TOGETHER FOR BETTER ATTENDANCE

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

Every day in school. Every opportunity in life.



Thank you for supporting school attendance in York.

In 2025/26 we've made real progress together – through the hard work and commitment of children, young people, families, schools and partners across the city.

ATTENDANCE IS MEASURED IN THREE WAYS:

OVERALL ABSENCE
The total percentage of possible sessions missed.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE
Below 90% attendance –
19 days (or more) missed in a school year.

SEVERE ABSENCE
Below 50% attendance –
95 days (or more) missed in a school year.

WE ARE PROUD OF OUR PROGRESS

Last year we saw:

- **Persistent Absence** in primary and secondary York schools improved to better than national and regional comparisons, and better than identified similar local areas in the country.
- **Primary Absence** improved to over 95% and returned to almost in line with levels before the pandemic.
- **Primary Severe Absence** improved to be in line with national and regional comparisons.

WHY ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Strong school attendance helps children and young people:

- ACHIEVE ACADEMICALLY
- ACCESS SUPPORT
- ENJOY OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN AND BEYOND SCHOOL

We know not everyone in our city is managing regular, secure attendance and that when children and young people miss school, they miss out.

This is particularly the case for some students with EHCPs and/or who are eligible for Free School Meals.

HOW WE SUPPORT FAMILIES

Our whole system, including schools, work with a **Support First** approach when attendance concerns arise to explore barriers with any family struggling.
Actions may include:

- Support meetings
- School based interventions and assessments
- Gaining support from relevant services
- Considering short term adaptations within the school day

WORKING TOGETHER MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

School leaders will make every endeavour to work in partnership with families.

We ask you to engage with your school team so we can take a joined up 'team' approach – we know this is what makes the difference.

On rare occasions, where parents and carers do not engage with the support being offered and all attempts to improve this have been exhausted, we have a **legal duty** to consider formal responses. This includes legal and social care led interventions, but **support will always** be on offer even after such processes begin.

Please look to work in partnership with your school team, as we expect from them too.

THANK YOU! LET'S MAKE 2026/27 A YEAR OF ATTENDANCE

Everyone working together so no one is left behind on our improvement journey.

LOOK OUT FOR:

Support sessions at **SEND Central**
SEND CENTRAL – York SEND Local Offer

Our new School Attendance Webpage – launching soon with resources for families, wider professionals and education settings

Is my child too ill for school? – NHS

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