

Leeds Children’s Trust Board

Date of meeting:	12 September 2011
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Report title:	Update on Children’s Services Obsessions – Improving School Attendance

Summary:

This is the third of the obsession reports to be presented to the Children’s Trust Board. The report presents progress on improving school attendance detailing provisional results for the first two terms of the 2010/11 academic year and highlighting the good work ongoing in clusters. It recognises that to make the significant impact needed, especially at the secondary level, a renewal of our strategy is needed based on recognition of the issues that lie behind absence and the partnership commitment needed to address these. Consideration is also given to national changes to the definition of persistent absence.

Recommendations:

The Children’s Trust Board is recommended to:

1. Share partners’ perspectives on progress against this obsession.
2. Note provisional 2010/11 half term 1-4 attendance information.
3. Endorse the work being undertaken to develop a new shared approach for improving school attendance and support the development of an options paper on our future approach to attendance.
4. Support the good initial work that has been undertaken in clusters and request that the next obsession report on attendance provides an update and assessment of impact.
5. Require individual agencies to share their experience of new approaches and to evaluate impact.

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 As part of the children’s trust performance framework the Children’s Trust Board (CTB) will receive regular progress reports on the three children’s obsessions. These are to facilitate thematic discussions that cover an evaluation of impact, development of policy direction and improvements in our partnership approach. These reports will complement evaluative report cards for the key children and young people’s plan indicators.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on our efforts to improve children and young people’s attendance at school and to reduce rates of persistent absence. This reflects our wider commitment to the outcome of helping children and young people do well at all levels of learning and have the skills for life. Additionally we recognise that school absence, especially persistent absence, is a potential symptom of broader needs relevant to all five outcomes of the Leeds Children and Young People’s Plan.
- 1.3 This report focuses on both an update on progress, similar to previous obsession reports, and beginning a process to renew our strategy and approach for improving school attendance.

2.0 Strategic Overview

- 2.1 Provisional data for 2010/11 half terms 1-4 shows improvements in both primary and secondary attendance and persistent absence. As national data is not available until October we are not able to confirm how these improvements compare.
- 2.2 The data highlights that the vast majority of children in Leeds attend school regularly without the need for any additional or targeted support. However, despite year on year reductions in persistent absence and improvements in attendance, a significant cohort of children in Leeds misses an unacceptable amount of school. It is also the case that some groups of children are overly represented in this cohort and have additional factors that make them more vulnerable to poor outcomes e.g. they have Special Educational Needs, are entitled to Free School Meals, are of Gypsy Roma Traveller heritage.
- 2.3 Through regular attendance, there is an expectation that all children should be accessing high quality learning and a curriculum which meets their needs. High levels of absence challenge that this expectation is being met. In agreeing school attendance as a partnership obsession for Leeds we recognised the need to do better. While the data presented in this report shows improvement it is likely that comparative performance at the secondary level while improved will remain poor. We therefore need

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attendance service will change with functions being more embedded in targeted services within localities.

- 2.4 The good work in recent months at cluster levels involving the use of OBA techniques and improved targeting of support will continue to be built on. This will include evaluation of impact and sharing of good practice.
- 2.5 Nationally the definition of persistent absence is being lowered from missing 20% or more of school sessions to 15% or more. This will lead to a significant increase in the number of children and young people considered to be persistently absent. While raising challenges around resources it is consistent with an approach focused on early intervention and will inform the renewal of our strategy.

3.0 Establishing a new Leeds approach to improving school attendance

- 3.1 The vision for Leeds is to become a Child Friendly City, as well as being the best council. In order to achieve these ambitions, we must ensure that every child in Leeds is accessing educational opportunities and that our services effectively support children and families to mitigate those factors that may limit access.
- 3.2 This section revisits the background by which attendance is a Leeds Children’s Trust Obsession. This is intended to frame a renewal of our partnership strategy for improving school attendance and for addressing the causes that contribute to absence. This is a first step to developing an options appraisal of our future partnership approach to this obsession.

3.3 Context

- 2010 mid-year population estimates indicate that the 5-16 year old population in Leeds is 96,319. In terms of numbers on the roll of a maintained school in Leeds, the January 2011 school census recorded 93,179 children and young people in reception through to year 11.
- Between 2000/01 and 2009/10 the number of births in Leeds has increased by 35%, with 10,202 children born in 2009/10.
- While Leeds is overall less deprived than other large cities and average income is above regional averages, 23% of children and young people aged 0-16 (around 30,000) live in poverty
- The proportion of pupils in Leeds schools that are of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) heritage has increased by more than 6 percentage points since 2005 to 22.5% of pupils in 2011. A higher proportion of primary than secondary pupils are of BME heritage. 14% of pupils have

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English as an Additional Language and over 170 languages are recorded as spoken in Leeds schools.

- Attainment against Key Stage measures in Leeds is generally in line or close to national, accepting that from being largely in line at age 11 some gaps do widen by the ages of 16 and 19. It is also often true that the gap between the Leeds average to national is narrower than the gap between priority groups to their peers nationally, for example young people not entitled to Free School Meals attain closer to their peers nationally than those who are entitled.
- The percentage of 16-18 year olds that are not in education, employment or training (NEET) has fallen from 10.0% in 2007/08 to 8.3% in 2010/11 (based on November to January averages).

3.4 School Attendance

- While Leeds has seen good reductions in secondary persistent absence with over 1,000 fewer young people persistently absent in 2010/11 compared to 2007/08, there were 2733 years 7-11 pupils persistently absent from school during 2010/11. (Provisional half term 1-4 based on attending less than 80% of schools sessions.)
- In 2010 Leeds ranked in the bottom 10 authorities for secondary attendance level, unauthorised absence levels and persistent absence levels.
- There is a clear relationship between attendance and attainment. For the years 2008 to 2010 above 60% of the pupils who attended 95% or more of school sessions achieved 5 good GCSEs including English and maths; for the groups attending less than 80% of sessions around 10% achieved this standard each year.
- Analysis has shown that while 7% of year groups typically become NEET for those attending less than 80% of school sessions it is over a quarter who will be NEET and for those attending less than half of school sessions over a third will be NEET. (2007)
- Initial 2010/11 analysis of secondary persistent absence shows significant overrepresentation of FSM entitled children and young people, some over representation of SEN children and young people and a mixed picture with ethnic minorities. There is minimal gender difference.

3.5 Vision for Leeds

The vision for young people in Leeds is shaped by the overall vision for the city. Our Vision for 2030 is to be the best city in the UK.

By 2030, Leeds will be fair, open and welcoming. Leeds will be a place where everyone has an equal chance to live their life successfully and realise their potential. Leeds will embrace new ideas, involve local people, and welcome visitors and those who come here to live, work and learn.

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By 2030, Leeds’ economy will be prosperous and sustainable. We will create a prosperous and sustainable economy, using our resources effectively. Leeds will be successful and well-connected offering a good standard of living.

By 2030, all Leeds’ communities will be successful. Our communities will thrive and people will be confident, skilled, enterprising, active and involved.

3.6 **Vision for Children and Young People**

Leeds Children’s Trust has set out a clear vision for children and young people as part of the overall vision to be the best city in the UK, and the best city for children.

Leeds will be a child-friendly city where the voices, needs and priorities of children and young people are heard and inform the way we make decisions and take action.

Our children will:

- be safe from harm;
- do well in learning progressing to further and higher levels so they have skills for life;
- choose healthy lifestyles;
- have fun growing up; and
- be active citizens who feel they have voice and influence.

3.7 **The Leeds Education Challenge**

The Leeds Education Challenge makes a city-wide pledge to ensure that successful schools are at the heart of a child friendly City. Leeds schools are at the heart of our vision for local responsive integrated services to children. The entire community; political, business, learning, third sector and public sector is committed to supporting Leeds schools to improve. As part of the Leeds Challenge the Leeds community has agreed to support five pledges, these represent challenging goals but with the support of the entire city Leeds can be successful. The first of these pledges is to ensure that: **Every child and young person of school age will be in school or in learning.** We will evidence this pledge by:

- reducing the unauthorised absence rate to 1% for secondary and 0.5% for primary in Leeds by 2015.
- fully implement the Raising of the Participation Age.

3.8 **Vision for improving school attendance**

The evidence tells us that non-attendance at school is mostly only one symptom of other, often complex, problems. As a children’s obsession Leeds has chosen an approach that aims to secure the commitment of all those who work with children and families to contribute to improving school attendance and therefore improving the life chances of young

Agenda item 2a – Update on Children’s Services Obsessions – Improving School Attendance people in the city. The responsibility for improving attendance and reducing persistent absence demands a multi-faceted response across the city. Improving attendance will be based on:

- strategies that have a strong evidence base of ‘what works’
- active partnership with young people and local communities
- the involvement of parents and families in promoting and supporting children and young people’s learning
- all partners taking responsibility to promote, encourage and support children and young people’s involvement in learning and their families support for learning
- the provision of learning responding to individual needs, such as those of young carers
- the clear role of schools and their relationship with children and young people and with parents and families
- universal and targeted support being available and delivered within localities including use of the Common Assessment Framework
- more specialist support being available, prioritised to those with greatest need and the most vulnerable
- that good levels of school attendance is a measure of success applied to work with children and young people wherever possible

In delivering the vision all partners will work within the Council values of:

- Working as a team for Leeds
- Being open, honest and trusted
- Working with communities
- Treating people fairly
- Spending money wisely

The Children’s Trust Board is asked to approve the above as a starting point for a partnership conversation on renewing our strategic approach to school attendance and developing options for making best use of our collective resources.

4.0 Story behind the baseline - 2010-11 Half Terms 1-4

4.1 Attendance information is formally reported based on school half terms, usually half terms 1-4 or 1-5. This information comes from termly school census returns. While half term 1-5 is the main national comparator it has significant delays with the summer term attendance data only collected in October School Census. Therefore half term 1-4 information is used in this report. Other operational sources of information are also available or are being developed in terms of sessional information and school half termly returns to the local authority.

4.2 Provisional data indicates that **attendance in primary schools** has improved in 2010/11. Attendance increased by 0.43% percentage points

Agenda item 2a – Update on Children’s Services Obsessions – Improving School Attendance (ppts). The increase in attendance was mainly achieved through a decrease in authorised absence, which went down 0.39%ppts, but unauthorised absence also fell by 0.04%ppts.

Half-term 1-4 primary attendance

	Leeds	National	Statistical Neighbour Average
2005/06	94.30	94.24	94.36
2006/07	94.79	94.82	94.98
2007/08	94.67	94.74	94.88
2008/09	94.09	94.54	94.60
2009/10	94.26	94.66	94.72
2010/11*	94.70		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

- 4.3 In relation to reasons for absence, there was a decrease in sessions lost due to illness in 2010/11. Absence due to religious observance rose from 0.14% of sessions in 2009/10 to 0.19% of sessions in 2010/11. Absence due to agreed family holidays continued to fall in 2010/11, however, there was a corresponding increase in non-agreed family holidays indicating that schools refusing to authorise holidays is not necessarily impacting on the decisions of parents to take holidays during term time. The greatest reduction was seen in absence due to ‘other authorised circumstances’, this could partly be due to the introduction of a new code this year allowing schools to mark children as attendance not required rather than authorised absence when they could not attend due to bad weather.
- 4.4 Persistent absence from primary schools fell in 2010/11, with 2.0% of pupils missing more than 20% of school. The number of persistent absentees fell by 19.5% from 1,187 for half-terms 1-4 in 2009/10 to 955 in half-terms 1-4 2010/11.
- 4.5 Attendance improved by 0.79%ppts in Leeds **secondary schools** in 2010/11. Both authorised and unauthorised absence improved, with authorised absence falling by 0.63%ppts and unauthorised absence falling by 0.16%ppts. While these are good improvements in the Leeds context performance is likely to remain below comparators.

Half-term 1-4 secondary attendance

	Leeds	National	Statistical Neighbour Average
2005/06	90.58	91.76	91.67
2006/07	90.83	92.14	92.23
2007/08	91.51	92.70	92.87
2008/09	91.43	92.70	92.80
2009/10	91.60	93.16	93.18
2010/11*	92.39		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

4.6 Changes in reasons for absence were similar to those occurring in primary schools. Absence due to illness fell, as did sessions lost due to medical/dental appointments in school time with absence due to religious observance increasing in 2010/11. The pattern of decreasing absence due to agreed family holidays, but increased absence due to non-agreed family holidays seen in primary schools was also evident in secondary schools. There was also a significant decrease in absence due to ‘other authorised reason’. Absence due to lateness, other unauthorised reason and no reason yet provided also fell in secondary schools.

4.7 Persistent absence fell in secondary schools in 2010/11 by 0.5%ppts. The actual number of persistent absentees missing 20% of school fell by 8.6% to 2,733. In 2009/10 2,989 secondary pupils had been persistently absent.

4.8 The following points highlight the characteristic of those secondary pupils who were persistently absent (PA) in 2010/11:

- Pupils eligible for free school meals are four times more likely to be PA than pupils that are not eligible. FSM eligible pupils make up half of the PA cohort, but only 20% of the total cohort of secondary pupils.
- PA increases with age, with levels of PA 4 times higher in year 11 than in year 7. Over a third of pupils that were PA in 2010/11 were in year 11.
- Overall, the level of PA for pupils of Black and Minority heritage is lower than for non-BME pupils. However, some ethnic groups have levels of PA significantly higher than the Leeds average. Pupils of mixed heritage, White Eastern European, Bangladeshi and traveller groups have above average levels of PA.
- Pupils with SEN are more likely to be PA, particularly those on School Action plus, a quarter of these pupils are PA.
- There is no significant difference in levels of PA between genders.

4.9 Further detail is provided in appendix 1.

5.0 Partnership Progress and Locality Working

5.1 Each cluster in the city has either already conducted, or is committed to undertaking, an Outcomes Based Accountability workshop in order to bring a wide range of partners, agencies and services to the table to address attendance and persistent absence.

5.2 From these workshops “Turning the Curve” activity plans have been produced. A consistent theme and commitment in these plans is to early intervention. The learning from these workshops will be shared across all partnerships and will be used to inform city-wide strategy and activity.

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- 5.3 There are a significant number of clusters who are developing best practice around support for attendance, and other indicators of vulnerability. For example, the Bramley cluster are already using the “Top 100” methodology to take a broad view of families in need and to allocate lead practitioners to best effect. Other clusters are developing multi-agency “Care and Support” meetings to deliver family support around a range of needs. Use of the Common Assessment Framework is being promoted.
- 5.4 The development of cross-cluster policies around attendance is helping to enhance consistency both in practice and in the messages about good attendance that are understood by parents/carers.
- 5.5 Work with the Safer Schools partnerships is developing a locality based model for targeting truancy, this is shifting the focus from a city-centre dedicated service.
- 5.6 Area Inclusion Partnerships continue to deliver the broader partnership responsibilities for outcomes in behaviour and attendance where, in particular, successful Fair Access protocols and the management of exclusions between partnership schools and local models of behaviour provision support improvements in attendance.
- 5.7 The Leeds Education Challenge embeds the need to improve attendance to secure the highest levels of educational attainment for the children and young people of Leeds.

6.0 Areas for Partnership Development

- 6.1 The main area of partnership development is the renewal of our strategic approach as outlined in section 3. This will influence the reshaping of attendance functions both within the emerging Leeds City Council Children’s Services structure and the wider partnership. A review and options paper on the future delivery of attendance services is to be developed. This will be based on attendance at school being owned, resourced and delivered through local partnerships and clusters. This will be broader than a service review reflecting the whole partnership approach including the role of Area Inclusion Partnerships and clusters.
- 6.2 The Children’s Trust Board will play a key role in the accountability framework for the deployment of resource – particularly where funds or the management of resource has been devolved to the partnerships. It is envisioned that the Children’s Trust Board will support and challenge engagement by schools in both engagement with partnerships and the collection of pupil level sessional attendance data. This is particularly pertinent for the acceleration in the academies programme and the potential increase in the number of primary academies.

6.3 The data development agenda has been highlighted through the OBA activities. It is essential that timely attendance data is available, particularly at a partnership level. This is in order that those partnerships can demonstrate the impact that their interventions have had. This will involve improved central dissemination and responsive use of the information available within schools and clusters.

7.0 Policy Context

7.1 The coalition government removed the statutory requirement for schools to set absence targets, although good schools will continue to use targets as a driver for improvement. Therefore there is no requirement on any individual school, academy or trust to set a target which is then monitored by the local authority or central government. Information will be available to the public through the revised national school and college performance tables; overall attendance, unauthorised absence and persistent absence by school are proposed to be published as supporting information.

7.2 DfE have recently raised the threshold for persistent absence from 80% to 85%. This is an expression of the DfE belief in earlier intervention and presents challenges to schools and services as this increases the scope of the potential work required. This new threshold will be reported on and included in performance tables from October 2011. In terms of impact on the number of children and young people categorised as persistently absent:

- The total number of primary pupils with less than 80% attendance in Leeds during half terms 1-4 2010/11 was 955. However, when applying the new threshold this number increases to 2,624.
- At secondary level 5,285 (13.1%) pupils would be categorised as persistently absent using the new threshold.

It is not clear what, if any, central monitoring arrangements will be used to measure either individual school or whole authority performance around this indicator.

8.0 Next steps and recommendations

8.1 The Children’s Trust Board is recommended to:

1. Share partners’ perspectives on progress against this obsession.
2. Note provisional 2010/11 half term 1-4 attendance information.
3. Endorse the work being undertaken to develop a new shared approach for improving school attendance and support the development of an options paper on our future approach to attendance.

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4. Support the good initial work that has been undertaken in clusters and request that the next obsession report on attendance provides an update and assessment of impact.

5. Require individual agencies to share their experience of new approaches and to evaluate impact.

Background documents:

- Appendix 1 - Analysis of 2010/11 Half Term 1-4 data

Appendix 1

Provisional 2010/11 half-term 4 attendance analysis

Provisional attendance data is now available for half-terms 1-4 of the 2010/11 academic year, from the School Census. National and comparative data will not be available until October. The following analysis provides a summary of attendance and persistent absence in primary and secondary schools.

Primary Schools

Provisional data indicates that attendance in primary schools has improved in 2010/11. Attendance increased by 0.43%ppts. The increase in attendance was mainly achieved through a decrease in authorised absence, which went down 0.39%ppts, but unauthorised absence also fell by 0.04%ppts.

In relation to reasons for absence, there was a decrease in sessions lost due to illness in 2010/11. Absence due to religious observance rose from 0.14% of sessions in 2009/10 to 0.19% of sessions in 2010/11. Absence due to agreed family holidays continued to fall in 2010/11, however, there was a corresponding increase in non-agreed family holidays indicating that schools refusing to authorise holidays is not necessarily impacting on the decisions of parents to take holidays during term time. The greatest reduction was seen in absence due to ‘other authorised circumstances’, this could partly be due to the introduction of a new code this year allowing schools to mark children as attendance not required rather than authorised absence when they could not attend due to bad weather. Absence due to ‘other unauthorised reason’ also fell in 2010/11.

Half-term 1-4 primary attendance

	Leeds	National	Statistical Neighbour Average
2005/06	94.30	94.24	94.36
2006/07	94.79	94.82	94.98
2007/08	94.67	94.74	94.88
2008/09	94.09	94.54	94.60
2009/10	94.26	94.66	94.72
2010/11*	94.70		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

Half-term 1-4 primary authorised absence

	Leeds	National	Statistical Neighbour Average
2005/06	5.26	5.30	5.22
2006/07	4.71	4.66	4.55
2007/08	4.76	4.69	4.62
2008/09	5.15	4.81	4.82
2009/10	4.88	4.67	4.66
2010/11*	4.49		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

Half-term 1-4 primary unauthorised absence

	Leeds	National	Statistical Neighbour Average
2005/06	0.44	0.46	0.43
2006/07	0.50	0.52	0.47
2007/08	0.57	0.57	0.50
2008/09	0.75	0.65	0.58
2009/10	0.85	0.68	0.62
2010/11*	0.81		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

Percentage of total possible sessions lost due to each reason for absence in primary schools (half-terms 1-4)

Reason for absence	2009/10	2010/11
Authorised absence		
Illness	3.19	3.12
Medical/Dental appointments	0.26	0.25
Religious observance	0.14	0.19
Study leave	0.00	0.00
Traveller absence	0.01	0.02
Agreed family holiday	0.57	0.54
Agreed extended family holiday	0.03	0.03
Excluded	0.01	0.01
Other authorised reason	0.66	0.32
Unauthorised absence		
Not agreed family holiday	0.12	0.19
Arrived after registers closed	0.08	0.08
Other unauthorised reason	0.49	0.42
No reason yet provided	0.16	0.13

Source: School Census

Persistent absence from primary school also fell in 2010/11, with 2.0% of pupils missing more than 20% of school. The number of persistent absentees fell by 19.5% from 1,187 for half-terms 1-4 in 2009/10 to 955 in half-terms 1-4 2010/11. The DfE has recently changed the definition of persistent absence and a pupil is now classed as persistently absent if they miss more than 15% of school during the year. Provisional data for 2010/11 indicates that 2,624 (5.4%) pupils met this threshold in Leeds primary schools.

Persistent absence in primary schools (half-term 1-4)

	Leeds number of PA	Leeds % PA	National % PA	Statistical neighbour average % PA
2007/08	1323	2.8	2.4	2.3
2008/09	1380	2.9	2.2	2.2
2009/10	1187	2.5	1.8	1.8
2010/11*	955	2.0		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

Secondary Schools

Attendance also improved in Leeds secondary schools in 2010/11, increasing by 0.79%ppts. Both authorised and unauthorised absence improved, with authorised absence falling by 0.63%ppts and unauthorised absence falling by 0.16%ppts. Absence due to illness fell, as did sessions lost due to medical/dental appointments in school time. As in primary schools, absence due to religious observance increased in 2010/11. The same pattern of decreasing absence due to agreed family holidays, but increased absence due to non-agreed family holidays was also seen in secondary schools. There was also a significant decrease in absence due to ‘other authorised reason’ which could be partially due to the use of the ‘Y’ code. Absence due to lateness, other unauthorised reason and no reason yet provided also fell in secondary schools.

Half-term 1-4 secondary attendance

	Leeds	National	Statistical Neighbour Average
2005/06	90.58	91.76	91.67
2006/07	90.83	92.14	92.23
2007/08	91.51	92.70	92.87
2008/09	91.43	92.70	92.80
2009/10	91.60	93.16	93.18
2010/11*	92.39		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

Half-term 1-4 secondary authorised absence

	Leeds	National	Statistical Neighbour Average
2005/06	7.09	6.82	6.73
2006/07	6.55	6.36	6.14
2007/08	6.10	5.86	5.69
2008/09	5.93	5.81	5.69
2009/10	5.78	5.44	5.34
2010/11*	5.15		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

Half-term 1-4 secondary unauthorised absence

	Leeds	National	Statistical Neighbour Average
2005/06	2.33	1.42	1.60
2006/07	2.63	1.50	1.62
2007/08	2.39	1.43	1.44
2008/09	2.64	1.47	1.51
2009/10	2.62	1.40	1.48
2010/11*	2.46		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

Percentage of total possible sessions lost due to each reason for absence in secondary schools (half-terms 1-4)

Reason for absence	2009/10	2010/11
Authorised absence		
Illness	3.97	3.64
Medical/Dental appointments	0.42	0.39
Religious observance	0.10	0.15
Study leave	0.02	0.01
Traveller absence	0.01	0.00
Agreed family holiday	0.24	0.19
Agreed extended family holiday	0.00	0.00
Excluded	0.22	0.19
Other authorised reason	0.82	0.57
Unauthorised absence		
Not agreed family holiday	0.18	0.25
Arrived after registers closed	0.12	0.09
Other unauthorised reason	1.99	1.86
No reason yet provided	0.34	0.26

Source: School Census

Persistent absence fell in secondary schools in 2010/11, by 0.5%ppts, the number of persistent absentees missing 20% of school fell by 8.6% to 2,733. Under the new definition of persistent absence (missing 15% of school), 5,285 (13.1%) pupils in secondary schools were persistently absent.

Persistent absence in secondary schools (half-term 1-4)

	Leeds number of PA	Leeds % PA	National % PA	Statistical neighbour average % PA
2007/08	3814	9.2	6.4	6.4
2008/09	3322	8.5	5.7	5.9
2009/10	2989	7.4	4.5	4.7
2010/11*	2733	6.9		

Source: DfE statistical first release; * provisional data from School Census

Make up of secondary persistent absence cohort

In half-terms 1-4 of 2010/11 there were 2733 (6.9%) pupils that were persistently absent (missed 20% of school) from Leeds secondary schools. Certain pupil groups are more likely to be persistently absent and the level of PA for pupil groups and the proportion of the PA cohort that they constitute are shown in the table below.

- PA increases with age, with levels of PA 4 times higher in year 11 than in year 7. Over a third of pupils that were PA in 2010/11 were in year 11.
- There is no significant difference in levels of PA between genders.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals are four times more likely to be PA than pupils that are not eligible. FSM eligible pupils make up half of the PA cohort, but only 20% of the total cohort of secondary pupils.

- Pupils with SEN are more likely to be PA, particularly those on School Action plus, a quarter of these pupils are PA.
- Overall, the level of PA for pupils of Black and Minority heritage is lower than for non-BME pupils. However, some ethnic groups have levels of PA significantly higher than the Leeds average. Pupils of mixed heritage, White Eastern European, Bangladeshi and traveller groups have above average levels of PA.

2010/11 persistent absence by pupil group

	Number of PA	% PA	% of PA cohort
All pupils	2733	6.9	100.0
<i>Year group</i>			
Year 7	222	2.8	8.1
Year 8	336	4.3	12.3
Year 9	540	6.8	19.8
Year 10	654	8.1	23.9
Year 11	981	12.3	35.9
<i>Gender</i>			
Female	1381	7.1	50.5
Male	1352	6.7	49.5
<i>Free school meal eligibility</i>			
Not eligible	1376	4.3	50.3
Eligible	1357	17.5	49.7
<i>Special Education Needs</i>			
No SEN	1302	4.2	47.6
School Action	755	12.6	27.6
School Action plus	614	27.3	22.5
Statement of SEN	61	10.9	2.2
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
BME	492	6.3	18.0
Non BME	2224	7.0	81.4

2010/11 persistent absence by ethnicity

	Number of PA	% PA	% of PA cohort
<i>Asian or Asian British</i>			
Bangladeshi	31	7.9	1.1
Indian	12	1.6	0.4
Kashmiri Other	2	5.3	0.1
Kashmiri Pakistani	41	5.7	1.5
Other Pakistani	72	5.4	2.6
Other Asian	20	4.2	0.7
<i>Black or Black British</i>			
Black African	23	2.1	0.8
Black Caribbean	27	5.4	1.0
Other Black Background	17	6.5	0.6

<i>Mixed Heritage</i>			
Mixed Asian and White	24	7.4	0.9
Mixed Black African and White	9	7.6	0.3
Mixed Black Caribbean and White	70	10.2	2.6
Other Mixed Background	41	9.3	1.5
<i>Chinese or other</i>			
Chinese	0	0.0	0.0
Other Ethnic group	21	7.0	0.8
<i>White</i>			
White British	2142	6.9	78.4
White Irish	10	6.8	0.4
Other White Background	20	10.0	0.7
White Western European	0	0.0	0.0
White Eastern European	52	15.1	1.9
<i>Traveller Groups</i>			
Traveller Irish Heritage	20	69.0	0.7
Gypsy Roma	62	47.3	2.3