompt 3: *What would be the top five school-based reasons that your students would have for not coming to school every day and the family reasons for not sending them?*

Student reasons	Family reasons

Audit Tool Question

Our policy clearly outlines the ways in which the following people help maintain a positive culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and punctuality.

- School governors
- Senior leaders
- Pastoral leaders
- Subject leaders
- Class teachers
- Form tutors

SSAT's Attendance and Punctuality Audit Tool



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An example of a school policy about roles

Attendance is a school leadership matter.

The Head:

- Is responsible for the strategic oversight of attendance procedures, developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance
- Ensures strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school
- Consider leave of absence requests of up to five days, applying the principles outlined in this policy and ensuring that the absence will not impact on key assessments or events
- Considers parent requests for leave of absence that are more than ten school days
- Notifies parents that, if a student fails to attend regularly, her parents are committing an offence in law



An example of a school policy about roles

The Heads of Year (Senior School) will:

- Ensure that Form Tutors and Class Teachers are following the correct procedures for registration
- Ensure that unaccounted for absence is followed up
- Check weekly data on attendance for pupils in their year group, identifying attendance concerns.
- Make checks on absence notes for such pupils
- Follow up with the student and the parent and put in support measures to facilitate an improvement
- Ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and sanctions applied
- Investigate reasons for absence
- Work with any pupil who has had protracted absence to assist with re-integration
- Present certificates for full attendance in Assemblies



An example of a school policy about roles

Class, Form or Subject teachers will:

- Record student attendance, absence and punctuality in every lesson
- Alert Reception immediately if a student is absent from the lesson, but has been present in school
- Apply sanctions for late arrival, for example making up the time missed during break or lunchtime
- Apply sanctions for failure to catch up on work missed through absence after an appropriate time limit
- Support pupils who are absent due to illness, enabling them to catch up work and understand content
- Alert the Form Tutor and Head of Year if absence or poor punctuality are persistent problems

Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 4: What key roles should each of the following postholders in your school play in helping maintain a positive culture that promotes good attendance and punctuality? How confident are you that this is featured in your policy, CPDL offer and appraisal processes?

Postholder	Role in positive attendance culture	Policy	CPDL	PM
Governors				
Senior Leaders				
Pastoral Leaders				
Curriculum Leaders				
Classroom Teachers				
Form Tutors				

Audit Tool Question

We **recognise** and reward good, and improved, attendance and punctuality in the following ways.

- We use an automated system linked to extrinsic rewards
- We use an analogue system linked to intrinsic recognition
- We do so on a termly or annual basis
- We do so on a weekly or fortnightly basis
- We recognise 100% attendance across the year
- We recognise 100% attendance over shorter periods

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Case Study B – Attendance Audit in March 2025

- Weekly recognition – ‘Perfect Week’ – for behaviour and attendance combined. Many students with ‘perfect’ attendance not being recognised because of behaviour.
- ‘Promoting good attendance’ was the shortest section of the attendance policy.
- Of the 25 weekly bulletins for parents published during the academic year so far, only 6 referenced attendance. All were administrative and none were celebratory.
- Letters to families were formal, adopted unedited from the LA templates.

Case Study C – Performance Tables Information

- Secondary in the north-east
- Very deprived community
- High levels of absence and PA
- Attendance audit in February 2024
- Weekly 100% attendance recognition
- Very highly valued by learners
- “Leaders could do more to foreground the ‘good news stories’ in all communications with all stakeholders.”

	School	Local authority	England state-funded schools
Overall absence ▶ More info	12.8%	10.4%	8.9%
Persistent absence ▶ More info	38.6%	28.5%	25.6%
Pupils with an SEN Education, Health and Care Plan		2.1%	2.7%
Pupils with SEN Support		22.5%	12.9%
Pupils whose first language is not English		51.2%	18.6%
Pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past 6 years		68.6%	27.3%

Case Study C – Green Shoots?

Academic Year 22-23

Primary

	Issued	Improved	Escalated	Monitored at stage	% improvement	% did not improve & escalated	% improved or escalated
Stage 1	218	106	94	18	48.6%	43.1%	91.7%
Stage 2	275	153	40	82	55.6%	14.5%	70.2%
Stage 3	54	37	11	6	68.5%	20.4%	88.9%
Stage 4	11	7		4	63.6%		63.6%

Secondary

	Issued	Improved	Escalated	Monitored at stage	% improvement	% did not improve & escalated	% improved or escalated
Stage 1	267	122	121	24	45.7%	45.3%	91.0%
Stage 2	548	247	136	165	45.1%	24.8%	69.9%
Stage 3	140	68	25	47	48.6%	17.9%	66.4%
Stage 4	35	18		17	51.4%		51.4%

Academic Year 23-24

Primary

	Issued	Improved	Escalated	Monitored at stage	% improvement	% did not improve & escalated	% improved or escalated
Stage 1	111	64	4	43	57.7%	3.6%	61.3%
Stage 2	26	21	0	5	80.8%	0.0%	80.8%
Stage 3	14	10	1	3	71.4%	7.1%	78.6%
Stage 4	1	0		1	0.0%		0.0%

Secondary

	Issued	Improved	Escalated	Monitored at stage	% improvement	% did not improve & escalated	% improved or escalated
Stage 1	216	130	20	66	60.2%	9.3%	69.4%
Stage 2	130	80	1	49	61.5%	0.8%	62.3%
Stage 3	28	21	1	6	75.0%	3.6%	78.6%
Stage 4	4	3		1	75.0%		75.0%

Case Study C – Ofsted Inspection in May 2024 (BA graded good)

- “The school is working in a context that provides significant challenge. It is experiencing the ongoing impact of the pandemic. This impact is most evident in regard to pupils’ attendance and mental health. **The school, supported by the trust, is responding to these challenges with both commitment and intelligence.**”
- “Levels of pupils’ absence are high. The school, supported by the trust, has made significant investment to address this. It has worked with external agencies to develop a coherent and extensive attendance strategy. It has created extra posts of responsibility for attendance. As a result of this, pupils’ attendance is improving. **The development of a positive school culture is also contributing to improved attendance.**”

Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 5: On the following scales about recognition for good attendance and punctuality, where would you place your school? Broadly speaking, the most impactful, sustaining approaches are towards the left-hand columns (although care should be taken with this).

Analogue											Digital
Intrinsic											Extrinsic
Daily											Annually
Public											Private

Reflections for future action:



Communicating with Families

- Family friendly approaches
- Absence processes – flowcharts and letters
- Barriers to good attendance and punctuality



Mumsnet Attendance Complaints

Frustrating attendance letter

7 replies



lavenderlou · 20/12/2023 18:27

Received a letter from the attendance officer at DD's school. She does have poor attendance this year but that's because she had open abdominal surgery in the first half term and the surgeon told us she couldn't return to school for two weeks. It was just before the half term so she missed 9 days in total, 3 of which she was in hospital. She had a catheter in for nearly a week! We spent the half term holiday catching up on missed work.

In addition she has had three days off when she had Covid and was really poorly. That's it.

We've now been told that any further absences will only be authorised with medical evidence. Well they can help me find a doctor who will do a doctor's note. Previous years her attendance has always been very good.

I'm a primary school teacher and know how annoying absence can be but am also aware that sometimes there are exceptional circumstances. It's so frustrating when children with genuine health issues are penalised.

OP posts: [See next](#) [See all](#)

- Quote
- React
- Add post
- Share
- Report

Bastard School attendance

49 replies



Mrgwl29 · 21/12/2023 06:43

Received a snotty letter from my eldest's school yesterday about attendance - he's had five days off for illness which has put his attendance at 92%. We always get him in otherwise, never late and no unexplained absence and he's doing well (reception year and has settled in really well and had good feedback from his teacher at parents evening).

What is the point of this? Am I to drag him in when he's vomiting? Or when he's coughing his guts up?

I know this is a well worn topic but man, it feels you can't do right for wrong as a parent sometimes!

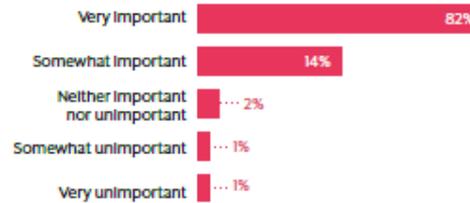
OP posts: [See next](#) [See all](#)

- Quote
- React
- Add post
- Share
- Report

Parentkind (2025) – School Absence Parent Poll



How important or unimportant, if at all, is it for children to go to school every day if they can?



Base: 1,000 parents of children aged 4-16

Is it getting easier or harder, if at all, to get your child to school every day?



Base: 1,000 parents of children aged 4-16

How often, if at all, do you have an argument or disagreement with your child over going to school?



Base: 1,000 parents of children aged 4-16

Audit Tool Question

We have the following family-friendly approaches in place to underpin the monitoring process for attendance and punctuality concerns.

- All staff are given training to support communication with families.
- Families are personally contacted about attendance and punctuality.
- There is a staffed phone line for families to share attendance issues.
- Families are expected to attend higher level attendance meetings.
- Families in regular contact about attendance have a dedicated contact.
- Concerns meetings address school-specific barriers identified by families.
- Concerns meetings action plans require family agreement for sign-off.

SSAT's Attendance and Punctuality Audit Tool



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and teachers network

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and teachers network

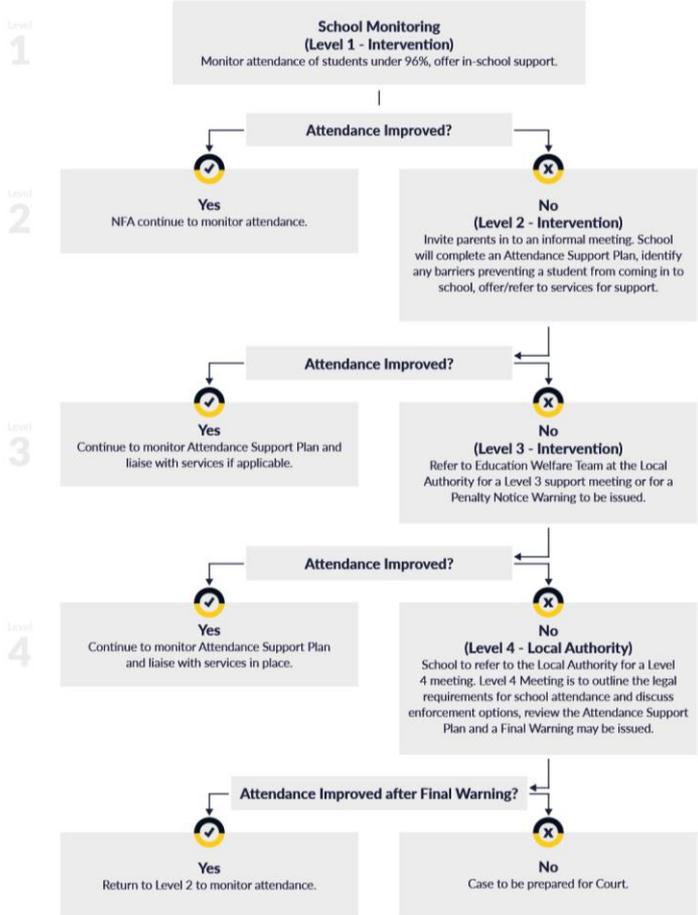
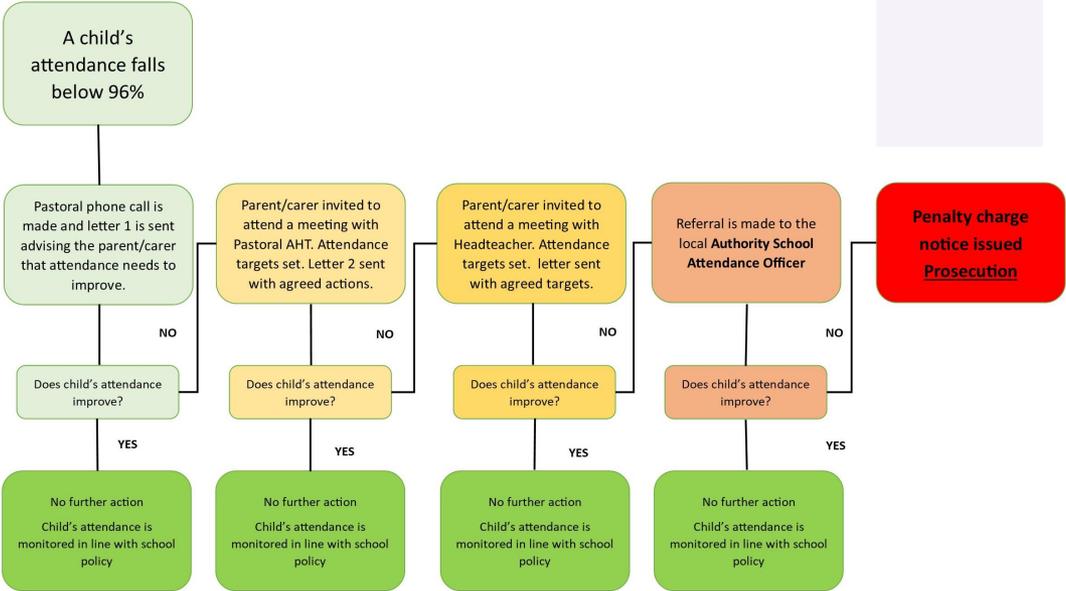
Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 6: Which of these family-friendly approaches does your school have in place to underpin the monitoring process for attendance and punctuality concerns?

Family-friendly approaches	Yes	No
All staff are given training to support communication with families.		
Families are personally contacted about attendance and punctuality.		
There is a staffed phone line for families to share attendance issues.		
Families are expected to attend higher level attendance meetings.		
Families in regular contact about attendance have a dedicated contact.		
Concerns meetings address school-specific barriers identified by families.		
Concerns meetings action plans require family agreement for sign-off.		

Reflections for future action:

Absence Management Flowcharts



Case Studies: Concerns about attendance – School D and School E

The school has implemented many strategies to address some pupils' low rates of attendance, including for students in the sixth form. For some pupils, rates of attendance have improved, however, for others they have remained static or decreased. The school is not clear enough about which strategies have had the most impact on improving attendance for different pupils.

February 2024 – RRRR

The school is insistent and persistent in promoting high attendance. The school analyses attendance carefully and strives to remove barriers to pupils' attendance. For pupils who miss school too often, there is intensive support for them and their families. As a result, there are many pupils with improved attendance. The school continues to rightly focus on those pupils whose attendance needs to improve further.

March 2024 – Maintained Good

Case Studies: Attendance Concerns Letter 1 – School D and School E

Dear

Re: (AttPn1)

As you are aware we are being asked to target pupils failing to meet our school target of 96%. I am currently monitoring your son's attendance and I note from our records that his attendance is currently as follows:

Number of Authorised Absence (AM/PM sessions) -	13
Number of Unauthorised Absence (AM/PM sessions) -	2
Overall Attendance -	85.29%

I am concerned by [student]'s absence. You are therefore invited to an attendance panel meeting in school on **Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 2.40 pm.**

Present at this meeting, at which your sons' absences will be discussed and target for improvement set, will be the Attendance Officer and myself. As a parent/carer you have a legal obligation to work with the school to ensure your child has good attendance at school and failure to do so may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Parents who do not pay the Fixed Penalty Notice may be prosecuted under the Education Act 1995, Section 444.

We know that poor attendance does impact on progress and we want to support your son to achieve his full potential. We hope that the forthcoming meeting will help him to do this.

Dear Parent/Carer

Absences from school

We've noticed that your child has missed a lot of school recently. We're concerned that they are missing out on key experiences because of this, and that they risk falling behind.

We know that every family's circumstances are different, and we want to work with you to provide the best education for your child. We are aware of the issues that have led to authorised absences in the past. Please let us know if there is anything else going on at home or at school which might be making it difficult for your child to attend regularly.

We want to make sure that we can support your child's education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help them to address gaps in learning due to absence.

Please contact the school office on the number below as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss



Attendance Audit Feedback

School D

- No attendance campaigns with families.
- No communications about achievements.
- Parental “backlash” about toilet closure.
- Staff felt that the school had “capitulated”.
- Staff believe parents can also easily get late passes by hitting trigger words.

School E

- No attendance ‘campaigns’ with families.
- Attendance not a priority for induction.
- Use of “serial offender” and “recidivism”
- Pastoral staff saw parents as “blockers”.
- Barriers for families not always known, particularly school-based challenges.



Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 7: What would you include in a family-friendly flowchart and/or a family-friendly letter for your school include to provide reassurance, empathy, and a sense of collegiality?

Absence management flowchart	Absence management letter

Audit Tool Question

We have the following people with specific and defined responsibilities around attendance and punctuality:

- Link governor with monitoring responsibility
- Governing board committee holding leaders to account
- Senior leader with strategic responsibility
- Attendance manager or equivalent

- Family Liaison/Educational Welfare Officer
- Designated person to handle first day absences
- School counsellor, mentor or equivalent
- Dedicated support from external agency staff

SSAT's Attendance and Punctuality Audit Tool



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Case Study A: Policy and Practice

Legislation

The Education Act 1996 states that:

“If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence”.

There are two offences relating to parental responsibility for ensuring regular attendance at school or alternative provision:

1. If a registered pupil is absent without authorisation then the parent is guilty of an offence under **Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996**. A conviction for this offence can result in a fine of up to £1,000.
2. If the parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails to cause him/her to do so, he/she is guilty of an offence under **Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996**. This is known as an aggravated offence. A conviction for this offence may result in a substantial fine up to a maximum of £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months and/or a community penalty.





Observations from the Attendance Audit for School A

- Leaders are frustrated by diminishing access to wider support agencies.
- Recognition that families are having the same issues with access (e.g. CAMHS)
- Family engagement, despite numerous strategies, remains problematic.
- Staff are concerned by the lack of parental engagement, even at court stages.
- Staff sympathetic to poor parental experience of school, language barriers, health issues.
- Staff generally value parents who are seen as being “with us every step of the way”.

Case Study A: Policy and Practice

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so that your child is prepared for the school day ahead.
- Make sure your child attends school daily and follows the school rules.
- Ensure your child arrives at school on time.
- Always arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours.
- Always inform the school if your child is absent.
- If your child is not attending school as you expect they may be putting themselves at risk – Who are they with? What are they doing?
- Take family holidays outside term time- holidays in term time will result in a Fixed Penalty Fine being issued to each parent.
- Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homework).
- Attend parent evenings and school events.
- Praise and reward your child's achievements at school.
- Always support school staff in their efforts to promote a positive attitude to learning.
- Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school – staff are here to help and will be supportive.

SCHOOL SUPPORT

In order to assist and support you with attendance issues, [redacted] has lots of supportive options available to ensure that your child can continue to attend school, even if they are a little under the weather from time to time with a particular ailment or injury.

Some of these options may include:

- [redacted] is well-equipped to support students remaining in school with colds/flu/headaches/bugs and other day to day ailments. This can involve a different working environment that is well ventilated, quiet and allows hydration and toilet access. This allows your child to continue their learning in supportive surroundings.
- Where possible, students should return to school for the afternoon session. This will safeguard your child's learning and minimise disruption to learning.
- With regards to physical injuries, support can consist of a lift pass, the ability to leave lessons early with a student helper to avoid student movement issues around school, a lunch fast pass and many other various supportive options will all ensure that it is still possible for students to attend school.

Mentoring

Students can access 1:1 mentoring appointments with our mentor, [redacted]. Many students find these appointments helpful, providing a safe space for them to discuss a range of issues.

Healthy Heads

Healthy Heads is a Mental Health Support Team in Sunderland, working with the Academy to provide support for students' mental health and wellbeing. Healthy Heads treat mild to moderate mental health issues and can do so in a timely manner without the long waiting times that can be experienced when accessing external services. The service includes intervention on an individual basis as well as group work and group parent classes.

Emotional Health and Resilience Nurse

An Emotional Health and Resilience Nurse has been commissioned by Sunderland and Gateshead to support young people's mental health and to build resilience and capacity within schools and the community. Their mission is to raise awareness, reduce stigma associated with this and ensure that the right level of support for emotional and mental health issues are accessed in a timely manner. A Resilience Nurse is on site fortnightly to complete workshops, group work and one-to-one intervention.

Washington Mind

Washington Mind is a local charity providing mental health and wellbeing support. We have a counsellor from Washington Mind in school every week.

CAMHS

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are services that support young people experiencing poor mental health. School or your GP can make a referral to CAMHS.

If you wish to discuss the additional support available please contact our Attendance Improvement Leader or your child's Progress Leader.



Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 2: *What do you think your students would have as the top five reasons for coming to school every day? What would be your families top five reasons for sending them?*

Student reasons	Family reasons

Prompt 3: *What would be the top five school-based reasons that your students would have for not coming to school every day and the family reasons for not sending them?*

Student reasons	Family reasons



Some Quick-ish Wins



Ten 'quick-ish wins' for recalibrating culture for family engagement

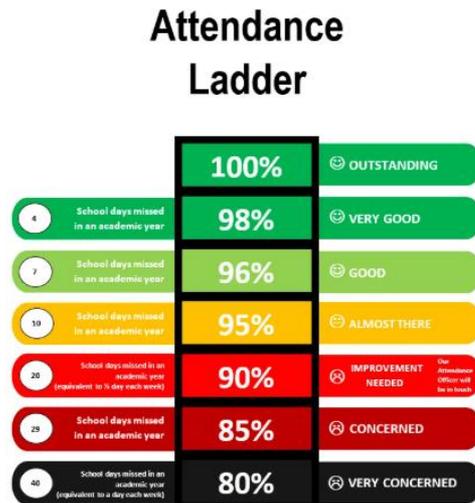
1. Remember that you are not alone in this. Keep calm and love your families.
2. Identify a Designated Attendance Lead to ensure "attendance is everyone's business".
3. Include uplifting, family-focused 'reasons to attend school' at the start of your policy.
4. Ensure staff roles around attendance begin with and focus on their positive contribution.
5. Consider the nature, frequency and visibility of recognition processes around attendance.
6. Use 'reset recognition' so every child has the chance for multiple 100% awards.
7. Capture data on improvements after intervention stages and share this in letters.
8. Simplify your attendance processes into an accessible flowchart for parents.
9. Rewrite standard attendance letters to emphasise collaborative intentions.
10. Words matter. Be adamant on what and what is not acceptable and ensure these.

10 minute break



www.hillingdon.gov.uk

Our Attendance Journey



OAK WOOD SCHOOL - 24 SEPTEMBER 2025

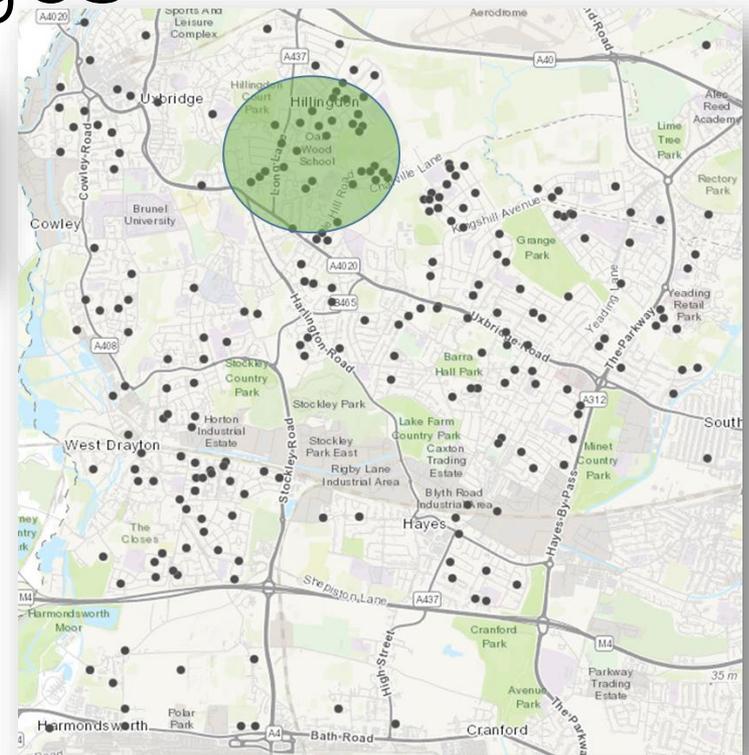


Context

Oak Wood School – Continuing the Improvement Journey

- Mixed comprehensive Foundation school in West London with 1292 pupils on roll including 185 in the Sixth Form
- 32.1% Pupil Premium, 2.5% EHCP and 9.5% SEND Support
- Attendance to school has improved 3 years in a row
- Last year the improvement in overall attendance was 1.6% (87.9% in 2022/23 to 89.5% in 2023/24)
- 7.2% reduction in persistent absence from school (39.1% in 2022/23 to 31.9% in 2023/24)
- This year (2024-25) attendance was 90.1% and persistent absence was 26.6%

Attendance Challenges



- Dec 2011 Much work has been done by leaders to address low levels of attendance; it is now broadly in line with the national average. However, a few pupils are persistently absent and the attendance of White British pupils continues to be a concern. Leaders are aware of this and are taking action to address this issue.
- Jun 2017 class and during recreation times. Attendance is still too low, particularly for White British boys, an issue identified during the last inspection.
- Nov 2018 Pupils' attendance and their punctuality are not good enough.
- Oct 2019 work closely with parents and pupils to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence so that both are at least in line with the national average for secondary schools
- May 2023 Levels of persistent absence remain high. This means that the continuity of some pupils' learning is adversely affected. Leaders should refine their approach to addressing persistent absence to ensure that they intervene as soon as possible.



Headline Information – Success Stories

- Attendance to school for our EHCP pupils in 2023-24 was 8.0% above the National Average (33 pupils)
 - 11.2% above National Average in Year 7
 - 11.7% above National Average in Year 8
 - 14.7% above National Average in Year 9
- Attendance to school for our EHCP pupils in 2024-25 was 3.4% above the National Average (35 pupils)
 - 0.8% above National Average in Year 8
 - 12.3% above National Average in Year 9
 - 16.7% above National Average in Year 9



Attendance Focus Groups

100% Group

- All pupils spoke about a good bedtime routine, going to be at 7-8pm, setting an alarm on a clock (not a phone), having a morning routine and getting prepared the night before. They also spoke about having this routine in place since the start of secondary school or during primary school
- Pupils spoke about the risk of missing a lesson and then not knowing what has gone on in the next lesson
- Some pupils spoke about the importance of coming to school for the social benefits
- Parents of all of these pupils have high expectations around attendance, and would check the pupil was ok, give them medicine and make them go to school to see how they feel later in the day
- Pupils really liked the idea of having their name on display for having 100% attendance for the previous week
- To improve attendance, pupils spoke about earning tickets/marbles across the course of the year that add up to an event

90-99% Group

- Pupils again spoke about a morning routine of an alarm, having equipment set out and leaving home at a similar time each day
- There was less confidence about the evening routine with this group, with pupils going to bed later than the 100% attendance group
- We spoke about why some pupils miss school. Pupils felt this was due to long travel distances, parents not challenging them on this and pupils staying up late
- We spoke about travel to school. 6 of the 7 pupils get a bus to school, with most of these journeys taking more than 30 minutes. One pupil has a journey on two buses of 1 hour 30 +
- This group spoke more about financial rewards/gifts for attendance than the other group, and were less keen on 95% badges/certificates

Below 89% Group

- Pupils spoke about historical attendance issues from primary school, with most of the group being around 90% throughout their time at school
- We spoke about morning routines. Some pupils did not have breakfast (4 of the 7), mainly because of the time it takes in the morning
- Less than half the group know their attendance and only some of the group track this on a regular basis
- Pupils would find it easy to have a day off school, and feel they could convince their parents/carers to allow them to stay at home tomorrow
- Pupils were not bothered about having their names displayed in assembly

Attendance Focus Groups

100% Group

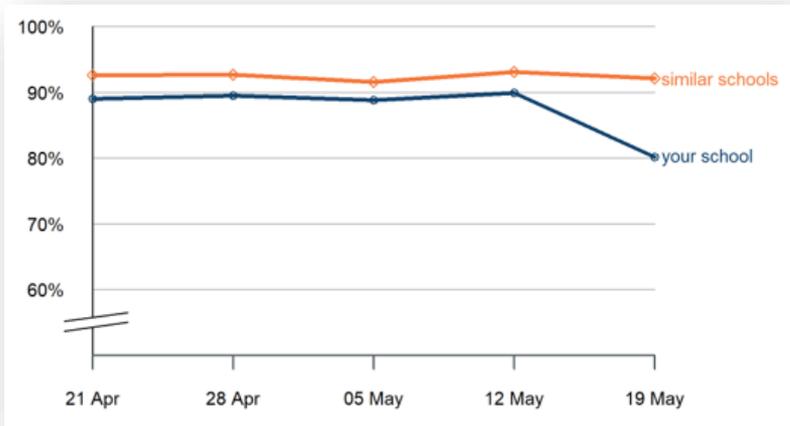
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Graph alternative: table of weekly attendance for the first half of the summer term 2024 to 2025.

Week start date	Attendance	Similar schools' median attendance
21/04/2025	89%	92.6%
28/04/2025	89.5%	92.7%
05/05/2025	88.8%	91.6%
12/05/2025	89.9%	93.1%
19/05/2025	80.2%	92.1%

Sources: [Monitor your school attendance results](#) for your school and similar schools, data from the DfE.

Attendance Case Study – Pupil A (Year 8 – LN) 2024-25

2023-24	Barriers	2024-25																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																													
<p>Attendance: 31.2% (end of year)</p> <p>Attendance marks (Attendance Year 2023/2024)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Week Beginning</th> <th>Mon AM</th> <th>Mon PM</th> <th>Tue AM</th> <th>Tue PM</th> <th>Wed AM</th> <th>Wed PM</th> <th>Thu AM</th> <th>Thu PM</th> <th>Fri AM</th> <th>Fri PM</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>01/09/2023</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>04/09/2023</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>11/09/2023</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>o</td></tr> <tr><td>18/09/2023</td><td>o</td><td>o</td><td>l</td><td>c</td><td>w</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>c</td><td>l</td><td>c</td></tr> <tr><td>25/09/2023</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>l</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>l</td><td>\</td></tr> 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style="list-style-type: none"> • Low self-esteem • Friendship issues • Mental health concerns • Overwhelmed by gaps in learning <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRP support • Parental meetings • Daily contact • Caught doing the right thing to build self-esteem and relationship • Support with options process • Spent time with pupil to listen to concerns/needs • Attendance contract • Reduced timetable • Review of sets and timetable • Daily check-ins by pastoral team • Positive attendance praised • Strategies shared with teaching staff 	<p>Attendance: 93.2% (end of year)</p> <p>Attendance marks (Attendance Year 2024/2025)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Week Beginning</th> <th>Mon AM</th> <th>Mon PM</th> <th>Tue AM</th> <th>Tue PM</th> <th>Wed AM</th> <th>Wed PM</th> <th>Thu AM</th> <th>Thu PM</th> <th>Fri AM</th> <th>Fri PM</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> 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Attendance Case Study – Pupil B (Year 9 – PD) 2024-25

2023-24							Barriers	2024-25																
Attendance: 86.4% (end of year)							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullying concerns Low self-esteem Friendship issues Mental health concerns Overwhelmed by gaps in learning 	Attendance: 96.6% (end of year)																
Week Beginning	Mon AM	Mon PM	Tue AM	Tue PM	Wed AM	Wed PM		Thu AM	Thu PM	Fri AM	Fri PM	Week Beginning	Mon AM	Mon PM	Tue AM	Tue PM	Wed AM	Wed PM	Thu AM	Thu PM	Fri AM	Fri PM		
01/09/2023	#	#	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	#	#	02/09/2024	#	#	Y3	Y3	L	/	/	/	/	L	L	
04/09/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	09/09/2024	/	/	L	L	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	
11/09/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	16/09/2024	/	/	/	L	L	/	/	/	/	L	L	
18/09/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	23/09/2024	/	/	/	L	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	
25/09/2023	L	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	30/09/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
02/10/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	07/10/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
09/10/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	14/10/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
16/10/2023	L	L	/	/	/	L	/	L	L	L	L	21/10/2024	/	/	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
23/10/2023	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	28/10/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
30/10/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	04/11/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
06/11/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11/11/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
13/11/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	18/11/2024	/	/	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
20/11/2023	/	/	/	/	/	/	#	#	#	#	#	25/11/2024	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	#	#	#	#	
27/11/2023	L	L	/	L	L	L	/	/	/	/	/	02/12/2024	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
04/12/2023	L	L	/	L	L	L	/	/	L	L	L	09/12/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
11/12/2023	/	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	16/12/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	o	o	
18/12/2023	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	23/12/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
25/12/2023	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	30/12/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
01/01/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	06/01/2025	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
08/01/2024	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	13/01/2025	#	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
15/01/2024	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	20/01/2025	/	/	/	/	/	L	/	/	/	/	/	/
22/01/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	27/01/2025	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
29/01/2024	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	03/02/2025	/	/	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
05/02/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	o	o	10/02/2025	/	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	o	
12/02/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	17/02/2025	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
19/02/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	24/02/2025	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	L	/	/	/	
26/02/2024	#	#	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	03/03/2025	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
04/03/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	L	/	/	/	10/03/2025	#	#	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
11/03/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	17/03/2025	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	L	/	/	/	
18/03/2024	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	24/03/2025	/	/	L	/	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	
25/03/2024	L	L	L	L	o	o	o	o	#	#	#	31/03/2025	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
01/04/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	07/04/2025	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
08/04/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	14/04/2025	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	
15/04/2024	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	/	/	/	/	21/04/2025	#	#	/	/	/	/	/	L	L	L	L	
22/04/2024	/	/	/	/	L	/	L	/	/	/	/	28/04/2025	L	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	o	o	o	



Attendance Case Study – Pupil C (Year 10 – RG) 2024-25

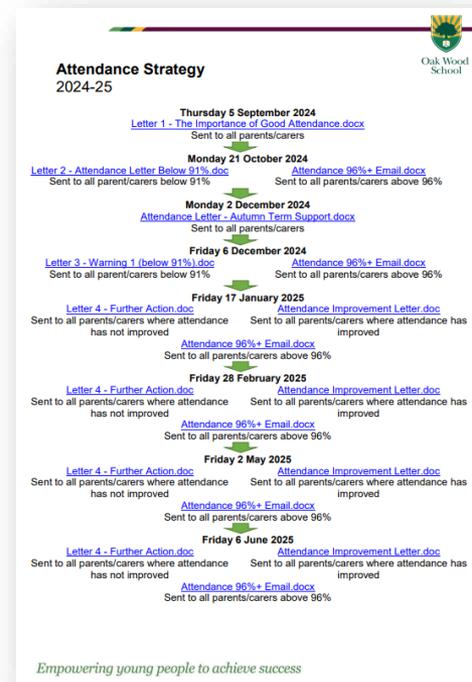
2023-24							Barriers	2024-25																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
Attendance: 57.5% (end of year)							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low self-esteem Friendship issues 	Attendance: 89.4% (end of year)																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
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Beginning	Mon		Tue		Wed		Thu		Fri			AM	PM	06/09/2023									#	#	04/09/2023	#	#	/	\	/	\	/	\	/	\	11/09/2023	/	\	/	\	/	\	/	\	/	\	18/09/2023	/	\	/	\	/	\	/	\	#	#	25/09/2023	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	02/10/2023	/	\	I	I	/	\	0	0	0	0	09/10/2023	/	\	/	\	/	\	0	0	0	0	16/10/2023	0	0	/	\	0	0	/	\	0	0	23/10/2023	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	30/10/2023	I	I	I	I	0	0	0	0	0	0	06/11/2023	0	0	/	\	0	0	/	\	0	0	13/11/2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20/11/2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	#	#	#	#	27/11/2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	04/12/2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	/	\	/	\	11/12/2023	/	\	/	\	I	I	/	\	/	\	18/12/2023	0	0	/	\	/	\	/	\	#	#	25/12/2023	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	01/01/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	08/01/2024	/	\	/	\	/	\	/	\	I	I	15/01/2024	/	\	/	\	I	I	I	I	/	\	22/01/2024	0	0	0	0	/	\	/	\	/	\	29/01/2024	0	0	0	0	/	\	/	\	/	\	05/02/2024	0	0	0	0	/	\	/	\	0	0	12/02/2024	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	19/02/2024	0	0	0	0	/	\	/	\	0	0	26/02/2024	0	0	/	\	/	\	/	\	0	0	04/03/2024	/	\	/	\	/	\	/	\	/	\	11/03/2024	0	0	/	\	/	\	0	0	/	\	18/03/2024	/	\	/	\	0	0	/	\	/	\	<p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental meetings Daily contact Attendance contract Reduced timetable Review of sets and timetable Daily check-ins by pastoral team Positive attendance praised Strategies shared with teaching staff 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Week Beginning</th> <th colspan="2">Mon</th> <th colspan="2">Tue</th> <th colspan="2">Wed</th> <th colspan="2">Thu</th> <th colspan="2">Fri</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>AM</th> <th>PM</th> <th>AM</th> <th>PM</th> <th>AM</th> <th>PM</th> <th>AM</th> <th>PM</th> <th>AM</th> <th>PM</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>06/09/2024</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>02/09/2024</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>Y3</td><td>Y3</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>09/09/2024</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>16/09/2024</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>23/09/2024</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>30/09/2024</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>07/10/2024</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>14/10/2024</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>21/10/2024</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td><td>/</td><td>\</td></tr> <tr><td>28/10/2024</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>#</td><td>#</td></tr> 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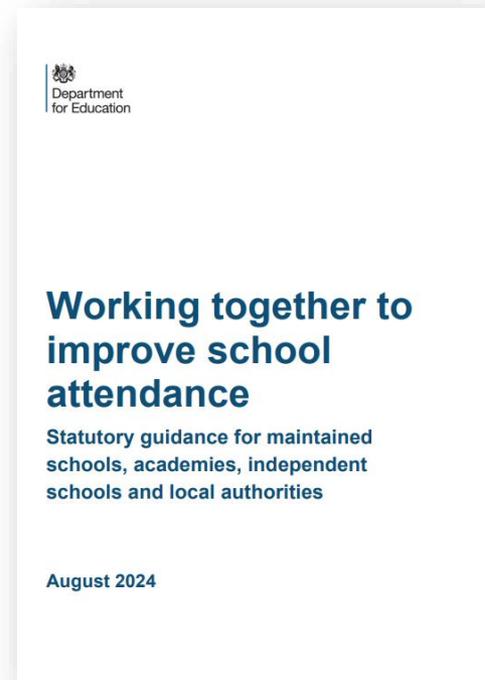
1 Attendance Strategy

- What action are you taking?
- What have you learned from last year?
- What can you learn from others?



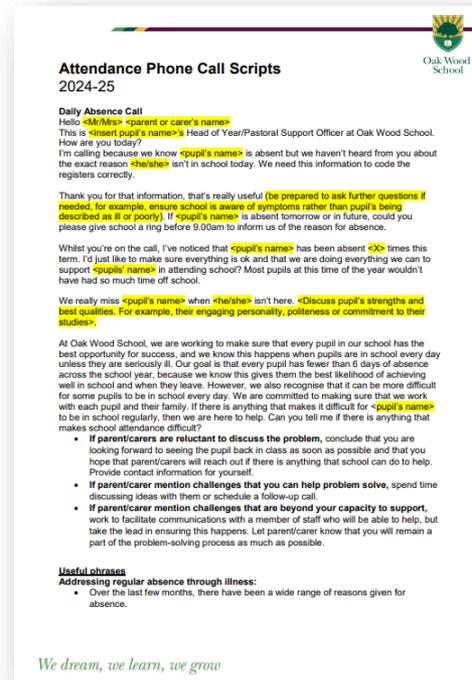
2 Deep Understanding of the Guidance

- What has changed in the guidance?
- Do your attendance/pastoral team know?
- What role does your LA take in improving attendance?



3 Communication Home

- Who calls home for your school?
- How consistent are these messages?
- What guidance do you have in place?



Attendance Phone Call Scripts
2024-25

Daily Absence Call
Hello <Mr/Ms> <parent or carer's name>
This is <insert pupil's name>'s Head of Year/Pastoral Support Officer at Oak Wood School.
How are you today?
I'm calling because we know <pupil's name> is absent but we haven't heard from you about the exact reason <he/she> isn't in school today. We need this information to code the registers correctly.

Thank you for that information, that's really useful. <be prepared to ask further questions if needed, for example, ensure school is aware of symptoms rather than pupil's being described as ill or poorly>. If <pupil's name> is absent tomorrow or in future, could you please give school a ring before 9.00am to inform us of the reason for absence.

Whilst you're on the call, I've noticed that <pupil's name> has been absent <XX> times this term. I'd just like to make sure everything is ok, and that we are doing everything we can to support <pupil's name> in attending school? Most pupils at this time of the year wouldn't have had so much time off school.

We really miss <pupil's name> when <he/she> isn't here. <Discuss pupil's strengths and best qualities>. For example, their engaging personality, politeness or commitment to their studies.

At Oak Wood School, we are working to make sure that every pupil in our school has the best opportunity for success, and we know this happens when pupils are in school every day unless they are seriously ill. Our goal is that every pupil has fewer than 6 days of absence across the school year, because we know this gives them the best likelihood of achieving well in school and when they leave. However, we also recognise that it can be more difficult for some pupils to be in school every day. We are committed to making sure that we work with each pupil and their family. If there is anything that makes it difficult for <pupil's name> to be in school regularly, then we are here to help. Can you tell me if there is anything that makes school attendance difficult?

- If <parent/carers are reluctant to discuss the problem>, conclude that you are looking forward to seeing the pupil back in class as soon as possible and that you hope that <parent/carers> will reach out if there is anything that school can do to help. Provide contact information for yourself.
- If <parent/carer mention challenges that you can help problem solve>, spend time discussing ideas with them or schedule a follow-up call.
- If <parent/carer mention challenges that are beyond your capacity to support>, work to facilitate communications with a member of staff who will be able to help, but take the lead in ensuring this happens. Let <parent/carer> know that you will remain a part of the problem-solving process as much as possible.

Useful phrases
Addressing regular absence through illness:

- Over the last few months, there have been a wide range of reasons given for absence.

We dream, we learn, we grow

4 Success Stories

- What success stories do you have across the school?
- What do these cases tell/show you?
- How do you share these with staff?



Oak Wood School

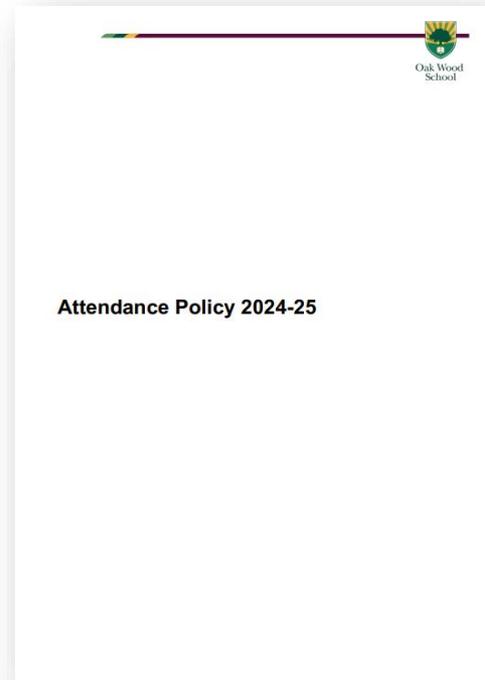
Attendance Case Study – Pupil A (Year 10 – RG) 2024-25

2023-24							Barriers	2024-25																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																										
Attendance: 57.5% (end of year)							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low self-esteem Friendship issues Mental health concerns Overwhelmed by gaps in learning <p style="text-align: center;">Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental meetings Daily contact Attendance contract Reduced timetable Review of sets and timetable Daily check-ins by pastoral team Positive attendance praised Strategies shared with teaching staff 	Attendance: 93.6% (26 Nov 2024)																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																										
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Empowering young people to achieve success

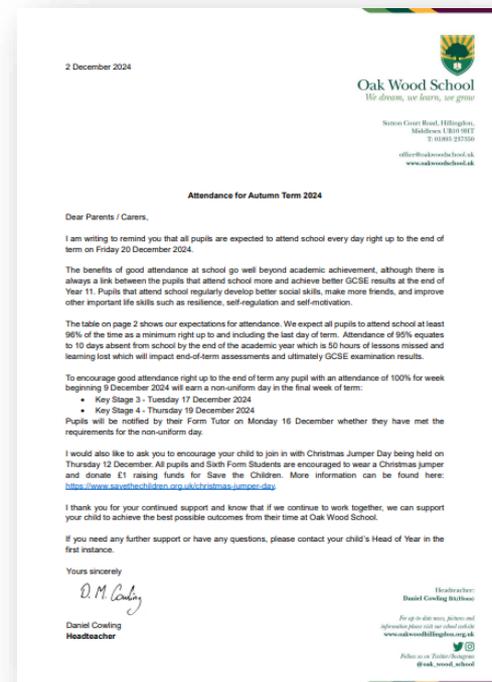
5 Attendance Policy

- What does your attendance communication look/sound like?
- Have you reviewed these?
- How often are these sent?



6 Attendance Letters

- What does your attendance communication look/sound like?
- Have you reviewed these?
- How often are these sent?



7 All Staff Support

- What role do all staff play in improving attendance?
- What does your attendance messaging look like?
- What contextual issues do you have (agency staff, etc)?

Attendance – Action Required

- If a pupil has been marked absent all day and arrives to your lesson

OR

- If a pupil has been marked present all day and does not arrive to your lesson

Email attendance@oakwoodschool.uk and cc in the relevant HoY and PSO

We dream, we learn, we grow



EVERY MARK MATTERS



The image shows a grid representing an attendance record. The grid has 10 columns and 10 rows. The top row is labeled 'EVERY MARK MATTERS'. The grid contains various marks: 'L' (absent), 'M' (present), 'O' (present), and 'S' (present). The marks are arranged in a pattern that suggests a specific attendance record for a group of pupils.

8 Use of Data (1)

- How are you measuring your progress?
- What does your data show you?
- What actions are you taking specific to this?

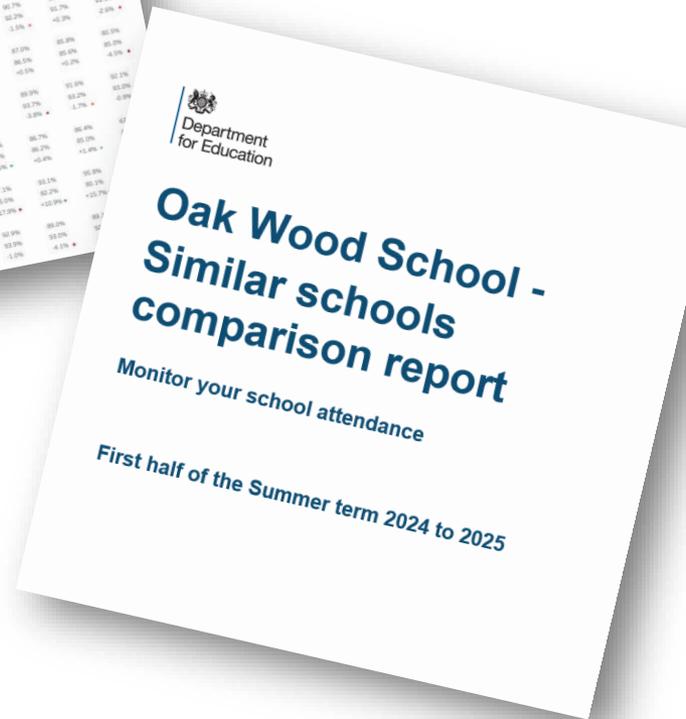
Last Updated	19-Jul-24
Pupils in Year Group	218
Current Attendance (%)	93.06
Attendance Target (%)	94.00
Current PA (%)	22.48
PA Target (%)	21.00
No. of pupils below 90%	49
No. of pupils between 85-90%	25
No. of pupils above 96%+	111

88.7	LAP	4	4	2	U	90.18%
88.7	MAP	5	5	4	5	93.65%
88.7	MAP	5	5	6	4	92.86%
88.7	LAP	4	4	U	3	93.92%
88.7	HAP	7	7	5	5	92.59%
88.7	MAP	4	4	4	4	90.48%
87.1	HAP	7	7	3	4	91.48%
87.1	LAP	4	4	4	1	97.35%
88.7	MAP	4	4	4	3	90.21%
88.7	MAP	7	7	5	5	98.15%
87.1	MAP	6	6	5	5	94.18%
87.1	MAP	7	7	3	4	90.48%
88.7	MAP	4	4	4	4	86.77%
87.1						-
88.7	MAP	4	4	3	3	94.71%
88.7	MAP			4	1	87.04%
87.1	MAP	4	4	4	4	93.12%
88.7	MAP	5	5	4	4	87.09%
88.7	HAP	6	6	5	5	89.54%
87.1	MAP	4	4	6	5	84.13%
87.1	MAP	4	4	5	3	93.92%

Total Minutes Late to Lesson by Period					
	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5
Year 7	19	372	98	342	77
Year 8	214	447	119	998	682
Year 9	1,650	399	1,640	1,712	1,652
Year 10	928	891	1,185	718	500
Year 11	594	1,599	4,805	1,859	1,359
Total	3,405	3,708	7,847	5,629	4,270

8 Use of Data (2)

- What platform do you use?
- Why is this showing you different data?
- How do you ensure that key staff understand the differences?





Improving Attendance – Ideas

- Speak to the pupils and find out the context of absence at your school
- Have the right people doing the right job(s)
- Make sure that you have a clear strategy
- Be clear with staff – what exactly are you asking them to do?
- Have a deep understanding of the guidance
- Consider how you communicate home
- Share success at every opportunity
- Put policy into practice
- Ensure that all staff are engaged
- Use data wisely
- Understand your context

Attendance



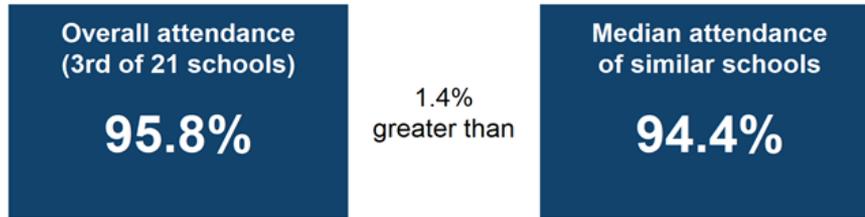
Whole School
Attendance

95.8%

Attendance

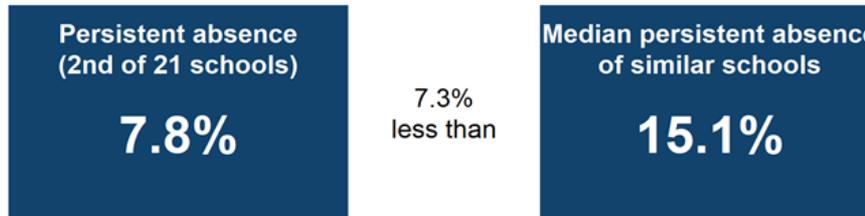
Grange Park Junior School

Overall attendance



Your overall attendance is 95.8% which is 1.4% greater than the median attendance of similar schools. You are ranked 3rd of 21 schools for attendance - meaning 18 similar schools have a lower overall attendance than your school.

Persistent Absence



Your persistent absence is 7.8% which is 7.3% less than the median attendance of similar schools. You are ranked 2nd of 21 schools for persistent absence - meaning 19 similar schools have a higher rate of persistent absence than your school.



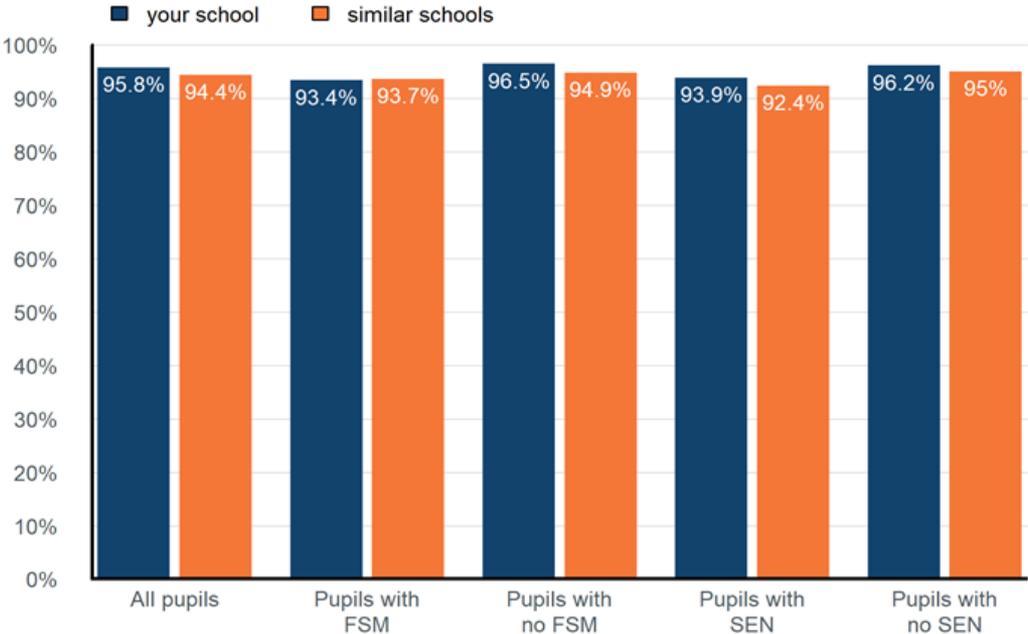
Areas of relative strength

We have identified three areas where your school is performing comparatively well.

1. Your attendance on Wednesday mornings was **96.6%**, which is higher than 20 out of 20 similar schools.
2. Your attendance on Thursday mornings was **96.5%**, which is higher than 20 out of 20 similar schools.
3. Your attendance on Friday mornings was **95.7%**, which is higher than 20 out of 20 similar schools.

Pupil group comparison

Figure 2: Bar chart showing attendance percentage for pupils with and without free school means (FSM) and special educational needs (SEN) compared to similar schools. Results are for pupils in years 1 to 6 from the start of the academic year 2024 to 2025, up to Friday 30 May 2025.





Graph alternative: table of attendance for different pupil groups from the start of the academic year 2024 to 2025, up to Friday 30 May 2025.

Pupil group	Your Attendance	Similar schools' median attendance
All pupils	95.8%	94.4%
Pupils with free school meals (FSM)	93.4%	93.7%
Pupils with no FSM	96.5%	94.9%
Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support	93.9%	92.4%



Areas to focus on

We have identified one area where similar schools have managed to achieve a higher attendance rate. If you can match their achievements in this area, then your overall attendance rate would increase from **95.8%** to **96%** and the proportion of your pupils who are persistently absent would remain unchanged. The fact that there is only one area in this section indicates that across most areas, attendance at your school is equal or higher than most schools similar to yours. Most schools are given three areas to focus on.

1. The attendance of your pupils eligible for free school meals was **93.4%**, which is lower than at least a quarter of similar schools. If you increased attendance for pupils eligible for free school meals to **94.2%**, then your overall attendance would increase by **0.2** percentage points and your overall persistent absence percentage would drop by **0.5** percentage points.



My vision for education:

- Grange Park School is a wonderful place to learn, achieve and thrive. With excellent teaching and an engaging, ambitious curriculum that meets the interests of the school community, we are committed to help every child be secondary ready – academically and socially. We want to aspire for our children to be the leaders of tomorrow, equipped to succeed in the 21st century.

What do we do?

- 1) An attendance officer who speaks Punjabi – Punjabi pupils are our biggest group and they make up most of our PA children.
- 2) Our Attendance officer is on the playground every morning, along with senior leaders and the pastoral team.
- 3) It is only the Attendance Officer who deals with attendance and wherever possible, conversations are face to face. We don't give out exceptional leave forms. If parents want to go abroad this is discussed first.
- 4) Our Attendance officer makes immediate phonecalls daily – an opportunity for personalised conversations to gain an insight and understanding.
- 5) We authorise very little. We have a consistent approach.
- 6) We try to build positive and open relationships with parents of children who are poor attenders.
- 7) Make referrals to social care for children who do not attend as they should under educational neglect.
- 8) Targeted interventions for vulnerable pupils, e.g. PA children.
- 9) We focus on the curriculum so it becomes the reason children want to come to school everyday. Teaching and learning pedagogy is at the heart of our CPD.
- 10) We built a sense of belonging for our children – they knew the school inside out...
- 11) We celebrate good class attendance weekly and then at the end of year we celebrate individuals who have achieved 100%.



Tracking

Persistent Absentees, below 90%

Period: 04/09/2024 to 13/01/2025

Reg	% Attend	Reasons:
3B	49	Part-time timetable
3L	50	Part-time timetable
6S	64.10	Other, relocated out of Borough
5P	66.03	left 2/12/24 relocated to Redhill, still on roll, awaiting new school
6S	67.95	illness / other
4K	67.95	Abroad
4K	69.23	illness / other
6P	75	illness
3B	77.56	illness / medical
5P	78.33	illness / previously part-time timetable
3L	79.49	medical
5F	82.05	Abroad
6C	84.62	Abroad
4M	84.62	Abroad
6K	85.26	Abroad
5N	85.26	illness
4M	85.90	Abroad
4M	87.18	Abroad
4M	87.82	illness
6C	87.82	Abroad
3E	88.46	illness / other
4K	88.46	Abroad
5F	88.46	Abroad
6S	89.74	Abroad
6K	89.74	Abroad
5F	89.74	illness
5F	89.74	illness
6K	89.74	Abroad
4D	89.74	Abroad
5N	89.74	Abroad

Clubs 2024- 2025 Autumn Term:

	Number of pupils	Number of PP
Year 3	28	4/18
Year 4	27	4/13
Year 5	29	8/23
Year 6	38	15/21

Number of spaces taken: 176

Number of pupil participants: 124

Number of PP participants: 31/75

Percentage of PP participants: 41%

Autumn 2024-2025

	Number of pupils	Year group(s)	Selection process	PP	SEND
School Council	13	KS2	Election	2	1
Head Pupils	3	6	Interview	1	0
JTAs	13	KS2	Teacher choice	10	1
Well-Being Buddies	13	KS2	Teacher choice	3	3
Sports Crew	13	KS2	PE lead choice	2	0
House Captains	8	6	Election	1	0

Number on roll : 369 -
 Attendance : 95.8 % ↑
 Y3: 95 % ↓
 Persistent Absence : 93.23 % ↑ (2.5 / 7.1) ↑
 PP Attendance 93.33 % ↑
 SEN EHCP - 83.51 % ↑
 SEN support - 94.92 % ↑
 Pupil Premium - 78 chn - 21 %
 SEN support - 52 chn
 EAL - 319 chn

An individual case

- Child A's attendance 2023-2024 – 66.4%
- Child A's attendance 2024-2025 – 87.6%



Context:

Child A displayed low level behaviour, struggled to maintain friendships and was working below age related expectations. Mum had health issues and suffered from poor mental health. She did not live with dad and the children spread their time between the two households with poor communication between the two parents.

How did we ensure his attendance improved?:

- Regular door knocks and we called the police when required
- Referrals to Social Care
- Face to face meeting with mum where we showed his learning. Face to face meetings with both parents.
- The Pastoral Manager built a strong relationship with her and in turn we increased her friendship circle through parent wellbeing mornings which this mum attended.
- Consistent communication with the attendance officer. Her efforts were acknowledged when she brought the children in consistently and the pastoral officer checked in with her about her own wellbeing. Mum is now open about her own struggles and she actively seeks our staff out when she would like support for her mental health.
- The child had a student leadership role as a wellbeing buddy for other children. He was also part of the Performing Arts Club and had a lead role in the end of term production. Furthermore he took part in weekly stay and play sessions with the pastoral manager. There were daily check ins too.
- Child A has now settled into Year 6. He is engaging in his learning. He is happier and sustaining friendships which is leading to healthier relationships with staff and children alike. He has little to no low level behaviour. We hope by the end of year 6 he will be Secondary ready, both academically and socially.

Guidance

Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance

Updated 19 August 2024

Supporting School Attendance –
Reflection and Planning Tool

- making sure communications on attendance are timely and regular - talk about emerging attendance patterns early
- using the child's name with accurate data specific to them rather than generalising
- framing absences in lessons missed - a key insight from the research was that percentages can be less clear when describing the impact of absence
- that parents said new or surprising information resonated most with them
- using the [school attendance data tool](#) to identify the number of sessions or days a child has missed and any patterns in their absences
- adopting positive, future focused messaging which encourages parents and carers to consider the wider social benefits of school for the overall wellbeing of their child
- highlighting the support benefits of school beyond academic benefits
- naming and providing contact details of specific people in school who can help address attendance barriers
- being careful about generalising when describing children and young people's feelings and experiences
- balancing a firm, factual tone with empathy
- avoiding unevidenced or unrealistic claims
- providing clear reminders of your school's policy relating to absence and guidance such as:
 - [Is my child too ill for school?](#)
 - [everything you need to know about school attendance](#)
 - [school attendance and absence](#)



You could also consider whether it might be suitable to use different communication channels. For example, a phone call may be better for a parent or carer:

- whose first language isn't English
- who has a disability affecting their ability to engage with written communication

Some parents or carers may feel less prepared to challenge children when thinking about whether they should attend school. Consider messages that encourage parents and carers to explore whether there are any other factors influencing their child's absence.

Impact of our work on attendance on the whole school -It goes beyond attendance

- More open conversations with parents built on mutual trust which has led to better relationships between key parents and school staff
- Parents have an excellent knowledge of our Attendance policy and what constitutes good attendance
- Even this September we are already showing positive attendance figures and excellent punctuality. Very low levels of lateness and all gates are shut by 8.55am.

Junior Travel Ambassadors



The Power of Everyday Heroes



Break for Lunch

Please return to your tables by 1.10 pm



www.hillingdon.gov.uk



Hillingdon Achievement for All Attendance Conference

Monitoring and evaluating data to target interventions on identified groups

Dr Keven Bartle – SSAT Senior Education Lead



Session Outline

- Research on absence data and interventions
- Accurate, timely and thoughtful data
- Focused, nuanced and tenacious support
- Some quick-ish wins and a final thought

SSAT Research Summary and Synthesis

Post-2019 Research on Attendance and Punctuality

February 2024



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Ofsted – <i>Securing Good Attendance and Tackling Persistent Absence</i> – February 2022	5-6
Department for Education – <i>Working Together to Improve School Attendance</i> – May 2022	7-8
Department for Education – <i>Toolkit for schools: Communicating with families to support attendance</i> - September 2023	9
Department for Education – <i>School attendance hubs</i>	10-11
Education Endowment Foundation – <i>Attendance Interventions: Rapid Evidence Assessment</i> – March 2022	12-15
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Children's Commissioner – <i>Reports on attendance in 2022 and 2023</i>	17-18
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Public First – <i>Listening to, and learning from, parents in the attendance crisis</i> – September 2023	19
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The Centre for Social Justice – <i>The Missing Link: Restoring the bond between schools and families</i> – January 2024	21
ImpactED – <i>Understanding Attendance: Findings on the drivers of pupil absence</i> – January 2024	22
Selected academic research papers on attendance since 2019	23-26

Moodley, R. et al. (2020) 'Using data mining in educational administration: A case study on improving school attendance'. *Applied Sciences*, Vol 10(9), p.3116.

Finning, K. et al. (2020) 'Secondary school practitioners' beliefs about risk factors for school attendance problems: a qualitative study'. *Emotional and behavioural difficulties*, Vol 25(1), pp.15-28.

Eklund, K., et al (2022) 'Addressing chronic absenteeism in schools: A meta-analysis of evidence-based interventions'. *School Psychology Review*, Vol. 51(1), pp.95-111

Keamey, C.A. et al (2022) 'School attendance and school absenteeism: A primer for the past, present, and theory of change for the future'. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 7)

Klein, M. & Sosu, E. M. (2023) 'School attendance and academic achievement: understanding variation across family socioeconomic status'. *American Sociological Association*, pp.1-18.

McDonald, B. et al (2023) 'School attendance problems in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic – A multiple stakeholder qualitative study with parents and professionals'. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 93(1), pp.386-401.

SSAT's 'best bets' for school attendance leads: *What schools can learn from recent research findings on attendance and punctuality*

27

Prioritise accurate data collection, rapid data analyses, and thoughtful data evaluation processes to enable timely, focused, and nuanced responses.

- a) Use data to identify at-risk students, with a particular focus on identifying those who have multiple intersecting characteristics that are correlated with risk factors.
- b) Place value on data that helps pre-empt attendance issues, or helps leaders see need for early intervention, as well as data on those needing targeted and responsive support.
- c) Ensure analysis of historic school, as well as student and group, patterns and trends such as start of term and year attendance, problematic sessions, year group transitions.

Provide support for those with the most pressing attendance and punctuality needs that is individualised, timely, nuanced, and tenacious.

- a) Ensure high levels of consistency in staff engagement with persistent and severe absence cases, through coherence of philosophy, training, data usage, and communication style.
- b) Know your school's and families' key drivers of absence and lateness to prioritise efficient resourcing of enhanced work with children for improved attendance and punctuality.
- c) Be persistent in brokering multiagency collaboration and signposting for at risk pupils, building provision through engaging your community's assets, including pupils.

Education Endowment Foundation: Supporting School Attendance



Evidence and resources

1. Build a holistic understanding of pupils and families, and diagnose specific needs

Get to know your pupils, their families, their influences, and their specific challenges.



Evidence and resources

2. Build a culture of community and belonging for pupils

Make sure pupils feel seen, understood, and safe.



Evidence and resources

3. Communicate effectively with families

Design effective communication strategies.



Evidence and resources

4. Improve universal provision for all pupils

Utilise teacher professional development.



Evidence and resources

5. Deliver targeted interventions to supplement universal provision

Personalise approaches to meet the needs of individual pupils.



Evidence and resources

6. Monitor the impact of approaches

Determine the effectiveness of an approach.



Research from 2024-2025 about data analysis and interventions

- *DfE 2025*: The higher the 5% attendance band, the more chance of success
- *EPI 2025*: Pupil absence is a key, and growing, driver of the disadvantage gap
- *IFG 2025*: Watch the data like a hawk, evaluate and adapt
- *IPPR 2025*: Use data to develop a strategic response to all children's needs
- *NFER 2025*: Strengthen pastoral support and support for missed lessons
- *EPI 2025*: Prioritise training in child development and different types of SEND
- *Youth Endowment Fund 2025*: Enhance targeting of interventions after suspensions.
- *Nuffield 2024*: Underprivileged in most need of assistance through targeted support



Data: Accuracy, timeliness, thoughtfulness

- A holistic approach to attendance data
- Proactivity around intersection of needs
- Making targets smarter for challenging times



Case Study A – Context

- 11-18 in rural East of England.
- 21.4% FSM6
- 8.4% SEN Support
- Attendance 90.4%
- Ofsted March 2024 (judged good). The school was seen to analyse attendance carefully and remove barriers to pupil attendance with intensive support.



Case Study A – Positives

- The school makes use of FFT attendance comparative data.
- First day absence processes and absence coding in line with statutory guidance.
- Attendance concerns on CPOMs – standing agenda item on pastoral/SG meetings.
- Sanctions and reward systems are clearly communicated and used effectively.
- Part-time timetables are used rarely and are temporary, in line with guidance.



Case Study A – Areas for Development

- No link governor or clear relationship with the Trust for monitoring attendance.
- Attendance is monitored on spreadsheets that do not connect with the schools MIS.
- The tracker works across years 7-11, but sixth form not using the same process.
- Absence data is monitored half-termly by pastoral leaders.
- Tutors felt that too many prescribed activities prevent them from addressing attendance.

Spreadsheets versus Management Information Systems

When to use which:

Spreadsheets:

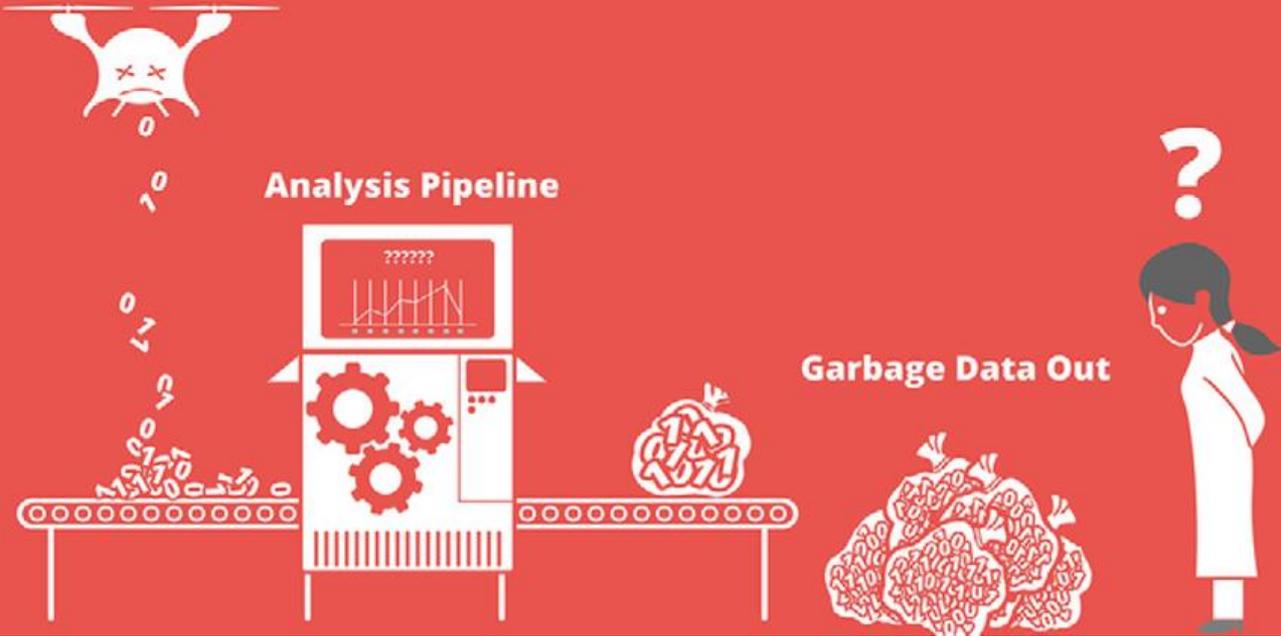
Use spreadsheets for simple data entry, calculation, and analysis of smaller datasets.

Management Information Systems:

Use MIS for **complex**, **large-scale** data management and analysis, where **scalability**, **data integrity**, **security**, and **collaboration** are important.

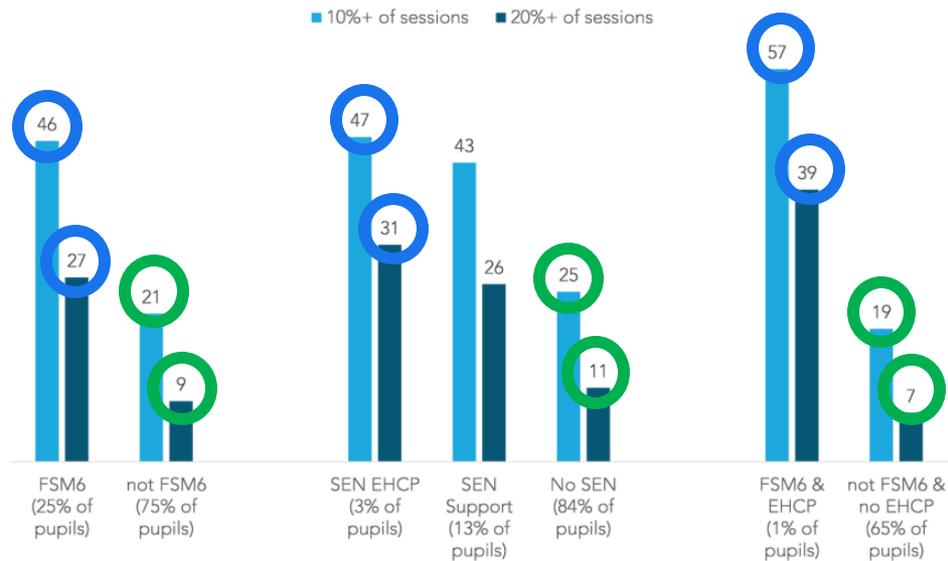


Garbage Data In



The intersection of risks to good attendance

% Year 11 pupils missing 10%+ and 20%+ of sessions by characteristic
Attendance Tracker mainstream schools, Autumn and Spring Terms 2023/24



The intersection of risks to good attendance

% pupils persistently absent in Year 7 by Year 6 absence and disadvantage
Attendance Tracker schools, 23/24 full year and 24/25 Aut and Spr

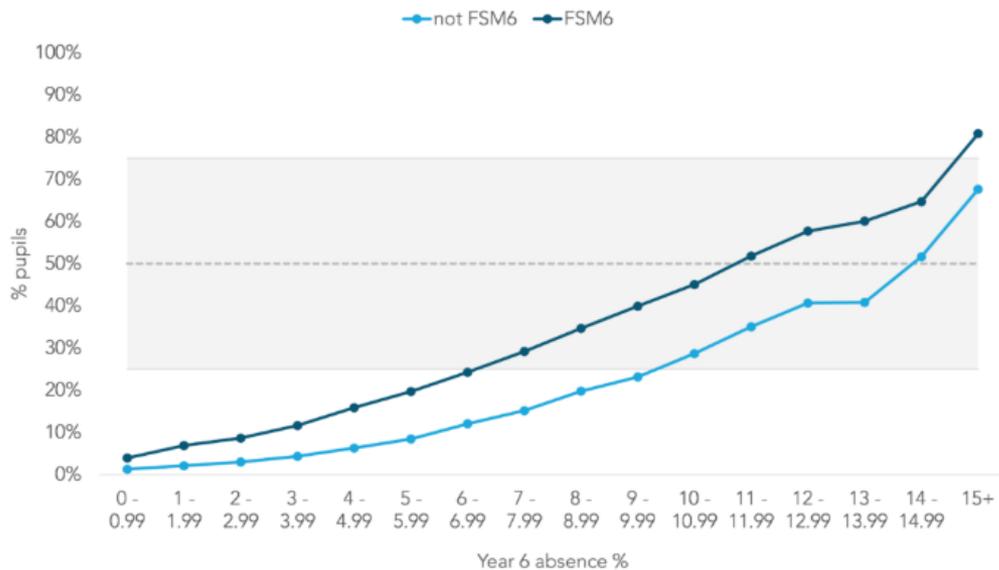
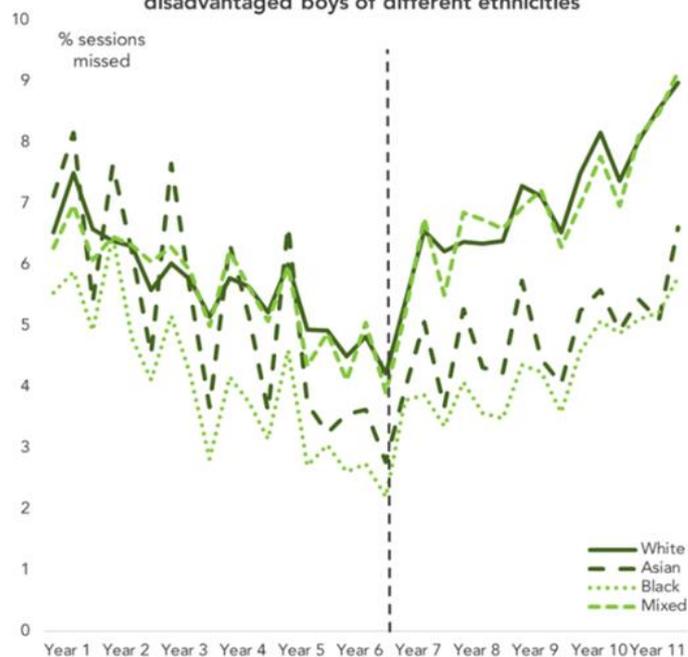


Figure 2. Absence rates amongst high-achieving disadvantaged boys of different ethnicities





Most reliable predictors of future absence concerns

1. Disadvantage
2. SEND
 - Which are more prevalent in your school?
 - Any other key groups in your school?
3. Prior absence
4. Health issues
5. Family dynamics
 - Do you have MIS defined groups for pupils...
 - With two or more of these attributes?
 - With siblings with high absence?
 - Already identified as SG concern?
 - With previous PA or SA (inc primary)?
6. School environment

Audit Tool Question

How often we monitor the attendance and punctuality data of pupils in the following groups. (Weekly, monthly, half-termly, termly, annually, never)

- Whole school
- Classes
- Year groups
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Pupil Premium
- SEND
- [Prior absence](#)
- Looked after status
- [Individuals by multiple risk](#)

SSAT's Attendance and Punctuality Audit Tool



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DfE Statutory Guidance on Monitoring Attendance – Paragraph 45

- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This should go beyond headline attendance percentages and should look at individual pupils, cohorts and year groups (including their punctuality) across the school to help schools achieve their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty. When analysing patterns, some schools, especially secondary schools, may wish to look further into patterns of attendance within a session to ensure all pupils are attending all timetabled lessons.
- Use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Undertake frequent individual level analysis to identify the pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases. This should not just focus on persistent and severe absence, but look at all severities of absence to identify pupils who can be supported earlier before patterns become entrenched.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This should include analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Benchmark their attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data. This may, for example, include pupils in a year group with higher than average absence or pupils eligible for free school meals if their attendance falls behind that of their more advantaged peers.
- Monitor in the data the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented. The findings should then be used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.
- Provide data and reports to support the work of the board or governing body, as set out in [chapter 3](#).

78. All trusts and governing bodies should provide support and challenge to their schools around current trends on attendance in the school community, by:

- Regularly reviewing attendance data at board meetings. This should include thorough examination of recent and historic trends at a school level as well as benchmarking to comparator schools within the trust, local authority area, region and nationwide.
- Paying particular attention to attendance of pupil cohorts within their school(s) that have historically had poor attendance or that face entrenched barriers to attendance. This should be specific to the school's context, but may include pupils who have a social worker, are from a background or ethnicity where attendance has historically been low, have a long-term medical condition, special educational needs or a disability, or are eligible for free school meals.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those focus areas.

79. In addition, for schools that are struggling with their attendance, academy trust boards and governing bodies of maintained schools should work with school leaders to develop a comprehensive attendance action plan to improve attendance. This should be evaluated and reviewed regularly. This may form part of a wider school improvement plan, including where appropriate school-to-school support from system leaders.

80. Multi-academy trusts and governing bodies of federations may also wish to hold termly attendance review meetings with each individual school and/or ask them to report on their attendance at defined intervals.

Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 1: Based on the 'data quality characteristics' shown here, and the issue of data protection regulations, what are the key challenges for your school? What steps can you take to more fully integrate absence data analysis with your existing MIS capability?



Audit Tool Question

13. We have the following targets/KPIs for whole school levels of attendance, authorised absence, unauthorised absence, persistent absence and severe absence.

Enter your answer

14. We also set specific and realistic targets/KPIs for the attendance of the following groups (select all that apply).

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classes | <input type="checkbox"/> SEND status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Year groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Prior attendance concerns |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demographic groups (e.g. gender, ethnicity) | <input type="checkbox"/> Looked after status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil premium eligibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with multiple risk factors |

SSAT's Attendance and Punctuality Audit Tool



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Attendance Target 95%



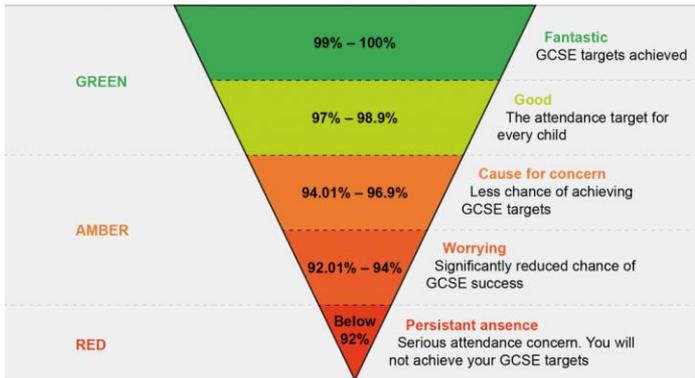
Our Attendance Target



The Attendance Target is:

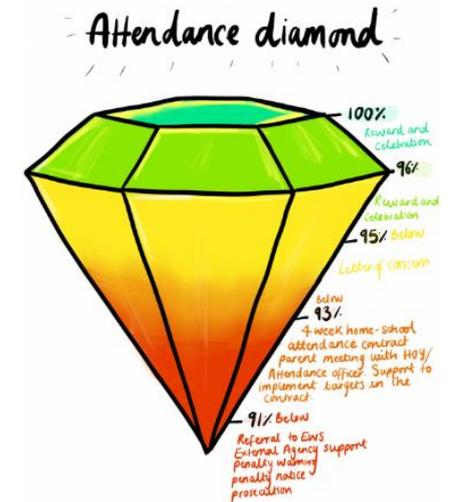
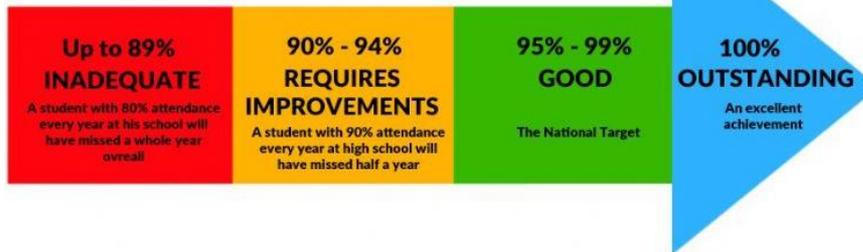
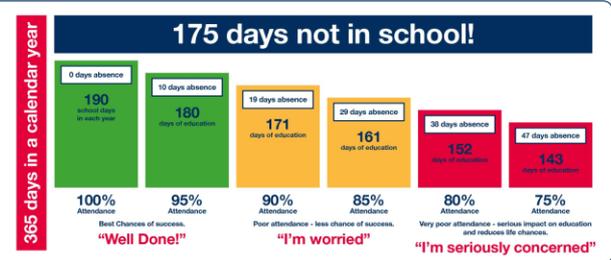
100%

The greater the attendance, the greater the achievement



Good attendance means...

Being in school at least 95% of the time or 180 to 190 days



How can schools have smarter attendance targets?

Trends: We will reduce the amount of unauthorised absence by at least 2% this year.

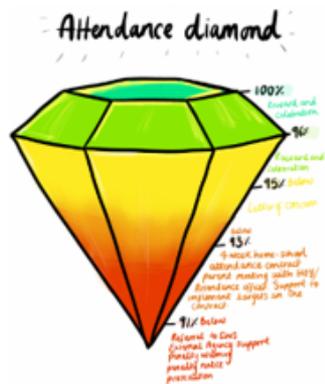
Relative performance: We will improve attendance so it is in the top 10% of local schools.

Cohorts: We will improve attendance of vulnerable students by increasing targeted support.

Processes: We will improve our use of MIS to capture absence interventions and impact.

Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 2: As well as data targets around attendance outcomes, what data targets could your school have around trends in attendance, relative performance to other schools, cohort targets for intersectional groups, or process targets for absence management?



Trend targets:

Relative performance targets:

Cohort targets:

Process targets:

Support: Focused, nuanced, tenacious

- Over-provision of 'support'
- Under-provision of 'support'
- Learning from SEND provision

Case Study C – Context

- 11-18 school in suburban Merseyside.
- 13.2% FSM6
- Attendance at 90.69%
- Previous inspection in March 2022 judged to be good: no mention of attendance.



Case Study C – Key Findings

The audit and visit showed that the school uses of part-time timetables.

- One HoY had three students currently studying part time for MH and SEND issues.
- No end date or review – most had lasted at least six months.

The school has 'planned provision' that some students can leave lessons to meet wellbeing needs.

- "A quarter of my students have exit passes"
- "I can't remember the last lesson where all students remained in class".

There is a lot of school-sanctioned absence, from school and from lessons.

- Expectation from pupils and families they should be given time off lessons or school.
- Subject leaders were concerned about the impact on future outcomes.
- Internal truancy from lessons had increased, influenced by the planned provision.



Guidance on mental health responses and part-time timetables

Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with additional support.

54. Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

66. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

Audit Tool Question

Our policy and/or processes clearly outline “*who does what and when*” in the following instances around pupil attendance rates.

- At risk of falling below 95% attendance
- Falling below 95% attendance
- At risk of falling below 90% attendance
- Falling below 90% attendance
- At risk of falling below 50% attendance
- Falling below 50% attendance

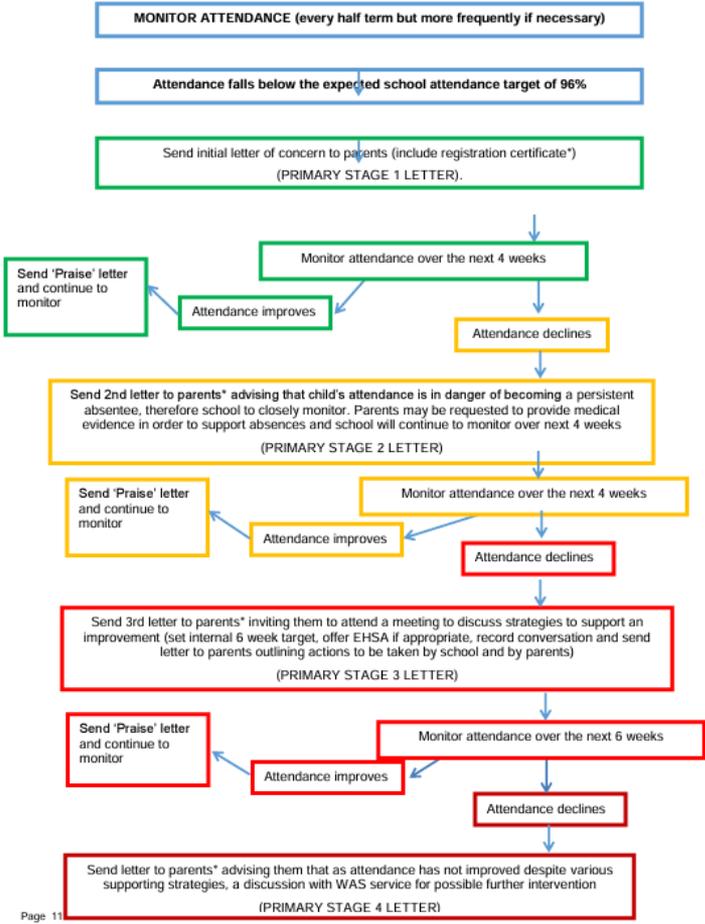
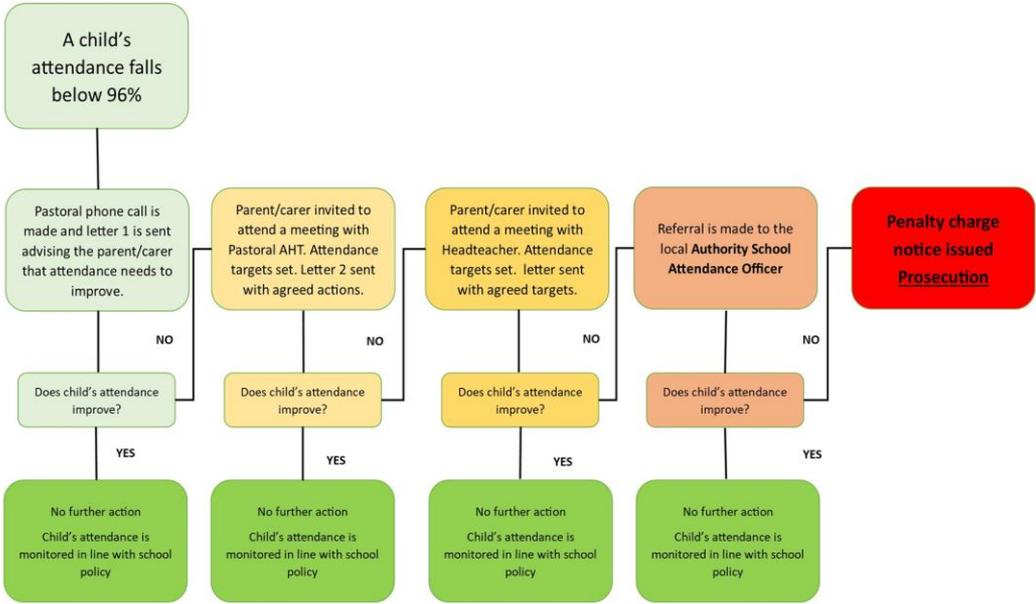
SSAT's Attendance and Punctuality Audit Tool



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Absence Management Flowcharts





Some common failings with absence management flowcharts

- Based upon the 'flow' towards parental sanctions.
- Meetings seen as an intervention, rather than information gathering.
- Greater staff seniority is often seen as an intervention.
- They rarely indicate specific targeted interventions.
- "No further action" flows from improvement (prior low attendance is a risk factor).



Case Study D – Context

- 11-18 school in the urban North-West (non-selective in selective region)
- 40.3% FSM6
- Attendance at 87.1%
- Declining attendance over three years
- Last published inspection from November 2021 judged as requiring improvement. The work of leaders to improve attendance had led to small improvements for some pupils.



Case Study D – Attendance panels as interventions

- Morning registers are open for 70 minutes.
- Different houses have different systems around attendance.
- Pastoral leaders not involved in 'attendance panel' meetings.
- Subject leads are uncertain of expectations.
- Tutors do not know how to record the outcomes of attendance discussions.
- 'Attendance panel' data is not analysed for common challenges.
- Absence of students after panel meetings is not captured.

Attendance Support Plans

ATTENDANCE PANEL MEETING ACTION PLAN

Pupil Name: _____
 Tutor Group: _____
 Date of attendance panel: _____

Pupil perspective. (reasons the pupil is giving for absences)	% attendance including any trends and recurring patterns.
Parent perspective.	Possible issues preventing attendance. (family situation, educational history, support agencies involved etc)
Specific needs (SEN/Vulnerable Status/Medical)	

Attendance Action Plan

Name	
What is your current attendance?	
How many days have you had off?	
What is your attendance target for the year?	93%
What does that look like?	13 days off

What does your attendance look like?	
I am late in the mornings	
I have had one long absence	
I have had lots of little absences	
I miss a couple of days at school every week	
I miss the same day(s) off school	
Fill in anything else you notice about your absence	

Tick the boxes that explain your attendance			
I have been on holiday	I can't be bothered to come to school sometimes	I stay up too late sometimes	I don't like my lessons on some days
I don't come to school when I fall out with my friends	I truant from school	I oversleep	I am allowed to stay at home when I want
I don't like my teachers on some days	I don't like being in school	I don't come in when I owe homework	I don't come in when I have a detention/ Exclusion Room
I don't come in when I have a test	I don't come in when I am worried about something		
I have had a long illness.		I have had lots of little illnesses	

What do your parents/ carers say when you say that you're not going to school?

What effect is your attendance having on your grades?

Attendance Support Plans

Attendance Support Plan

Student Name: _____ Date: _____ Staff Member: _____ Current Attendance: ____% Unauthorised Absences: ____% Authorised Absences: ____% Interventions Used Previously: _____				
	Student Comments	Parent Comments	Staff Comments:	Strategies for Improvement:
What prevents _____ from coming to school?				Short term: Long term:
How does _____ feel about missing school?				Short term: Long term:
What impact is missing school having on _____?				Short term: Long term:

Name of Student: _____
 Tutor Group: _____
 Date: _____
 Present Attendance % = _____ Number of Sessions = _____ Unauthorised absence = _____

What attendance issues exist presently?

 Which Agencies have been involved to support the Student and Family?

What has the school done so far to support the student and the family?

 What have the Family tried to do to encourage better attendance?

Target Attendance _____ Sessions _____
 By When? _____
 Actions Required by Student:
 Actions Required by Parent:
 Actions Required by the School:

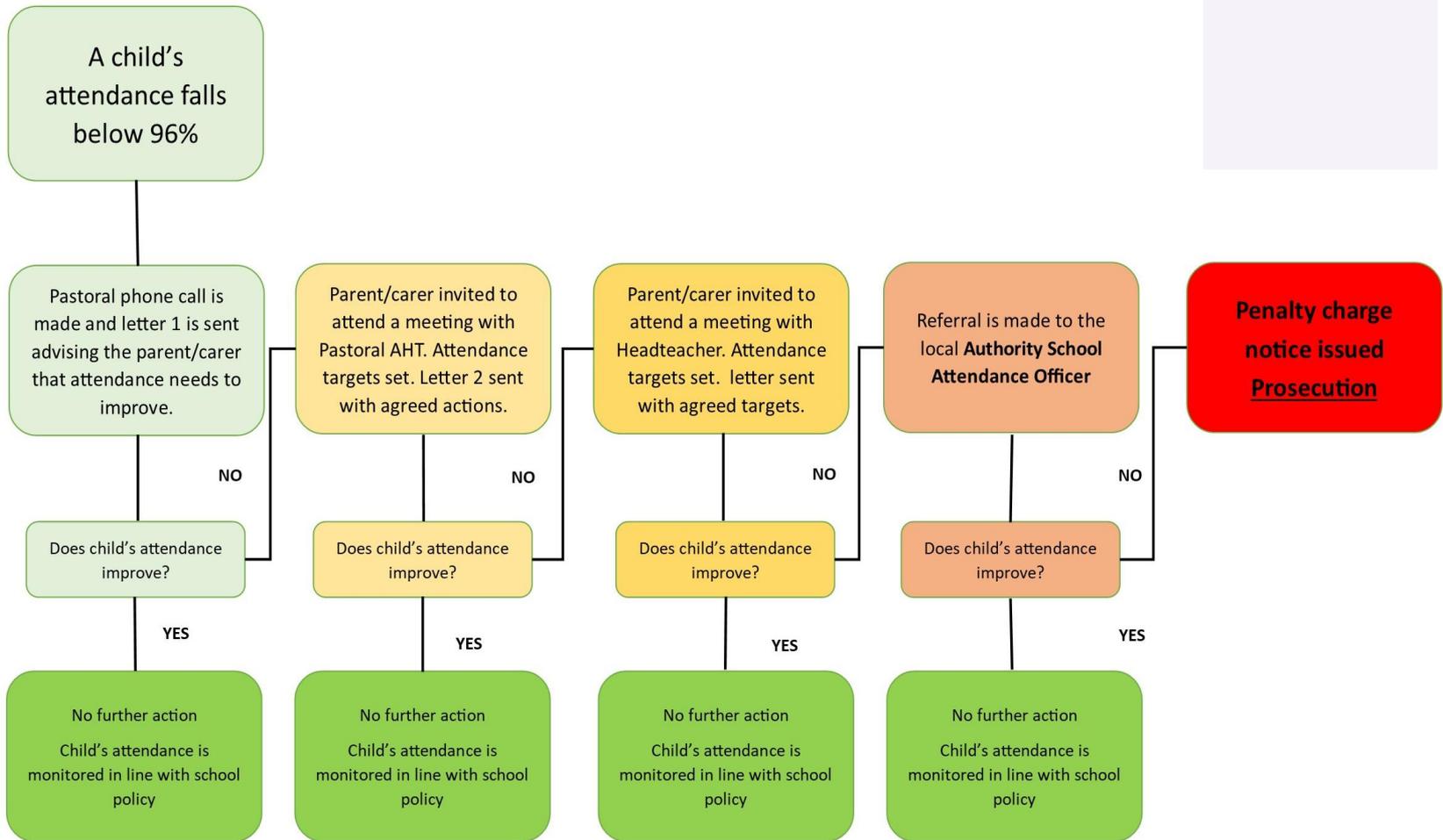
Assessment and Review
 Date: _____

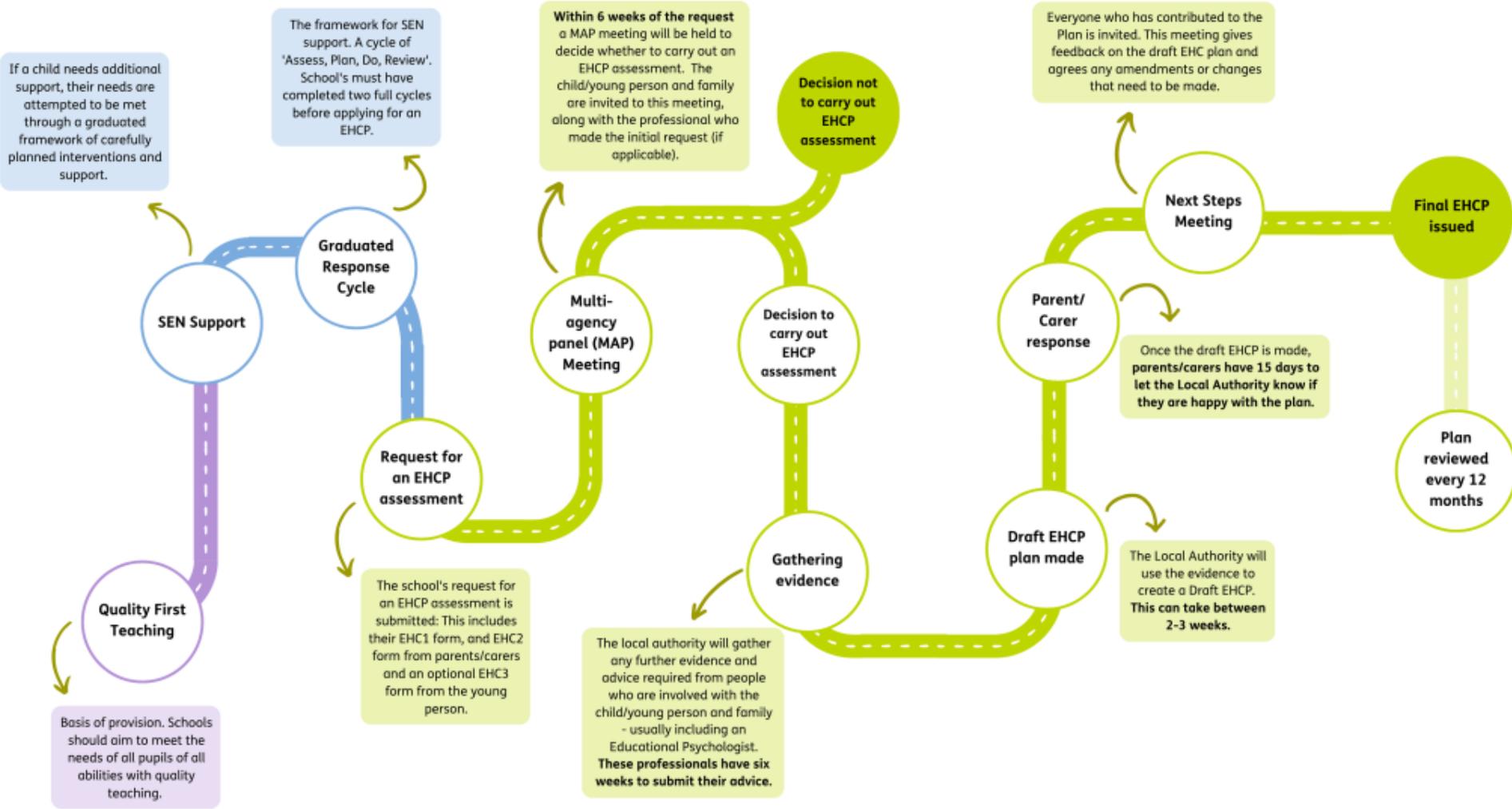
Signed _____ Student/Parent Date:
 Signed _____ Staff Member



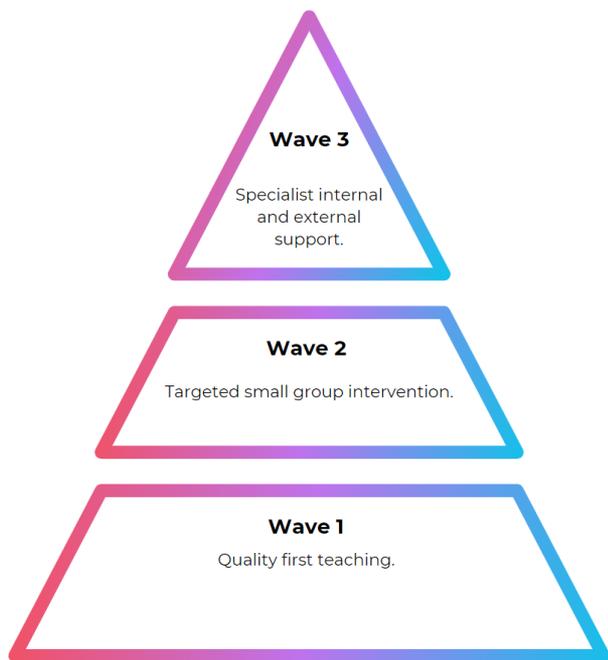
Some common failings with Attendance Support Plans

- The plan is often seen as the intervention.
- More focus on the issues affecting attendance than on interventions.
- More focus on pupil/family factors than on school-based factors.
- Usually paper-based and uploaded as documents to MIS
- Most teachers or support staff do not receive or read the plans.
- Usually ask staff to transcribe information already in the MIS
- Rarely connected with MIS capabilities around provision mapping





Intervention: Learning from SEND in Addressing Absence



Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle

Assess

Carry out child observations, hold discussions with key staff and parents/carers to identify and analyse the child's needs. Note the child's strengths and areas for development.

Assessments from outside agencies (Health, Educational Psychology, Social Services) may be required with parental consent.

Review

Discuss with others involved about how effective the support has been and the impact on the child in line with the review date.

Check back against observations and planned outcomes.

The next steps should be carefully planned with parents, outside agencies and the child themselves. Think about any other colleagues or specialists that might be able to help before the cycle begins again.

Plan

Hold discussions and meetings with parents, colleagues or any specialists who are involved to plan for what support will be put in place.

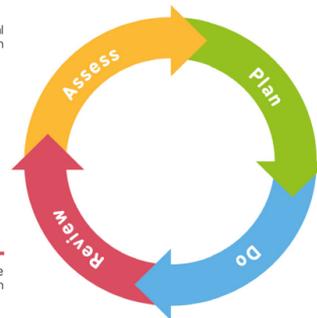
Make your plan 'outcome focused' - what do you all want the child to improve, develop or achieve? The plan should involve the child and parents at the centre.

Identify the interventions and support required and the expected impact on progress, development and behaviour. Set a clear date for review.

Do

Implement the support as planned with class teachers, early years practitioners, support staff and any other staff members working together with support from the SENCo.

Continue with observations to see how the child responds to the support.





Graduated Approach and Waves of Intervention: Benefits

- Familiar concepts for schools
- Recognises chronic absence as an additional need
- Addresses intersectional risks well
- Dovetails with existing systems for identification/tracking
- Evidence-driven approach to intervention (review + assess)
- Reinforces that “attendance is everyone’s business”



Graduated Approach and Waves of Intervention: Challenges

Graduated Approach

- Graduated approach often not effectively implemented for SEND students.
- Graduated approaches are often not captured on MIS.
- Attendance policies are often not clear about roles of subject leaders/teachers.

Waves of Challenge

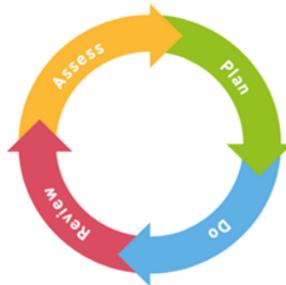
- Subject leaders/teachers often less involved in Wave 3 provision.
- DSLs and SENDCOs, not attendance leads, seen as responsible for Wave 2/3 provision.
- Attendance meetings and support plans often mistaken for Wave 2 interventions.

Tabletop Exercise

Prompt 3: In-school data shows that absence rates for older female students (Y5 and Y6 if primary, Y10 and Y11 if secondary) with high levels of prior attainment increase in the period leading up to in-school assessments and national tests. Student and family voice processes have indicated that there are mental health and wellbeing concerns for this group about anxiety around assessment periods.



What targeted, small group (Wave 2) provision could you put in place to tackle the causes of these anxieties without removing students from the classroom? How would subject leads be involved in addressing this issue?



How would you ensure that teachers are equipped to make adaptations to quality first teaching (Wave 1) for the students identified in the group? In what ways would you capture the impact of the graduated approach?



Some Quick-ish Wins and a Final Thought



Some 'quick-ish wins' for using data to target attendance support

1. Eliminate paper documents, spreadsheets, and apps that do not align with MIS.
2. Find a way of capturing qualitative data on barriers to attendance on your MIS.
3. Configure your MIS to capture all attendance interventions and their impact.
4. Identify students with intersectional absence risks as a user defined group on the MIS.
5. Generate reports for these students (and those with past absence) on a weekly basis.
6. Set achievable targets for trends, comparisons, cohorts, and processes.
7. See absence meetings and plans as a conduit to intervention, not as the intervention.
8. Adapt SEND approaches (waves of provision, APDR) for tackling absence.
9. Run CPDL with subject leaders/teachers to identify Wave 1/2 absence interventions.

Ofsted 2025: Attendance and Behaviour Toolkit (expected standard)

Inclusive approaches to attendance and behaviour

- Staff expertise, confidence and support
- Reasonable adjustments and adaptations...while maintaining high expectations
- Timely, well-chosen, targeted interventions to support those who need additional help
- Monitor, evaluate and amend approaches, adjustments, adaptations and interventions
- Part-time timetables are short term and have defined end points, and clear plans for pupils' return
- Monitor pupils' alternative provision attendance carefully...and take swift and effective action
- Relationships between adults and pupils are open, respectful and harmonious
- Pupils who need support...show improvements over time

Inspection Tracker: Frequency and Risk of Attendance 'Needs'

Frequency of attendance 'needs'

	2023	2024	2025
Attendance and/or punctuality	4.1%	5.6%	5.4%
Vulnerable attendance and punctuality	0.2%	0.4%	0.6%
Absence coding and data analysis	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Lack of support for pastoral barriers	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
Part time timetables used inappropriately	0.0%	0.02%	0.03%

Relative risk of attendance 'needs'

	O	G	RI	I
Attendance and punctuality	2%	75%	18%	5%
Vulnerable attendance and punctuality	2%	78%	17%	3%
Absence coding and data analysis	6%	45%	20%	29%
Lack of support for pastoral barriers	7%	66%	20%	7%
Part time timetables used inappropriately	0%	60%	20%	20%
For any identified need	2%	74%	20%	5%

Back to 2019: Persistent Absence and Absence Trajectories

July 2032

June 2032							August 2032						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

July 04 Independence Day

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July 2042

June 2042							August 2042						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30						29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

July 04 Independence Day

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Self-Evaluation Tool

Audit Tool: SSAT members: £129 / Non-members: £179

This downloadable 20-page electronic audit tool allows you to evaluate your attendance provision against five key themes drawn from recent research:

- Culture
- Data processes
- Family engagement
- Individualised support
- Evidence-informed practice

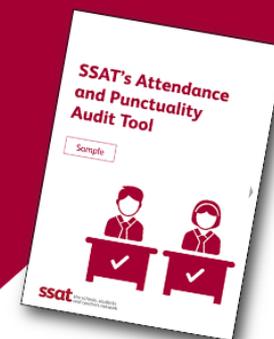
Working through this comprehensive audit, in discussion with colleagues, will allow you to drill down to the detail of your policies and processes and compare with best practice in the field.

The audit is supported by SSAT's comprehensive research summary report, presenting an overview of the key insights, findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the array of evidence-informed reports that have been published about pupil attendance and punctuality to school since 2019. The report presents our 'best bets' for supporting students to achieve their best possible attendance.

SSAT's Attendance and Punctuality Audit Tool Sample

Download a free sample of the audit tool.

Free download



Thank you for your engagement!

Keven Bartle

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02078029068

X/Threads/Bluesky: @kevbartle

Our attendance expert

Dr Keven Bartle, Senior Education Lead, SSAT



Keven has been a teacher for almost three decades and was headteacher at a richly diverse secondary school in London for nine years. Through his career, Keven has been committed to the power of education for social justice and transformation, working in schools where staff make a difference to the lives of children, families and communities.

[Book a call with Keven](#)



Attendance Strategies

Gilly Hare-Deputy Headteacher

Attendance and Safety



Our Context

- We are an all girls school—we do accept boys into our 6th form.
- We are on Clifton Gardens just off Long Lane, Hillingdon.
- We are 8 form entry with a sixth form of 250.
- We are 23.6% student Premium across the school
- 3.7% of students are identified as Young Carers
- 30% EAL, 9% SEND.
- Attendance is 1.1% above mixed national and 1.5% above girls' national figures.





2024/5 Academic Year
DFE Comparison Data

National

Decile 4-top 30-40% of schools

Hillingdon

11th out of 22 schools





Swakeleys School for Girls - Similar schools comparison report

Monitor your school attendance

Summer term 2024 to 2025



Swakeleys School for Girls - Attendance summary report

Monitor your school attendance

Summer term 2024 to 2025

Data Sources we use:

- FFT 360 attendance tool
- DFE attendance view attendance data
- DFE similar schools comparison report
- Internal reports from MIS



students with absence in the 5% to less than 10% band
 Our main focus group

Overall Absence Band	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
less than 5%	55%	50%	48%	52%	21%
5% to less than 10% →	31%	29%	29%	30%	45%
10% to less than 15%	7%	12%	14%	9%	18%
15% to less than 20%	3%	5%	2%	2%	7%
20% to less than 25%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%
25% to less than 30%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%
30% to less than 35%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
35% to less than 40%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
40% to less than 45%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%
45% to less than 50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
50% and above (severely absent) →	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%
10% and above (persistently absent)	14%	22%	23%	18% →	33%

Sources: [Monitor your school attendance results](#) for your school, data from the DfE.



DFE Similar Schools Comparison report

Comparisons with similar schools

Monitor your school attendance

⤴ Hide

▶ [View school attendance data](#)

▶ [Compare your attendance](#)

▼ Similar schools comparison reports

- [Your similar schools comparison reports](#)

Download a summary comparing your school's attendance with 20 similar schools. Identify your strengths and areas that require focus. You can share this report with your academy trust, governing body, or local authority.

▶ [Year 6 transition data download](#)

Now available: Updated similar schools comparison reports for the full 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Your similar schools comparison reports files available for SWAKELEYS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS (UKPRN 10033349)
File

[Official_Sensitive_10033349_Secondary_School_Attendance_Similar_Schools_First_Summer_Term_10062025.docx](#)

[Official_Sensitive_10033349_Secondary_School_Attendance_Similar_Schools_Full_Spring_Term_29042025.docx](#)

[Official_Sensitive_10033349_Secondary_School_Attendance_Similar_Schools_Full_Summer_Term_01092025.docx](#)



Swakeleys School for Girls - Similar schools comparison report

Monitor your school attendance

Summer term 2024 to 2025





How the DFE choose similar schools

How we choose your similar schools

We compare your attendance results with 20 schools that are similar to yours. This gives us enough data to make a fair comparison, without including so many schools that the results become less relevant.

These schools have a similar:

- proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)
- proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support and social, emotional and mental health needs as their primary SEN type
- level of deprivation affecting their pupils, measured by the [Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index \(IDACI\)](#)
- geographical region to your school and urban/rural classification
- proportion of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)
- funding amount per pupil

We will not compare your attendance with some of your similar schools if there are:

- less than 6 pupils in a group (such as pupils with FSM)
- less than 6 pupils recorded in a given week (only applies to weekly comparisons)

We may compare your school with schools from other regions if they are similar in other ways.



Comparison Report DFE Similar Schools



Swakeleys School for Girls - Similar schools comparison report

Monitor your school attendance

Summer term 2024 to 2025

Areas of strength

Our students are very good at coming in at the start of the week on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Areas of focus

Our Thursday attendance

Year 11 attendance

The attendance of our FSM students

(4.4% better than national but slightly below similar schools)

Your attendance on Thursdays was **92.3%**, which is lower than at least a quarter of similar schools. If you increased it to **94.3%**, then your overall attendance would increase by **0.4** percentage points and your overall persistent absence percentage would drop by **2.1** percentage points.

Strategic conversations: PE timetabling, LG detention arrangements, Year 11 Study Programme, lunch!



Religious Absence

Eid al-Fitr March 30 2025

Eid al-Adha June 6 2025

Like many local schools we have a large Muslim student population (50%)

We presented to trustees last year on the likely impact of Eid on attendance and will be doing so again this year to see if a calendar adjustment is possible.

We had direct communication with families about our policy—we are mindful of national guidance and also SACRE guidance when coding.





Disadvantaged Students and attendance

Creating **connection**

Values curriculum, Coffee Mornings, Felix Food Project, Family Liaison Officer, MHST delivery to parents, Parental Engagement Evenings, widening participation events, student voice and school council. Breakfast Club.

Providing 121 intervention as part of a whole school approach—they are monitored as a group but not treated like one.

We are resilient and successful. We are trusting and kind. We are diverse and respectful.





Progress Meetings Academic Success

Pilot with Year 11

Academic intervention meetings—but all students are asked about attendance, wellbeing etc

Requests for intervention are flagged to relevant staff for follow up.

Students value this approach. There is a clear rationale for why they are seen (academic not social/pastoral)





Rewards

5 e praise points for 100% in a week—exchange at the shop or for charity donations—part of a bigger reward system.

100% non uniform Friday – visible and motivational. We bend on long term absence.

End of term certificates and recognition.

Attendance leagues—often organised in “rounds” so lots of forms can celebrated.





Mentoring focus groups Attendance Mentoring

Mentoring cohort changes termly and includes those flagged at transition.

Based on data from the previous term.

Students allocated to LG, Year Teams, mentors, wider pastoral staff. Two identified groups-intensive work with the SA students and a targeted approach with those in the 90-95% category.

Weekly contact and recorded -parents/carers contacted



Buy in and collective responsibility

Buy in from LG-LG line management agenda items to discuss with those they line manage via our shared agenda which is discussed weekly at LG.

YLCs review year group data/individuals of concern via line management every two weeks and log actions.

Detailed weekly attendance e mail from Deputy to LG and teaching and non teaching pastoral team. Success is praised and highlighted.

Attendance updates weekly in staff briefing.

We talk about attendance-especially with the students under the value of "resilience"-its about good attendance and improving attendance.





Administration

Part time attendance administrator

Fortnightly cycle of attendance checks

Checks and letters sent/referrals

Consideration of any student requiring a WPA referral

Completion of and review of any PT timetables

Exceptional leave request

Medication Form





How we use A21 A21 and flexibilities (EBSNA/Mental Health)

Year 2 of using A21

A21 referrals are discussed at Deputy/Headteacher level and costed.

Medical evidence and multi-agency meeting approach. Health plans.

Where possible students are on a programme that means they still attend school on some or all days.

Year 11 Case Studies 2025 exam season

Year 8 Case Study

Young Carers programme and flexibilities.





Why mental health matters Place2Be and MHST

We are a Place2Be school with a 4 day a week full time project lead and at any one time at least one other counsellor for x1 day. Place2Talk, Place2Think and Place2Be services all run as well as workshops and student training etc.

Our MHST practitioner is in 1 day a week and we also have other practitioners working with our students.



SEND Students

Room 116-Sensory area /ICT access.

Individual plans for students with ASD – how long can they stay? What do they need to regulate?

Strict process around access.

Role of the TAs in building trust-HLTAs with specialisms including a specialism in ASD.



Monitoring and Evaluating Attendance and Punctuality

The attendance team

Deputy Headteacher

Leadership Group (linked to year teams)

Year Learning Co-ordinators

Form Tutor

Attendance Officer

Attendance Administrator (PT)

Home school liaison/family support officer

Safeguarding officer

Attendance mentors/student desk





Monitoring and Evaluating Attendance and Punctuality

Weekly stats-internal, DFE.

Attendance officer meetings-regular interrogation of data student by student with a focus on SA and PA students or those flagging as a concern.

The pastoral MER process.

EduRio questionnaires

Weekly punctuality statistics

Line Management shared agenda and meetings

Pastoral Leaders Meetings

Pastoral SEF (Year Team)



Next Steps

- DfE Attendance Toolkit for Schools
- Similar schools' Comparison Report
- Educational Neglect Policy Information Sessions:
 - [1st October 12pm-1pm](#)
 - [3rd October 12pm-1pm](#)
- Attendance Network Cluster
- Plan, do, review



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**Thank you for attending and
your input.**

We hope to see you soon!



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