

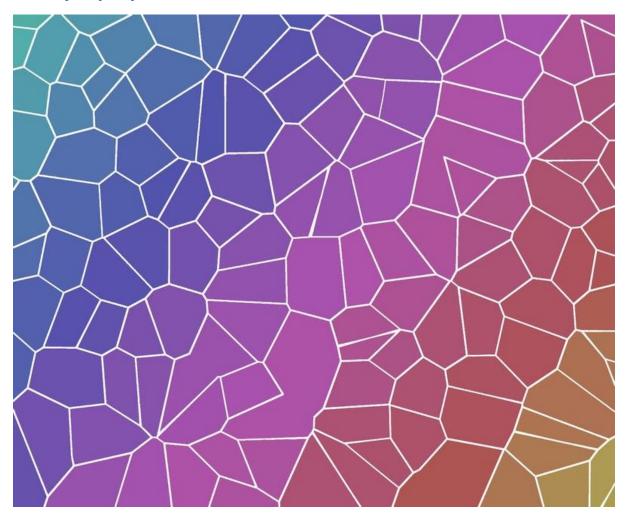
Termly Attendance Update Term 4 w/c 31st March 2025

Welcome to term 4's edition of the Attendance Update Newsletter.

Term 5's Attendance Update edition is due for release in May 2025.



Termly Top Tips



This section aims to provide a couple of suggested operational attendance activities aligned to the point in the academic year. Please note, these suggested activities aren't the only activities that we recommend delivering. A 'targeted intervention' means that you should triage the cases and decide on the type of intervention that is most suitable. For example, a

Termly Top Tip 1: Absence bandings (10-15% absence banding)

This is a large but influenceable group. Triage the group and identify a sub-group to deliver an individual targeted intervention, it might be a positive text message, phone call or email to discuss attendance with the parent/carer.

Termly Top Tip 2: Attendance Summary Report

In View Your Education Data (VYED) use the NEW attendance summary report to:

- Review your whole school attendance.
- Understand more about your school's attendance in line with national and regional benchmarking.
- See which groups would benefit most from targeted attendance interventions.

Termly Top Tip 3: Reduced timetables

- Review and know which pupils are presently on a reduced timetable in your school.
- Make sure the correct register code (usually the new C2 code) is being applied for the sessions that they are not expected to attend.
- Make sure that for any pupil who has a reduced timetable in place there is: a plan
 that's been jointly agreed & signed by all parties, it's time limited and for the shortest
 duration as possible, reviewed regularly by all parties, in the child's best interests &
 reintegration focussed, complies with the regulations and wider safeguarding
 requirements, NOT for behaviour.
- Did you know, across Bristol, attendance data shows a significant increase in reduced timetable use from Year 8 upwards.

Attendance News



Breaking Down the Barriers to Opportunity - DfE's regional attendance conference



On Friday 14th March, the DfE Breaking Down the Barriers to Opportunity regional attendance conference took place in Exeter. Many Bristol schools were represented. The day focussed on school level attendance practice. In case you missed it, we have made the resources and documents available to view and download from associated tab on the BCC Attendance Toolkit.

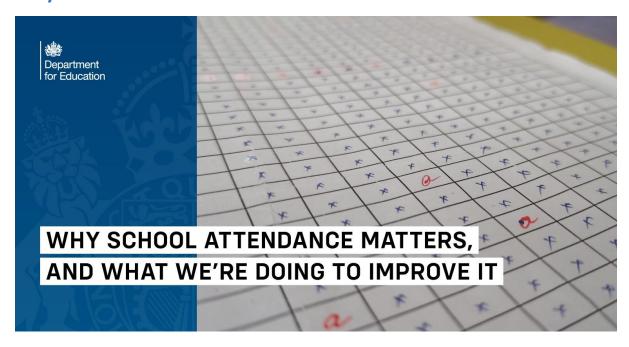
The link between attendance and attainment





A research report was published by the DfE recently drawing on evidence-based research into attendance and attainment in an assessment year. Read the full report here: <u>The link between attendance and attainment in an assessment year</u>.

Why school attendance matters...



The Education Hub has published an article about 'Why school attendance matters and what the Government are doing about it'. Read the article here:

https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2025/03/why-school-attendance-matters-and-what-were-doing-to-improve-it/

Transitions



The City wide transition day is Wednesday 2nd July 2025.

Please make sure that you:

- Identify and work with parents and families that need extra support with the application process
- Identify pupils that would benefit from 'enhanced' transition support
- Have robust processes in place to share pupil level attendance data with the receiving school

Bristol Future transition project needs you...

Are you a practitioner who is interested in getting involved and working in collaboration to collate a City wide set of transition documents?

If so, we'd love to hear from you, to share your views and resources on this important topic.

Please complete this link: https://forms.office.com/e/inrgFErJPG

We are working quickly to collate the current good work in this area across the City in order that we can share with colleagues, settings and families. For more information please email Clare Greene, Lead for School Improvement - <u>Clare.Green@bristol.gov.uk</u>



NEW functionality added to View Your Education Data (VYED)



How – through your DfE sign-in via the VYED reports

What – View reports to help you analysis your school's attendance. New functionality is being added all the time. A recent addition includes the **NEW attendance summary report** - now available for primary and secondary schools.

Why – to increase the ability for schools to use a data driven approach for attendance operations including targeting attendance interventions and support

Support – DfE VYED webinars, DfE user guides, your schools TSM conversations

Key dates and training



Attendance CPD for Bristol Schools

Please see below for the Education Welfare Service CPD Courses for Schools Academic Year 2024/25.

All our sessions have been fully revised in line with the national attendance regulation changes and the new Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024).

All training – virtually, via Zoom

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

After Easter, the scheduling of the attendance training offer for academic year 2025/26 will start. The aim will be to have the offer live from June/July 2025 so that schools and settings can start planning ahead.

September Attendance Briefings (free)

Our September attendance briefings took place on:

- Wednesday 4th September 2024 11-12noon
- Thursday 5th September 2024 2-3pm

We recorded one of the sessions, the recording is available to watch on the attendance toolkit.

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.

We record one of each of the sessions, recordings are available to watch on the attendance toolkit.

- November 2024
- Wednesday 13th 1-3pm
- Thursday 14th 10-12 noon
- January/February 2025
- Wednesday 29th 1-3pm
- Thursday 30th 10-12noon
- May 2025

- Wednesday 7th 1-3pm
- Thursday 8th 10-12noon

Children Missing Education - Free

Child Missing Education - Why does it matter? This session includes the legalities about making adjustments to the school roll.

- Wednesday 18th September 2024 12:30-15:00
- Wednesday 4th December 2024 12:30-15:00
- Wednesday 12th February 2025 12:30-15:00
- Wednesday 18th June 2025 10:00-12:30

Attendance Casework – Chargeable £75

A course for school attendance staff working directly with parents whose children are not attending school regularly across the primary and secondary phases of education.

- Wednesday 9th October 2024 12:30-15:00
- Wednesday 5th March 2025 10:00-12:30

Parental Responsibility Measures - Penalty Notice Training for Schools - Free

Penalty Notice Training for Schools - When is a Penalty Notice appropriate and what is the process to request one?

- Wednesday 25th September 2024 10:00 12:00
- Wednesday 11th December 2024 10:00 12:00
- Wednesday 5th February 2025 10:00 12:00
- Wednesday 11th June 2025 10:00-12:00

Parental Responsibility Measures - Irregular Attendance Prosecutions - Chargeable £75

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

Wednesday 27th November 2024 12:30-15:00

• Wednesday 21st May 2025 12:30-15:00

Improving School Attendance – Support for Senior Leaders in Schools and Settings – 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). During this training, Bristol Healthy Schools will be running a short session aimed to support schools with "making the school a safe place" and fostering the "right ethos" for improving attendance. The session will be specific to school attendance, with a focus on mental health and creating safe spaces, addressing the theme of belonging in education.

- Wednesday 20th November 2024 10:00-12:00
- Wednesday 12th March 2025 13:00-15:00
- Wednesday 25th June 2025 10:00-12:00

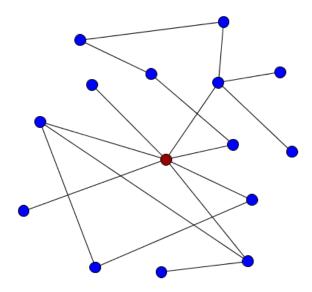
New Attendance Officers Introduction to Attendance Course – Chargeable £50 (includes for both sessions)

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' 2024.

- September 2024 Friday 20th and 27th September 10-12 noon
- January 2025 Friday 10th and 17th January 10-12 noon
- May 2025 Friday 2nd and 9th May 10-12 noon

Please note – you are advised to attend both sessions in the series

South-West Attendance Network (SWAN)



The South-West Attendance Network has been meeting virtually at regular intervals throughout academic year 2023/24 and will continue to do so throughout 2024/25. The group is an off shoot from one of the Government's Attendance Hubs.

The network is well attended and provides an excellent opportunity for operational attendance leads from schools to come together to share attendance practice and expertise.

Feedback from a Bristol EWO "These sessions are excellent; I learn so much each and every time. They are a must for anyone working in the attendance field."

The next meeting will take place virtually on **Tuesday 13th May 3:30-5pm.** If any you or any of your colleagues would like to join this network, please pass on this link: <u>Registration Form.</u> By registering, you will get access to the virtual meetings and the content that is shared including templates to support operational attendance practice.

Other attendance features and reminders

Your School's Attendance Policy

In order to ensure compliance with Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance statutory attendance guidance, your school is expected to have a current attendance policy that is accessible on your school's website.

Additionally, your attendance policy should outline the start times for the morning and afternoon sessions including the timings for the use of the late codes - Code L and Code U.

Spot light on - Code B and Code D



Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-schoolattendance statutory school attendance guidance contains the absence code descriptors.

Compliance with coding descriptors are essential in line with wider safeguarding duties and maintaining data accuracy. Where colleagues are unclear about what code to use, please connect with the Education Welfare Service via our usual channels (EWS Helpline, Attendance drop-in etc..) and an officer will be happy to explore the scenario with you and provide advice.

Code B - Attending any other approved educational activity

- The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
- A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if the place is somewhere other than the school and the activity is of an educational nature;
- The school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- The activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the
 appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity
 takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's
 attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised
 by someone who meets this definition.

- Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity.
- Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D - Dual registered at another school

- The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school.
- This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.
 - The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code. Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.
- Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed up.

Healthy Schools





The Bristol Pupil Voice Survey 2024- City-wide report has recently been published! It provides the largest insight into the health and wellbeing of young people in Bristol. The report presents findings from the 2024 survey, with over 4,000 pupils from 30+ schools responding. All primary and secondary schools in the city are invited to participate, with questions tailored by age group. The Bristol Pupil Voice survey provides those planning and delivering services a detailed insight into the behaviours, attitudes and concerns of young people, and helps schools address the needs within their school communities. The Bristol Healthy Schools team uses the findings to guide improvements with schools, often through the Healthy Schools award scheme.

How Do You Use the Bristol Pupil Voice Data?

We'd love to hear how you're using or intend to use the Bristol Pupil Voice Survey data. We're asking for your input so we can show young people where their data is going and how their input is actively shaping services for children, young people, and families in Bristol. Specific, tangible examples would be especially helpful - as they can help highlight the impact of their voices and encourage others to take part in future surveys.

Sexual Health education in Bristol secondary schools (11-16) and post 16 settings

Bristol City Council's Sexual Health team is gathering insights from those involved teaching, supporting or monitoring RSE in Bristol secondary schools (11-16) and post 16 settings.

Please share your views in this short survey: Sexual Health education in Bristol secondary schools (11-16) and post 16 settings

OFFICIAL: UKHSA Webinar promotion for schools and childcare settings





Dear Colleagues

Here are some great resources to help you prevent or manage cases and outbreaks of infectious diseases in your setting. Please do share these links with whoever manages absences/exclusions in your setting.

- A-Z of managing specific infectious diseases GOV.UK This useful guide provides a
 quick snapshot of what you can do to prevent and manage cases and outbreaks of
 common infectious diseases such as chickenpox, hand, foot and mouth, ring worm
 and lots more. It also guides you to when you should contact your local Health
 Protection Team. Please have a read of the A-Z before contacting us.
- <u>Exclusions Table: Health protection in education and childcare settings</u> this useful table can be printed out for use by your reception team and for parents and carers to see.
- <u>Diarrhoea and Vomiting Action Card</u> a useful checklist if you have an outbreak of D&V in your setting.
- <u>Respiratory Infection Action Card</u> a useful checklist for when you have cases of acute respiratory infections such as COVID or flu, but can also come in useful for general coughs and cold that spread quickly and can still make you feel quite ill.

Other Resources

- POSTER Managing case of infectious diseases in schools and other childcare settings
- POSTER Should I keep my child off school?
- BLOG A parent's guide to keeping kids healthy this school year UK Health Security
 Agency

The SW Health Protection Team also continues to run free Health Protection webinars aimed at providing early years and education colleagues with information about how to prevent and manage seasonal cases and outbreaks. The next 2 webinars are scheduled for **Thursday 27th March 4-5pm** and **Thursday 15th May 4-5pm**. You can book your place here <u>Health</u> Protection in Education and Early Years settings Webinar

Attendance support provided by the local authority



Bristol's Attendance Toolkit



The Attendance Toolkit has been developed to provide schools and educational settings with a single online location to receive up to date attendance information, tools and templates.

The Attendance Toolkit, which is being regularly updated, is intended for professional use only and can be accessed via a SharePoint site and is available by following the link:

<u>Attendance Toolkit - Home (sharepoint.com)</u>

The Attendance Toolkit includes templates such as the Model Attendance Policy, Leave of absence request templates, leaflets, attendance quick guides etc...

Weekly attendance drop-in: for attendance questions, advice & guidance



To support the work of school-based Attendance Officers, champions and other colleagues concerned about an attendance issue, we have a weekly online drop-in session every:

- Tuesday 11am-12 noon during term time
- NEW Thursday 3-4pm during term time

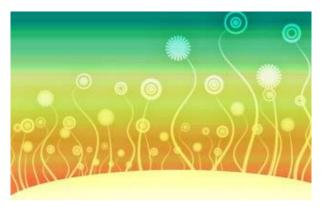
We encourage colleagues to join the meeting if they have specific questions relating to attendance or would like to share best practice. Join the Zoom meeting at:

https://zoom.us/j/95659748840?pwd=WkRCZy93b0FZRGkxeU5oRlRRMHhsZz09

Meeting ID: 956 5974 8840

Passcode: 354077

Attendance targeting support meetings (TSMs)



The Education Welfare Service holds regular (between 1-3 per academic year) attendance conversations with all schools individually, using their attendance data to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions for those pupils.

Please refer to the attendance toolkit in the TSM section for a copy of the latest meeting agenda template.

It is recommended that you have access to the view your school's data reports via the DfE daily attendance data reporting.

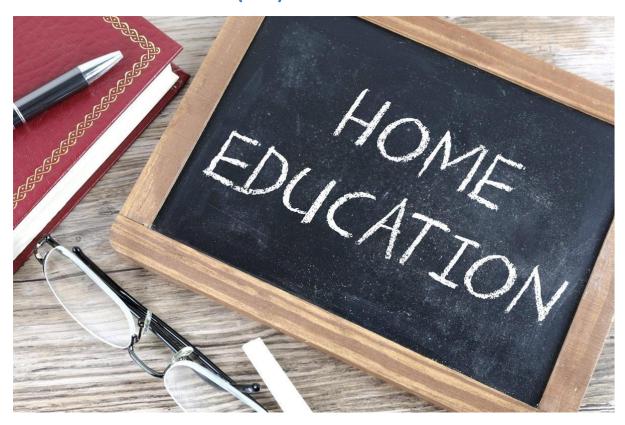
It is also essential practice for your school's attendance senior leader to participate with your school's TSM on a consistent basis.

The meetings will also provide an opportunity to keep up to date with who your SLT attendance champion & your school-based attendance officers are, capture data on the number of Attendance Contracts that have been offered and Notice to Improve letters that have been sent by your school.

If you have questions about your schools TSM please contact the EWS on education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk

For further information about TSMs please watch the DfE TSM webinar 2024: https://youtu.be/ERNHbDZiHs4?list=PLXjcCX3hH9LXqKNI35VTWirdJnzjO3s2b

Elective Home Education (EHE)



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

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 - https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2020/10/20/all-you-need-to-know-about-home-schooling-and-elective-home-education-ehe/

Please do not persuade or encourage parents to consider EHE as an option – this could be seen as 'off-rolling'. School staff must not support parents to write EHE removal from roll letters.

Please do signpost parents to impartial information that outlines what EHE entails. National EHE guidance for parents is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education

Please ensure any parents considering EHE are made aware of the LA EHE guidance https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/schools-learning-and-early-years/education-outside-mainstream-schools/home-education

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

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

Children Missing Education (CME) and Pupil Tracking processes



Guidance for adding and deleting pupils from roll.

CME and Pupil Tracking are processes that are designed to support schools to trace and locate pupils who's whereabouts are unknown/missing/failed to return/moved away.

These processes don't support long term non-attenders (without a change in circumstances).

Further information about making CME and pupil tracking referrals and removing from roll, please refer to the BCC CME Guidance document here:

https://www.bristol.gov.uk/business/schools-learning-and-early-years-for-professionals/attendance-and-inclusion/children-missing-education-cme

For questions please email childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk

National CME statutory guidance is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education

EWS Traded Offer



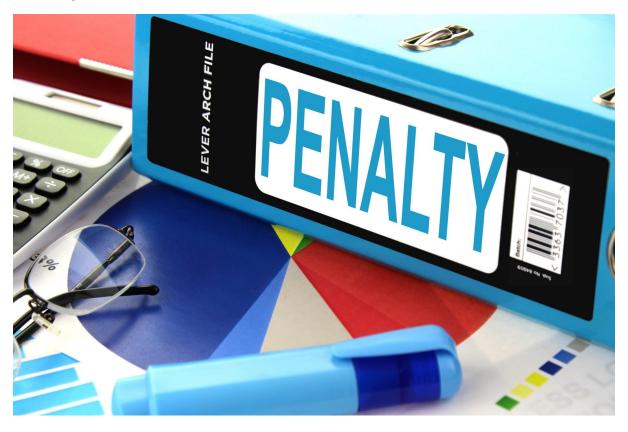
All schools can commission the Local Authority to act on behalf of the school to fulfil attendance expectations.

We have had a well embedded **traded attendance offer** for many years. This is because schools can make autonomous decisions about how they resource their attendance functions.

In addition to your free core offer, you may wish to **add-on traded attendance products/services** from us (or another independent attendance provider).

Please refer to the EWS brochure of services on the attendance toolkit for further information and costs or email education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk to request a brochure.

Penalty Notices



In August 2024 there were significant national changes to the **Penalty Notice Code of Conduct and process**, including documents and templates.

Our fully revised Code of Conduct is available on our webpage: https://www.bristol.gov.uk/business/schools-learning-and-early-years-for-professionals/attendance-and-inclusion/education-welfare-service

To support you with the changes, all our latest documents are available on the attendance toolkit. This includes our fully revised Penalty Notice request forms.

Don't forget about the new duty to consider a Penalty Notice if the threshold has been met, and the new requirement to send a Notice to Improve warning letter.

Timeliness of making PN requests to us is important, we ask within 2 school weeks of last unauthorised absence

If you are not sure on the arrangements for Penalty Notices including making requests, please contact educationpenaltynotices@bristol.gov.uk for assistance and/or attend our fully revised free Parental Responsibility Measures – Penalty Notice training session, booking via Trading with Schools.

DfE Penalty Notice webinar2024:

https://youtu.be/KZOonios Bc?list=PLXjcCX3hH9LXqKNI35VTWirdJnzjO3s2b

Attendance Data



National Attendance Data



- Academic year 2023/24 Parental responsibility measures data (national, regional and LA level) can be accessed here: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/parental-responsibility-measures
- Academic year 2023/24 Pupil absence in schools in England data (national, regional and LA level) can be accessed here: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england/2023-24

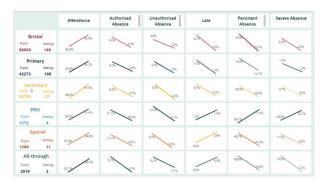
Local Attendance Data



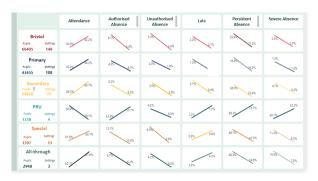
Please note that this data comes directly into the local authority from school MIS and includes schools who share their attendance data with the local authority.



1 - Term 1 24/25 Data



2 - Term 2 24/25 (up to 6th Dec 2024) — academic year to date set against last academic year



3 - Term 3 24/25 (up to 7th February 2025) - academic year to date set against last academic year



4 - Term 4 24/25 (up to 28th March 2025) - academic year to date set against last academic year.

Other sources of attendance data for schools include:

- 1. Your schools own Management of Information system attendance data reports
- The DfE View your school's own attendance data (which includes national and regional comparators & absence bandings for your setting) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/monitor-your-school-attendance-user-guide
- 3. The DfE fortnightly attendance data release (which you can use to create your own tables and includes national and regional comparators)
 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-attendance-in-schools

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

Alternatively, for general attendance related questions, please contact the EWS Helpline on 0117 3521438 or email education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk and a Duty Education Welfare Officer will be available to assist you.