



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A background image showing a desk with a stethoscope, a pen, and some papers, overlaid with a semi-transparent white box containing the title text.

Working Together to Improve School Attendance

AGENDA

Welcome & Introductions

Attendance Facts/Quiz

Why Attendance Matters?

South East and regional landscape

Discussions



INTRODUCTIONS



James Fowler

Education Entitlement Manager



Fiona Hostler

Head of Education Access and Support



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**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Carole Vernon

Principal Education Welfare Officer

AUDIENCE GAUGE



- How familiar are you with the topic of Working Together to Improve School Attendance?
- <https://app.sli.do/event/1YXBGfsR8qdsV7CQNthX8B>



ATTENDANCE QUIZ



<https://app.sli.do/event/1YXBGfsR8qdsV7CQNthX8B>



WHY ARE WE HERE?

“Securing good attendance cannot [...] be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools’ efforts on

curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing [...]

- “It cannot solely be [...] a single member of staff, or organisation,
- **it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and nonteaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.”**

Source: Working together to improve school attendance, DfE 2022 & 2024



SAFEGUARDING

- “Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.”



ASSESSMENTS SHOULD:

“[...]recognise a child’s entitlement to a full-time education and the positive impact attendance at school has on personal development and attainment”

Source: Working together to safeguard children, HM Government 2023



ROLE OF GP'S

“gps have close and trusted relationships with children and their families, who will often turn to their doctor first when they have concerns. gps can use this opportunity to reinforce the health and wellbeing benefits gained from a good school attendance”

Source: [The role of the GP in maximising school attendance](#) | [British Journal of General Practice \(bjgp.org\)](#)



IMPACT

Why is school attendance so important and what are the risks of missing a day? – The Education Hub (blog.gov.uk)

1 or 2 absences a week doesn't seem like much, but this is what it can lead to...

Student misses..	This equals..	Which is...	Over 13 years of school...
1 day per month	10 days per year	2 weeks per year	Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of a year
4 days per quarter	16 days per year	3 weeks per year	Just over 1 year
1 day per week	36 days per year	7 weeks per year	Just over 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years
2 days per week	72 days per year	14 weeks per year	Just over 5 years



IMPACT

Figure 2: Overall attainment in reading, writing and maths at the end of KS2 by percentage of sessions missed over KS2

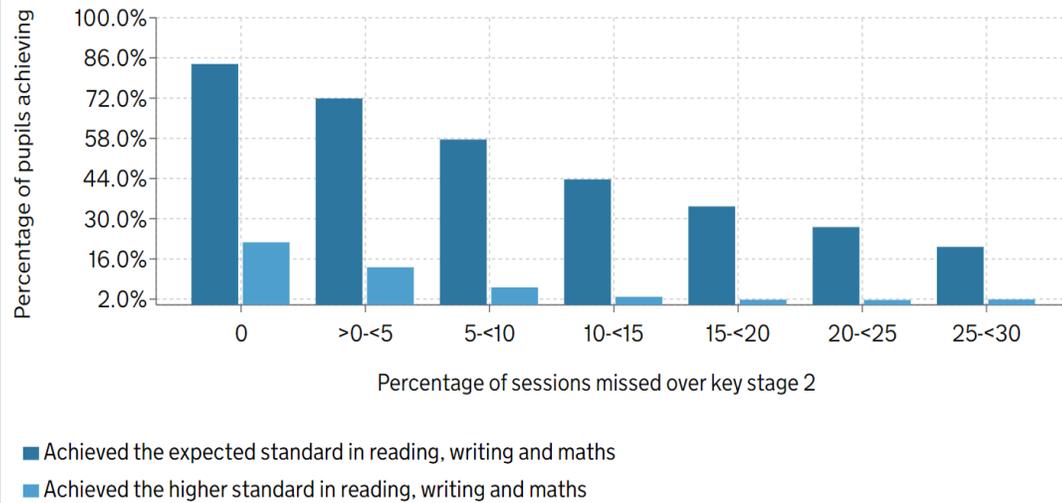
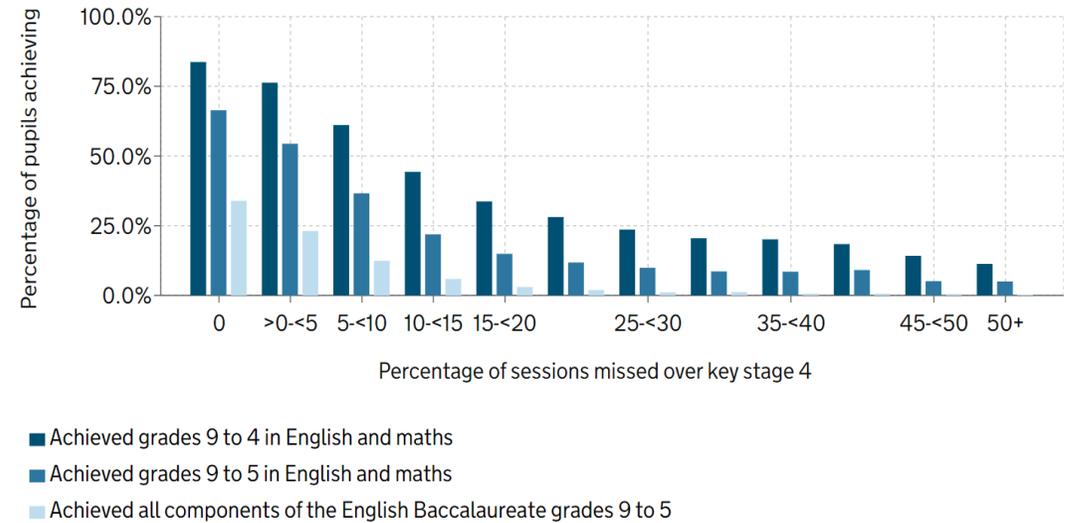
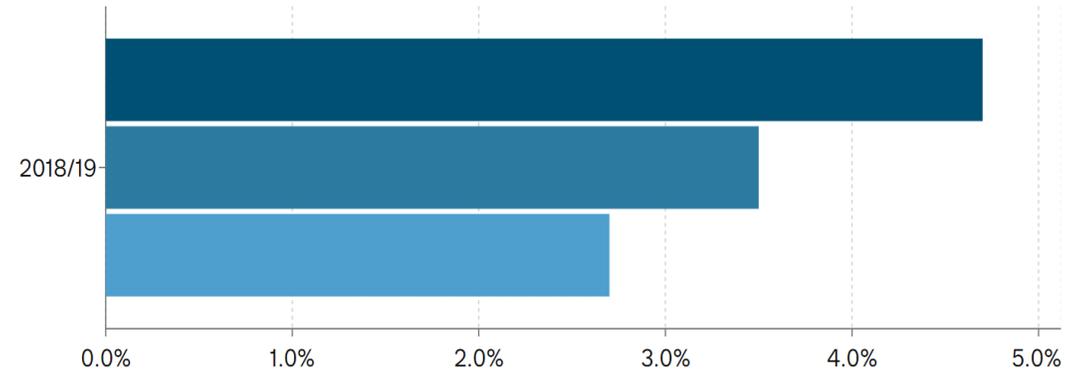


Figure 6: Overall attainment in stated qualifications at the end of KS4 by percentage of sessions missed over KS4



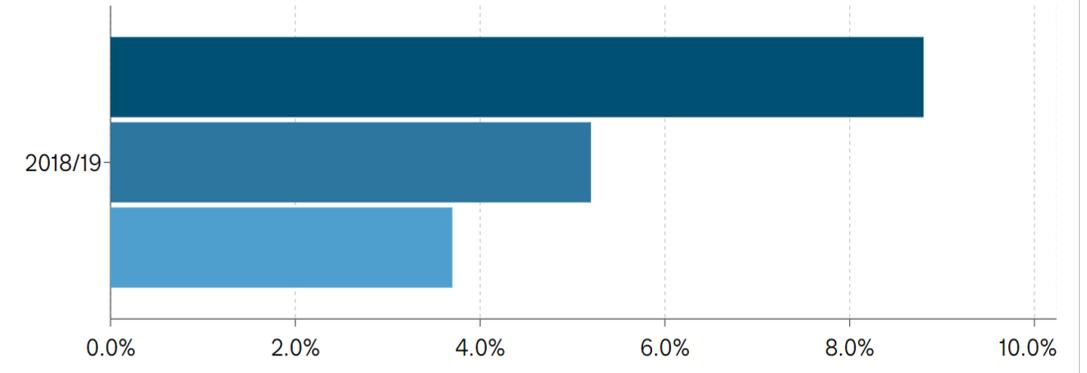
IMPACT

Figure 1: Overall absence rate over the key stage by attainment in reading, writing and maths at the end of key stage 2 in England



- Did not achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths
- Achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths
- Achieved the higher standard in reading, writing and maths

Figure 4: Overall absence rate over the key stage by attainment in English and maths GCSEs at the end of key stage 4 in England



- Did not achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and maths
- Achieved grade 4 in English and maths
- Achieved grade 9 to 5 in English and maths



SOUTH EAST & READING LANDSCAPE



WHAT IS IT LIKE TO GROW UP IN THE SOUTH EAST?

For most children, the South East is a great place in which to be born and grow up



- The South East is the **second most affluent region in England**, by weekly earnings.
- The South East has **lower unemployment rates than the national average**.
- The South East has the **second highest percentage** of adults in **senior management positions**.
- On average, **15.1% of South East children are in low income families**, compared to 20.2% nationally.

However...

- There are **pockets with significantly lower earnings** such as **Hastings, Isle of White and Arun**.
- In **Southampton**, 25% of children are in **low income families**; in **Wokingham** it is 7.6%.

% of people that are unemployed	
Region	Percentage
North West	5.3
North East	5.2
West Midlands	5.0
London	4.8
East of England	4.3
East Midlands	4.1
South East	3.9
South West	3.6
Yorkshire and The Humber	2.9



EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH EAST

On average, education outcomes are in line with national for all measures at primary



% reaching expected standard in maths by region

KS1

- Year 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics in the South East is **in line with the national average** which is 79%.
- In phonics, children eligible for free school meals perform worse than **any other region in England.**
- Pupils in the South East **exceed the national average** when it comes to reaching the expected standard in reading and maths.

% reaching expected standard in reading by region



EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH EAST

... and at secondary



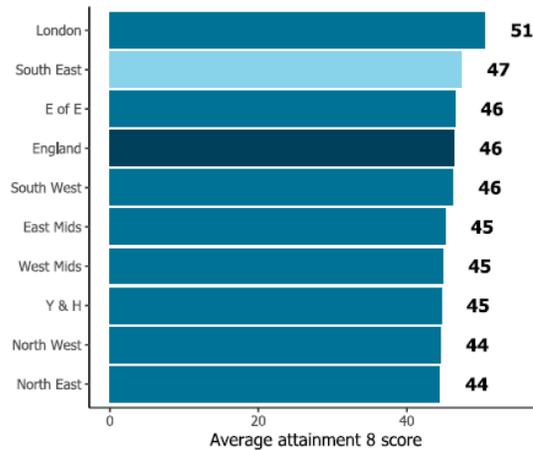
■ KS4

■ The South East region has the **2nd highest average attainment 8**, by region, in England.

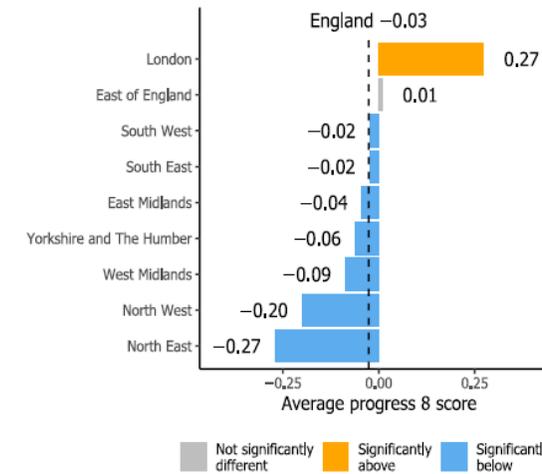
■ The proportion of pupils achieving gaining a **grade 4+ or grade 5+** in their GCSEs is **higher than the national average**.

■ However, **average progress 8 is significantly below** the national average.

Average attainment 8 by region, 2023



Average progress 8 by region, 2023

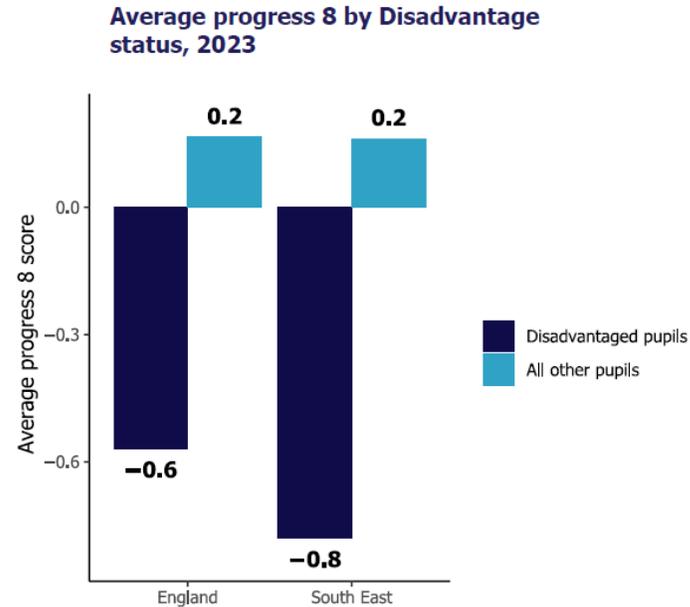


DISADVANTAGE IN THE SOUTH EAST

However, this is not the case if you come from a poorer household



- The South East has the **largest gap between advantaged and disadvantaged attainment** in England.
- The educational performance of pupil premium children is the **lowest in the country**.
- Disadvantaged children in KS4 had an average progress 8 score of -0.8 which is **lower than the national average** which is -0.6.
- In 2022, KS2 progress for disadvantaged children in reading, writing and maths was **significantly lower than the national average**.

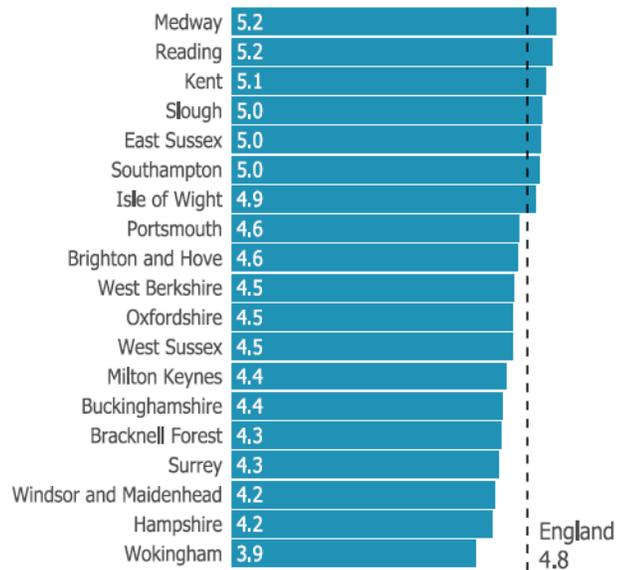


ATTENDANCE COMPARATOR

Absence is lower than the national average, but still an issue in the South East



Primary School Absence by Local Authority



- Absence in the South East is **broadly in line with the national average**, with 6.2% of children being absent from school compared with 6.3% nationally.
- Absence rates in **primary schools** in the South East are 4.6% which is **lower than the national average** of 4.8%. In **secondary schools** absence rates are **in line with the national average** of 8%.



DATA FROM LAS

LA Name	No of pupils	No of PAs	No of FSM	No of EHCP	No of SEN Support
West Berkshire	25845	4288	3612	1225	4534
Reading	24795	5702	1879	487	1207
Oxfordshire	97758	14862	16677	5325	17193
Wokingham	29237		3097	1513	3446
Buckinghamshire	90592	13684	13460	4728	10717



JAMES FOWLER – WORKING TOGETHER



BARRIERS TO ATTENDANCE



- <https://app.sli.do/event/1YXBGfsR8qdsV7CQNthX8B>
- What are some key factors affecting school attendance you have observed?



SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE



- <https://app.sli.do/event/1YXBGfsR8qdsV7CQNthX8B>
- What are you already doing that supports children to attend school?



WHAT CAN WE DO TO SUPPORT YOU?



- <https://app.sli.do/event/kWAe1z8qHmdTXyR9TVQMQj>
- How can your local partnership support you?
- Ideas of 'something else' in the chat



THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION

Support families with reassuring, sensitive dialogue about common worries, especially during transitions or new terms. Early concerns—if unaddressed—can quickly escalate into patterns of non-attendance. Encourage parents to engage openly with school staff and consider joint support plans where necessary. Schools are often incredibly creative and able to make reasonable adjustments to promote attendance. They are able to do more with medical advice.



HELPFUL?



- <https://app.sli.do/event/kWAe1z8qHmdTXyR9TVQMQj>
- On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is 'not at all', do you feel that you have been listened to today, have confidence in how we can work together to improve school attendance and know what you can do?
- If you've got any further suggestions on how we can work together, **please put into the chat.**



THANK YOU

Contacts:

Local Authority	LA contact for family or professional for advice:
Buckinghamshire	Present for Their Future Buckinghamshire Council countyattendanceteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Oxfordshire	attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk Contact the Education, Employment and Training (EET) Team Oxfordshire County Council
Reading	cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org Early help - Brighter Futures For Children
Wokingham	Education.welfare@wokingham.gov.uk triage@wokingham.gov.uk
West Berkshire	ewss@westberks.gov.uk Telephone: 01635 503090 child@westberks.gov.uk

Further Reading:

- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- [Children missing education \(CME\)](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- GP Bulletin (see emails/Sharepoint)

