



Termly Attendance Update – Term 3 23/24 w/c 5th February 2024



Welcome to term 3's edition of the Attendance Update.

This academic year, the Attendance Update is published **termly**.

Term 4 edition is due for release in March 2024.

Section 1: News

Attendance Seminar – Sandbach High School, Northwest England



Ellen Walton (Headteacher) and Nicki Oyler (Deputy Headteacher) at Sandbach High School will share the whole-school attendance strategy they have implemented since September 2020 to increase the school's attendance to approximately 96% primarily by creating a culture of **belonging** and **kindness** around the approach to

persistently absent children.

Connect before you correct!

Watch the 40minute webinar here: https://youtu.be/SzqQiVK1BT4?si=uTAQWP8QUmg473AN



"Do schools close because of bad weather?

Schools will make every effort to stay open in adverse weather conditions, including storms, snow and heatwaves. However, the safety of pupils and teachers is a top priority. On rare occasions schools do sometimes need to close or operate at a reduced level.

Read the new post: https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/11/06/do-schools-close-because-of-bad-weather-everything-parents-need-to-know/

Please also refer to our **Severe Weather Quick Guide on the attendance toolkit** which contains coding advice.

What to do if you think a child has measles and when to keep them off school



Cases of measles are rising across England, including among children. It's an infection that spreads very easily and for some people can cause serious problems. There's no specific medical treatment for measles, so it's important to get vaccinated as it's the best protection against becoming seriously unwell.

Read the new post: https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/01/22/what-to-do-if-you-think-your-child-has-measles-and-when-to-keep-them-off-school/

How should schools code measles absence?

- For confirmed cases, schools should continue to use usual register codes for absence due to illness.
- If a child needs to isolate following public health advice, the most appropriate code is likely to be an absence authorised by the school (code C).

Government's national attendance campaign



Moments matter, attendance counts! The campaign is scheduled to run from January to March 2024. It aims to primarily reach those parents whose children are taking preventable odd days of absence – or "avoidable absence" – rather than those who face greater barriers to attendance, such as pupils with long term medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities.

"From the first day of term to the last, the small moments in a school day make a real difference to your child. #AttendanceCounts"



- A toolkit for schools is available <u>here</u>. The government is encouraging schools to use this resource and support the campaign throughout Spring term.
- The toolkit contains ways you can support the campaign and valuable resources which can be used to help create a national warm welcome to school for children, young people and families over the Spring term. The campaign features media partnerships, radio advertising and social media influencers to promote the importance of school attendance and the value of a school day.
- The campaign forms one part of the DfE's wider strategy to increase attendance, which also includes <u>clearer expectations for schools and local authorities</u>

built around a 'support first' approach.

 While the importance of learning and the legal obligation to attend are core reasons for children to be in school, we want to remind parents of the wider holistic benefits for children's wellbeing and happiness - such as the development of friendships and fantastic extra-curricular opportunities.

7 ways your school can support the campaign

- 1. Help create a **national warm welcome to school** for families throughout the spring
- 2. Make the Spring term **a fresh start** for children and young people struggling to attend school by taking a "support first" approach and sustaining efforts to engage families where absence is severe or persistent.
- 3. Refer to the <u>Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u> toolkit when communicating with families about attendance, to maximise your impact.
- 4. Set clear expectations for parents and carers about what they need to do to support good attendance (e.g., phoning when their child is ill and having a back-up plan if their child misses school transport). And what you will do for them in return (e.g., phoning parents and carers to discuss a child's attendance where there are challenges and getting them into school for a meeting if there are concerns).
- 5. Remind parents and carers of the NHS Is my child too ill for school guidance and the Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty's letter on mild illness and school attendance that says a prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending school in the future.
- 6. Help reduce the spread of infection in your school remind staff and pupils of the importance of regular and effective handwashing and ensure spaces are well-ventilated. You can use your CO2 monitors to manage good ventilation. Tell parents and carers about the steps you are taking to reduce infection spread to offer reassurance.
- 7. **Sign up to share your daily attendance data with DfE** if your school has not already done so and use the data to identify and respond to trends early.

How small changes can make a big impact on attendance



Focusing on the interactions every student experiences could transform how the most persistently absent feel about school.

Read the article here: https://schoolsweek.co.uk/how-small-changes-can-make-a-big-impact-on-attendance/

School Governors - expectations and role in relation to attendance



- NEW Attendance fact sheet for school Governors is available on the attendance toolkit
- Further information is available from Bristol Governor Development Service - GDS Helpline 0117 9036900 or email gds@bristol.gov.uk
- GDS provides training on attendance, delivered by Bristol City Council's Educational Welfare Service Lead – please consult the current training programme for details.
- Please also consult the generic information pack for named/link governors in the BCC GDS Resources area on GovernorHub: <u>Info Pack Named Gov</u> <u>2023.doc - GovernorHub</u>



Child Employment Laws - it's nothing new!

Do any pupils you know of undertake part-time work? To be lawfully employed they must have a work permit. A work permit is FREE, and the application is easy to complete for the employer and parent/carer.

Did you know:

- Children must be 13 years of age to work
- Every child (13-16) must have a work permit to enable them to work
- Children can only work restricted hours between 7am and 7pm
- Children cannot work during the hours of a school day
- Children may only undertake light work, and some types of work are prohibited
- Employers must register every child employed with their Local Authority
- A risk assessment must be carried out for every child that is employed
- Failure to comply with the legislation may result in legal action being taken against the employer and the parent/carer

More information can be found on our website - Children in employment (bristol.gov.uk)

Should you have any concerns about a child working illegally then please email ceal@bristol.gov.uk

Targeting Support Meetings (TSMs)



- During term 2, the wider delivery of the targeting support meetings commenced.
- Officers from the Education Welfare Service met with mainstream secondary schools.
- Further information about TSMs can be found in the guidance Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- The Bristol TSM offer for other schools/settings is to be confirmed and will be publicised in due course.
- The backstop position for all schools is EWS Attendance Helpline (0117) 3521438 or education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk) and weekly attendance drop-in (please refer to the meeting link further on in this publication).

Bristol Pupil Voice Survey



Has your school signed up to the Bristol Pupil Voice Survey for March 2024 yet? The Bristol Pupil Voice survey is free for all Bristol schools and supported by the Council. This survey is hugely important to

help us all understand and support the health and wellbeing issues that are significant to young people and some of the barriers that may prevent them achieving good health and wellbeing. The most recent Pupil Voice Survey showed us that illness or injury was the number one reason for absence in the month before the survey, for both primary and secondary pupils. Find out the other reasons in the full report – The Bristol Pupil Voice Report 2022.

Each school completing the survey will receive their own school report, which will analyse and present their school data. These reports provide an evidence base to guide schools to plan ways to improve young people's health, through participation in Healthy Schools, PSHE programmes, and other health-based interventions. <u>SIGN</u> UP TO THE MARCH 2024 SURVEY HERE!

Continued support is available through the <u>Bristol Healthy Schools programme</u>. Register <u>here</u> or e-mail: <u>healthy.schools@bristol.gov.uk</u> to become a Bristol Healthy School.

Section 2: Key Dates

Education Welfare Service CPD Courses for Schools Academic Year 2023-24

School Attendance Network Meetings - Free

An opportunity for School Attendance Leads to keep updated on current attendance legislation, national guidance, local guidance, local processes and good practice.

November 2023

Wednesday 8th 1-3pm Thursday 9th 10-12 noon

January/February 2024

Wednesday 31st 1-3pm Thursday 1st 10-12noon

April 2024

Wednesday 24th 1-3pm Thursday 25th 10-12noon

Training - virtually, via Zoom

Booking via Trading with Schools Trading with Schools Helpline 0117 922 2444 Email: tradingwithschools@bristol.gov.uk

<u>Children Missing Education - Free</u>

Child Missing Education - Why does it matter? Education Welfare Service (EWS)

Wed 20 Sep 2023 12:00 – 14:30 Wed 29 Nov 2023 12:00 – 14:30 Wed 7 Feb 2023 12:00 – 14:30 Wed 12 June 2023 10:00 – 12:30

Training - virtually, via Zoom

Booking via Trading with Schools Trading with Schools Helpline 0117 922 2444 Email: tradingwithschools@bristol.gov.uk

Attendance Casework – Chargeable £75

A half day course for school attendance staff working directly with parents whose children are not attending school regularly across the primary and secondary phases of education. Education Welfare Service (EWS)

Wed 4 Oct 2023 12:00 - 14:30 Wed 6 March 2024 10:00 - 12:30

Training - virtually, via Zoom

Booking via Trading with Schools Trading with Schools Helpline 0117 922 2444 Email: tradingwithschools@bristol.gov.uk

Parental Responsibility Measures - Penalty Notice Training for Schools - Free

Penalty Notice Training for Schools - When is a Penalty Notice Appropriate? Education Welfare Service (EWS)

Wed 27 Sept 2023 10:00 - 12:00 Wed 17 Jan 2024 10:00 - 12:00 Wed 22 May 2024 10:00 - 12:00

Training - virtually, via Zoom

Booking via Trading with Schools Trading with Schools Helpline 0117 922 2444 Email: tradingwithschools@bristol.gov.uk

<u>Parental Responsibility Measures - Irregular Attendance Prosecutions – Chargeable</u> £75

An invaluable course designed for schools who prepare their own witness statements for school attendance prosecutions.

Education Welfare Service (EWS)

Wed 22 Nov 2023 12:00 - 14:30 Tues 8 May 2024 12:30 - 15:00

Training - virtually, via Zoom

Booking via Trading with Schools Trading with Schools Helpline 0117 922 2444 Email: tradingwithschools@bristol.gov.uk

<u>Improving School Attendance – Support for Senior Leaders in Schools and Settings</u> – 1 free place per setting

This course provides guidance and practical strategies to school senior leaders with an attendance remit to support improvements especially for vulnerable groups.

The first part of this course sets out the principles underpinning an effective whole school strategy for attendance and develop a sense of belonging. The second part of this course outlines actions that schools may consider taking to improve attendance for all pupils, pupils at risk of persistent absence and pupils who are persistently absent (PA).

Wed 15 Nov 2023 10:00 - 12:30

Wed 13 March 2024 13:00 - 15:30

Wed 19 June 2024 10:00 - 12:30

Training – virtually, via Zoom

Booking via Trading with Schools Trading with Schools Helpline 0117 922 2444 Email: tradingwithschools@bristol.gov.uk

<u>Attendance Officers Introduction to Attendance Course – Chargeable £50 for both</u> sessions

An introduction to attendance - For new attendance officers and school-based attendance leads and senior leaders with oversight of attendance.

This virtual course will support schools and settings to work in partnership with the local authority to meet the expectations identified in the new DfE attendance guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' 2022.

September 2023 - Fri 15th and Fri 22nd 10-12 noon

January 2024 - Fri 12th and Fri 19th 10-12 noon

April 2024 – Fri 19th and Fri 26th 10-12 noon

Please note – you are advised to attend both sessions in the series. Training – virtually, via Zoom

Booking via Trading with Schools Trading with Schools Helpline 0117 922 2444 Email: tradingwithschools@bristol.gov.uk

Section 3: Regular Features and Reminders

Illness and absence



It is important to remind parents and carers about when it is appropriate for their child to attend school or not due to illness. The NHS have provided clear guidance available via their website at

Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Information Directory for Schools Supporting Children with Medical Conditions

To help schools find expert and up to date information to support children with medical conditions, Sirona care & health's School Nursing service has identified resources for education settings.

These resources include the latest information, resources and training on epilepsy, anaphylaxis, allergies, and asthma. The websites have been reviewed by subject experts and approved by our Local Authority Commissioners.

Please see the information available on our <u>website</u>, along with more details about our School Nursing service.

Flu Vaccination 2023-24



This winter all school aged children in England (from Reception class to Year 11) will be offered a flu vaccination by the NHS school aged immunisation service. Most children are offered a nasal spray flu vaccine. We are grateful for the support of schools in hosting vaccination sessions. Delivering the programme through schools makes it more accessible to pupils which results in higher uptake levels. The school aged immunisation service will be in touch with schools to agree a date for the vaccination session and the best approach for implementing the programme in schools.

For more information please visit Flu vaccination in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

EWS traded attendance support options



The EWS have a variety of attendance support options that you can buy - other independent attendance providers are also available

- Flexible support charged at our half/whole day rates £280/£485 general flexible attendance support. Good for short pieces of targeted input on a 1:1 basis across several CYP/families.
- EWS parent/pupil attendance assessment charged at £280 with the option of upgrading to full referral rate on conclusion a more in-depth piece of one-off direct work with the family. An EWO contacts parent(s) and arranges to carry out
- an EWS assessment (Individual Assessment Profile) to explore the reasons for absence and if appropriate draws up an action plan with the parent(s)/carer(s) to resolve their child's attendance issues.
- EWS full casework referral charged at £815 per case an in-depth piece of 1:1 direct work with the family over a number of weeks with the aim of improving attendance or instigating legal proceedings if there is evidence to

do so. End to end case management included and it includes the above EWS parent/pupil attendance assessment and attendance action plan.

For further information please refer to the EWS brochure or contact us via email at education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk

Working Together to Improve School Attendance

New documents have been added! They now include a 'Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance' and 'Annex A: example attendance letters and emails to parents and carers'.

Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

DfE daily attendance data collection - WONDE data

WONDE is the DfE's software provider partner. The DfE is collecting automatic daily attendance data from schools that agree to share their data. At least 120 Bristol schools have already signed up. We encourage all schools to do so, those that are already on board are reporting positive feedback. The more school that sign up, the more accurate and useful the data is.

The benefits in getting daily attendance data:

- 1. gives schools, local authorities and academy trusts access to more up-to-date pupil-level attendance data
- 2. helps you meet the new expectations set out in <u>working together to improve</u> school attendance
- 3. will not add to your school's workload

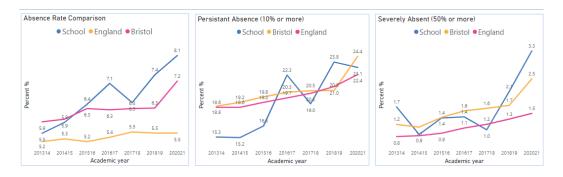
For further information see this link: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/share-your-daily-school-attendance-data



School Attendance Data Packs

Most schools are now routinely accessing the School Data Packs provided free by the Local Authority. The data that is available is based on publicly released data from the Department for Education. School level data for

2022-23 is available in section 2. School level live data for 2023-24 should be available in due course.



If you are yet to access your data pack, please nominate a member of staff to be the lead.

School Attendance Data Pack - Nominated staff member

If you have any queries, please contact the Attendance and Belonging Team at attendanceandbelongingteam@bristol.gov.uk



Free ESOL Conversation Clubs in Bristol

To support our families who speak English as an additional language, there are opportunities over the summer for adults to join free ESOL Conversation Clubs in Bristol.

For more details, please visit joinesol –

Community Learning Bristol (communitylearningwest.net)

Supporting Refugees and Asylum-Seeking Pupils in Schools (SRASPS) – Professionals Toolkit



As a City of Sanctuary Bristol is proud to welcome refugee and asylum-seeking families into our city. To help support the needs of new arrivals we have developed

a Professionals Toolkit to provide information and resources for those working with these pupils and their families. To request access the Toolkit please email the Attendance and Belonging Team at attendanceandbelongingteam@bristol.gov.uk

The Education Hub – Parent fines for Missing School: What you need to know

The Education Hub has provided guidance for parents to support the understanding of the risk of fines if their child misses school without a good reason. Local councils and



schools can intervene, in some cases, this might mean that parents receive a fine.

For further information please visit: <u>Fines for parents for taking children out of</u> school: What you need to know - The Education Hub (blog.gov.uk)

Bulk Admissions (Year 7 and Reception applications for September 2024) – National Application Deadlines



Secondary application deadline was 31st October 2023. Late applications can still be made but are dealt with after on-time applications. For further information please visit Apply for a new year 7 secondary school place (bristol.gov.uk)

- Reception application deadline was **15**th **January 2024**. Late applications can still be made but are dealt with after on-time applications. For further information please visit <u>Apply for a new reception primary place</u> (bristol.gov.uk)
- If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan do not apply to School
 Admissions, see Apply for a key stage transfer school place for a child with an
 Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan on the Local Offer site or email the
 Special Educational Needs Team at sen@bristol.gov.uk for how to apply.

Elective Home Education (EHE)



We want to ensure a parental decision to Electively Home Educate their child is an **informed decision**.

Please **do not persuade or encourage** parents to consider EHE as an option, but if they raise it, please do signpost them to impartial information that outlines what EHE entails.

EHE should not be used as a way to avoid suspensions, permanent exclusion or to avoid attendance legal interventions.

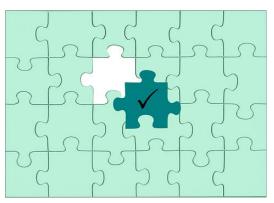
Please ensure any parents considering EHE are made aware of the LA EHE guidance Home education - bristol.gov.uk

An EHE Quick Guide and a Briefing Note are available on the Attendance Toolkit.

Home education means that the child is not on a school roll and the parent is taking full responsibility for their education. Read more about home education and home schooling on the Department for Education blog.

Please notify ehe@bristol.gov.uk about any/all EHE requests.

Admissions messaging supporting early identification of Children Missing Education Action Required



To ensure all children and young people receive a place at a school or education provision in a timely way, in circumstances where schools and settings are unable to offer a place, we request that the following information is included in any written correspondence to parents and carers:

We are sorry that we have been unable to offer your child a place at our school.

To help support your child access education provision please email childrenmissingeducation @bristol.gov.uk if you live in Bristol and:

 your child is not currently on roll at a Bristol school or receiving elective home education

- you applied directly to a school and were told there are no places in the appropriate year group
- you applied directly to a school more than 10 school days ago and have not had a response

If you manage your own in-year admissions arrangements, and you are unable to offer a place please also complete the Child Missing Education form to notify the local authority of this situation, further details including the notification form are found in the link below:

Children missing education (CME) (bristol.gov.uk)

We also want to remind schools and settings that even if you are over-subscribed, parents and carers **must not be refused the opportunity to make an application** or be told that they can only be placed on a waiting list rather than make a formal application. They should still be encouraged to apply for a place for their child please see School admissions code 2021 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Children Missing Education (CME) webinar for schools

Last summer term, the Department for Education hosted a CME webinar for schools. It is now available on YouTube: Children Missing Education — Webinar for Schools - YouTube

Help for Households

To help with the cost-of-living crisis the government has launched a website detail a range of support for households. This is available from the link below:



Help for Households - Get government cost of living support

Local Crisis and Prevention Fund - Bristol

The Local Crisis and Prevention Fund can provide financial support to families facing an immediate financial crisis by

- giving an emergency payment for essentials like food and clothing
- supplying household goods if they cannot afford basic furniture or white goods, like a fridge or a cooker



Emergency payments - local crisis and prevention fund - bristol.gov.uk

Weekly Attendance Officer Drop-in Sessions - Every Tuesday



- To support the work of Attendance Officers and other colleagues concerned about an attendance issue we have arranged a free weekly online drop-in session every Tuesday 11am-12 noon during term time.
- We encourage colleagues to join the meeting if they have specific questions relating to attendance or would like to share best practice.

Join the Zoom meeting at (new academic, year new link! Please save the new link):

https://zoom.us/j/95659748840?pwd=WkRCZy93b0FZRGkxeU5oRIRRMHhsZz09

Meeting ID: 956 5974 8840 Passcode: 354077

Attendance Toolkit



To support communication and practice around attendance related issues, we have set up an Attendance Toolkit on a SharePoint site for professionals.

For BCC Staff

Please follow the following the link <u>Attendance Toolkit - Home (sharepoint.com)</u> to trigger a request for access

For Non-BCC Staff

Access to the site is via the supply of a named email for an individual as opposed to a departmental or general email so you can be registered for access. If you are on the Attendance or Bristol Inclusion Panel mailing lists, you should be set up already.

For other colleagues please email the attendanceandbelongingteam@bristol.gov.uk to request access, providing your email details. You will then be invited to join the SharePoint site, if you have not received an email within 2 working days of making a request, please check your spam folder. We recommend you save the SharePoint site link in your favourites.

Section 4: Data

Local Attendance Data

Term 1 23/24

Phase	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Phase	Term to Date	Phase	Year to Date
All-through		91.37	89.06	85.71	84.34	84.89	85.86	84.53	All-through	86.32	All-through	85.49
Specialist	12.67	67.02	74.86	73.55	72.46	71.55	72.33	78.56	Specialist	72.97	Specialist	75.06
Primary	91.66	95.14	95.93	95.14	94.48	94.91	94.96	93.84	Primary	94.92	Primary	94.75
Secondary		93.93	93.28	91.68	90.16	90.67	91.67	90.61	Secondary	91.65	Secondary	91.40
All	74.71	94.09	94.08	92.89	91.85	92.26	92.74	91.89	All	92.79	All	92.63

Note Week 1 = w/c 28/8/23 to capture the start of the academic year.

Term 2 23/24 (up to 01/12/23 inclusive)

Phase	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14	Phase	Term to Date	Phase	Year to Date
All-through	86.38	85.13	84.28	83.35	82.93	All-through	84.31	All-through	85.49
Specialist	79.48	79.06	79.14	76.63	76.24	Specialist	78.17	Specialist	75.06
Primary	94.85	94.85	94.53	94.32	94.00	Primary	94.51	Primary	94.75
Secondary	91.30	91.32	91.15	90.82	90.72	Secondary	91.07	Secondary	91.40
All	92.82	92.71	92.44	92.16	91.92	All	92.41	All	92.63

Term 3 23/24 (up to 02/02/24 inclusive)

Phase	Week 19	Week 20	Week 21	Week 22	Week 23	Phase	Term to Date	Phase	Year to Date
All-through	85.06	85.55	82.26	80.14	80.30	All-through	82.42	All-through	84.54
Specialist	77.07	79.57	78.26	77.69	78.47	Specialist	78.32	Specialist	72.66
Primary	92.83	94.47	93.33	92.83	93.31	Primary	93.40	Primary	94.20
Secondary	90.39	90.30	89.47	89.22	89.44	Secondary	89.73	Secondary	90.68
All	91.23	92.19	91.07	90.59	91.00	All	91.22	All	91.93

Contact

If you require for further information in relation to this Attendance Update, please contact Vanessa Davies (EWS Lead) on vanessa.davies@bristol.gov.uk