



# **Termly Attendance Update – Term 1 23/24**

## **w/c 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023**



Welcome to term 1's edition of the Attendance Update. This academic year, the Attendance Update has changed frequency to a termly edition.

It's been a busy start to the academic year. We hope you all manage to get a well-earned rest over the October holiday, and we look forward to working with you in term 2.

Term 2 edition due for release in December 2023.

## **Section 1: News**

### **Letter to school leaders on mild illness and school attendance**



The Chief Medical Officer and leading health professionals have written to schools to provide a clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance.

They have shared useful information for schools to pass onto parents including when it's appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with a mild illness.

[Letter to school leaders on mild illness and school attendance - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)  
([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))



## Infographic: Why attendance is everyone's business

The Children's Commissioner has produced an infographic to help support colleagues understand the importance of attendance.

For more information please visit:

[CC A4 HEADER \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

## Guide for Parents on school attendance

Members of the Attendance Action Alliance have worked with the Department for Education to develop this short guide which helps parents understand how they can work with their school and local authority to support their children to attend school and get the right support.



For more information please visit : [DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)



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 \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.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 \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

## Parenting Contracts

### What is a parenting contract?

A parenting contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. A contract is not

legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. A parenting contract is not a punitive tool it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents cannot be compelled to enter a contract, and they cannot be agreed in a parent's absence.

### **Why is it a helpful tool to support attendance?**

A parenting contract can help to evidence the help and support that has been offered by the school, and it also helps to formally note what has been done to date.

The May 2022 Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance explains in more detail the benefits of a parenting contract and also sets out expectations on schools and local authorities to have considered a parenting contract prior to prosecution:

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

### **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](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

### **Targeting Support Meetings (TSMs)**

During term 2, the wider delivery of the targeting support meetings will commence. The rollout will start by offering TSMs to secondary schools across the City. Officers from the Education Welfare Service will be in contact with secondary schools to arrange a date and time for the online meeting to take place. Further information about TSMs can be found in the guidance [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

### **South West Attendance Network**

The newly developed South West Attendance Network held its first meeting in September.

You will likely have heard about the government initiative to support improved attendance in schools, through the launch of Attendance Hubs. Wallscourt Farm Academy in South Gloucestershire is currently the only Attendance hub based in the South West, and for schools who have missed out on joining a hub, they are offering an additional opportunity to engage in a discussion about attendance through the newly established SW Attendance Network.

- The network will **meet three times this academic year** and is hosted **virtually**. All colleagues are welcome to attend, whatever their role in attendance.
- The network will start with an opportunity to share the thinking, resources and practice developed as part of the CLF Attendance Hub, which has close links to supporting disadvantaged learners to attend well. Across year 1, they will focus on three themes -  
Culture  
Capacity - expertise and professional development to support effective attendance practice.  
Use of attendance data for impact
- The network intends to draw on experts across the country to deliver content, drawing on expertise in other hubs to maximise impact of this DfE initiative across the South West. Each meeting will include a balance of presentation and opportunities to reflect and discuss, with pre-thinking provided via sign up to an email distribution list.

Fill in your details here to be added to their distribution list:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=ViObpySMIkm0IMbibQtAkt1kQZURmwdPkTddD8XPkpRUNVc3MUNTnjA1MIZJSEdaV0xPMEZHsVMMyMCQIQCN0PWcu>

## Section 2: Key Dates

**Upcoming training that is coming up being run by the CAMHS Primary Mental Health Specialist Team - Emotionally Based School Avoidance- Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 1.00-3.00pm**

Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a broad umbrella term used to describe a group of children and young people who have severe difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors. The impact of EBSA is far reaching. Young people who have prolonged absence from school are at risk of poorer outcomes in relation to academic attainment, social opportunities and employment opportunities. EBSA is also associated with poor adult mental health. This training session will explore the definition of EBSA and will identify signs of EBSA. We will also explore a wide range of risk factors associated with EBSA as well as looking at resilience factors and strategies to support affected young people. This training is for professionals only and not parents.

Book your place here: <https://forms.gle/WHsbExh5iQrfYMrr5>

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

### [School Attendance Network Meetings](#)

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 8<sup>th</sup> 1-3pm

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> 10-12 noon

#### **January/February 2024**

Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> 1-3pm

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> 10-12noon

#### **April 2024**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> 1-3pm

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> 10-12noon

Training – virtually, via Zoom

Booking via Trading with Schools

Trading with Schools Helpline 0117 922 2444

Email: tradingwithschools@bristol.gov.uk

### [Children Missing Education - Free](#)

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

### [Parental Responsibility Measures - Irregular Attendance Prosecutions – Chargeable £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

### [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).

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

### [Attendance Officers Introduction to Attendance Course – Chargeable £50 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' 2022.

September 2023 – Fri 15<sup>th</sup> and Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> 10-12 noon

January 2024 – Fri 12<sup>th</sup> and Fri 19<sup>th</sup> 10-12 noon

April 2024 – Fri 19<sup>th</sup> and Fri 26<sup>th</sup> 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

Attendance advice sheet for professionals - Call to support strong school attendance - <https://tradingwithschools.org/Article/147043>

**Call to support strong school attendance**

The new school attendance guidance [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/107848/school\\_attendance\\_2022.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107848/school_attendance_2022.pdf) sets out how schools and local authorities should work together to tackle absence, focusing on a 'support first' approach.

This information document is intended for operational use by colleagues who have contact with parents and children to help to communicate the importance of regular school attendance. Trusted visitor giving the same message are crucial. Please save the information and links and share them with families as necessary.

Some examples are:

- social workers and early help workers ensuring that every conversation with a pupil and family reviews school attendance and addressing any barriers
- school nurses identifying and working with pupils who are anxious about returning to school
- family hubs giving out information to parents on illness and absence <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/childrens-services/childrens-welfare-service/parent-ask-guide-for-parent-on-school-attendance.pdf>

Some professionally crafted questions to use with parents and children are:

- What's the name of your child's school and when did they last attend?
- When school is open, does your child usually attend every day?
- Does anything get in the way of your child attending school? If so, what?

As a professional, did you also know, if you are worried about a child's attendance, you can come along to our free weekly attendance drop-in session where we can provide you with signposting advice and guidance.

Attendance Drop-In Session - Weekly, term time only, Tues 11-12noon

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/9542574884?pwd=VW9SczU5b0F7RkxlcUk0RjR0aGln720j>

Meeting ID: 954 257 4884  
Passcode: 544077

Other sources of information to assist with attendance in Bristol are:

- School attendance - <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristol-local-offer/parents-and-carers/education/school-attendance-365-495-4954>
- Children missing education (CME) - <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/parents/school-learning-and-early-years-for-professionals/attendance-and-education/children-missing-education-site>
- Information about applying for a school place - <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/parents/school-learning-and-early-years/school-admissions>
- Home education (also known as elective home education) - <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/parents/school-learning-and-early-years/education-outside-mainstream-school/home-education>

It is essential that services working in partnership with schools, intervene early where problems emerge, particularly for children and families with more complex circumstances. A joined up local effort is critical. Thank you for your commitment to reducing pupil absence and helping to lead the local response.

If you require further information, please contact:  
Education Welfare Service - [education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk)

August 2023

### School Attendance is everyone's business

School absence rates are still above pre-Covid levels and the most vulnerable children are more likely to be absent. Improving school attendance really is a critical priority.

We know attendance has long term impacts on a child's life chances, including attainment, employment prospects and future earnings.

Your continued support in ensuring strong school attendance for all children for the new academic year is vital.

This PDF - [Call to support strong school attendance | Trading with Schools](https://tradingwithschools.org/Article/147043) is an information document intended for operational use by colleagues who have contact with parents and children to help to communicate the importance of regular school attendance.

# 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.

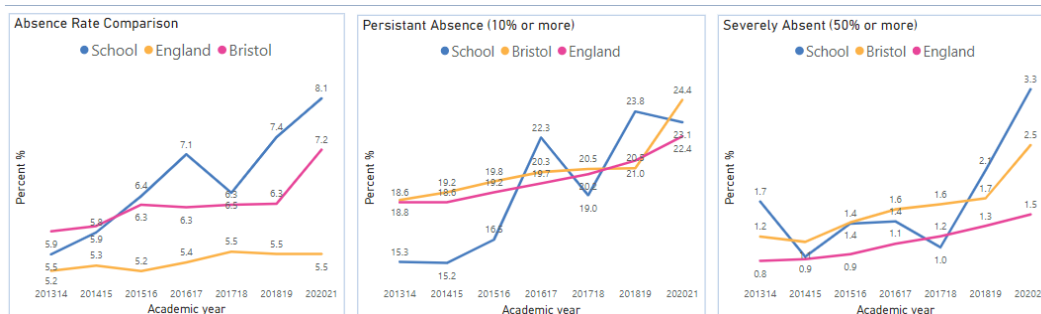
Please see the information available on our [website](#), along with more details about our School Nursing service.



## 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](mailto:attendanceandbelongingteam@bristol.gov.uk)





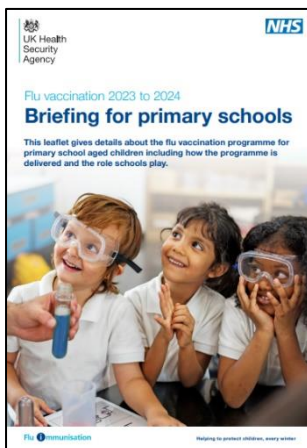
## Free ESOL Conversation Clubs in Bristol

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](https://www.joinesol.com) –

[Community Learning Bristol \(communitylearningwest.net\)](https://www.communitylearningwest.net)

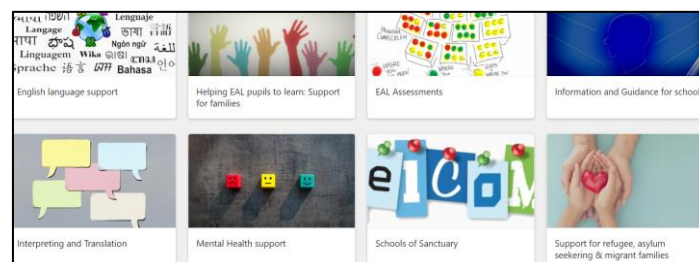
## Flu Vaccination 2023-24



This autumn term 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

## 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](mailto: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: [Fines for parents for taking children out of school: What you need to know - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2023/10/23/parent-fines-for-missing-school-what-you-need-to-know/)

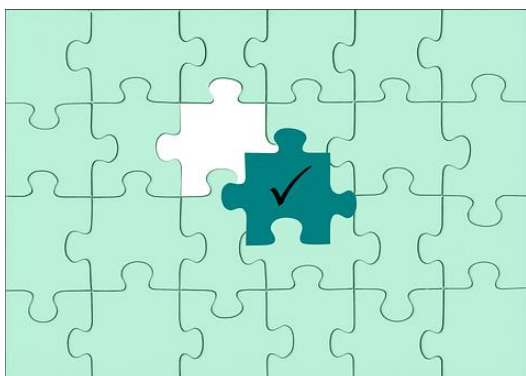
## Bulk Admissions (Year 7 and Reception applications for September 2024) – National Application Deadlines



Secondary application deadline is **31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**. Please publicise the deadline and encourage and support families to make an on-time application. For further information please visit [Apply for a new year 7 secondary school place \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/apply-for-a-new-year-7-secondary-school-place/)

- Reception application deadline is **15<sup>th</sup> January 2024**. Again, please publicise the deadline and encourage and support families to make an on-time application. For further information please visit [Apply for a new reception primary place \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/apply-for-a-new-reception-primary-place/)
- 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](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/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](mailto:sen@bristol.gov.uk) for how to apply.

## 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](mailto: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 \(CME\) \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/children-missing-education-cme)

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 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91222/school-admissions-code-2021.pdf)

### 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](https://www.gov.uk/help-for-households)

## 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



For further details please visit

[Emergency payments - local crisis and prevention fund - bristol.gov.uk](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/emergency-payments-local-crisis-and-prevention-fund)

## 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.

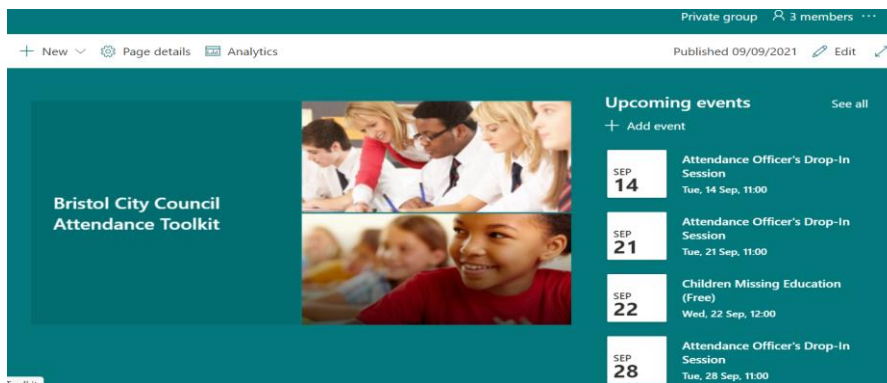
Join the Zoom meeting at **(new academic, year new link! Please save the new link):**

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

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 [Attendance Toolkit - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#) 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](mailto: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	Phase	Term to Date	Phase	Year to Date
All-through		91.37	89.07	85.86	84.46	84.89	85.46	All-through	86.63	All-through	86.63
Specialist	12.02	67.07	74.97	73.64	72.51	71.50	77.10	Specialist	72.88	Specialist	72.88
Primary	78.47	95.13	95.92	95.13	94.47	94.88	94.97	Primary	95.07	Primary	95.07
Secondary		93.85	93.21	91.61	90.12	90.61	91.61	Secondary	91.74	Secondary	91.74
All	65.92	94.06	94.05	92.86	91.84	92.22	92.93	All	92.94	All	92.94

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

## 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](mailto:vanessa.davies@bristol.gov.uk)