MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

Attendance communications toolkit for schools

February 2024 update

Department for Education

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MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

Toolkit for supporting attendance comms

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Improving school attendance is everyone's business and, to tackle the challenge we face, we need to work together.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide schools with off-the-shelf products they can use to remind parents and carers of the importance of school attendance.

The campaign strapline is **"*moments matter, attendance counts"***. Messaging for the communications have been developed from research into parental attitudes, as well as two local authority pilots at the end of 2023.

This research found that some parents place less value on regular school attendance post-pandemic. We know you are working hard every day to change these attitudes; these materials are to support you with this. **Schools report that these resources have been helpful to integrate into their existing newsletters, email signatures and communications with parents.** These are just a few of the ways you might use them to amplify the message.

Campaign messages aim to primarily reach those parents and carers whose children are taking preventable odd days of absence – or "avoidable absence" – rather than children who face greater barriers to attendance, such as those with long term medical needs or special educational needs and disabilities.

For families facing complex barriers, schools are reminded to refer to guidance and have sensitive conversations with parents and work with them to put support in place for their individual needs.

Our campaign aims to:

- Continue to support schools and local authorities in navigating attendance challenges.
- Amplify the notion that every day of school is important, reminding families **moments matter, attendance counts.**
- Reassure parents that the NHS and the Chief Medical Officer say it is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses, including general cold symptoms like a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat.
- Encourage you to participate in the campaign to help us amplify messages to families and schools.

The national campaign

The campaign **seeks to influence parents and carers'** views on the importance of school attendance.

To promote the importance of school attendance and the value of a school day, the national communications campaign will include:

- Promoted social media advertising
- Media partnerships
- Radio advertising
- Expert-led activity
- Out of home advertising
- Promoted online video – YouTube

When?

Campaign activity began in January and is continuing to March 2024.

The campaign reflects feedback from schools and local authorities. It forms one part of our wider strategy to increase attendance, which also includes clearer expectations for schools and local authorities built around a 'support first' approach.

7 ways you can support the campaign & attendance comms

1. Help create a national warm welcome to school for families throughout the spring by sharing the attendance campaign resources (**on slide 6**) on your social media channels, newsletters and website. You can tailor these to your school.

2. **Make the Spring term a fresh start for children and young people struggling to attend school** by taking a "support first" approach and sustaining efforts to engage families where absence is severe or persistent. We have produced range of webinars and case studies with tips and best practice to address attendance barriers.

3. **Refer to the communicating with families to support attendance toolkit when communicating with families about attendance,** to maximise your impact. The campaign will also encourage parents and carers struggling with their child's attendance to reach out to their school as the first step of support.

4. **Set clear expectations for parents and carers about what they need to do to support good attendance** (e.g., phoning when their child is ill and having a back-up plan if their child misses school transport). Be clear on what they can expect from you in return (e.g., phoning parents and carers to discuss a child's attendance where there are challenges and getting them into school for a meeting if there are concerns).

5. **Remind parents and carers** of the NHS Is my child too ill for school guidance and the Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty's letter on mild illness and school attendance that says a prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending school in the future.

6. **Help reduce the spread of infection in your school -** remind staff and pupils of the importance of regular and effective handwashing and ensure spaces are well-ventilated. You can use your CO_2 monitors to manage good ventilation. Tell parents and carers about the steps you are taking to reduce infection spread to offer reassurance.

7. **Sign up to share your daily attendance data** with DfE if your school has not already done so and use the data to identify and respond to trends early.

Attendance campaign resources to use

We have updated the social media graphics to feature new animated creative assets on illness and shared connections at school. They are downloadable here and include:

- Images you can print out
- Social media graphics you can post – including four new videos (see example stills below)
- A 'Moments Matter, Attendance Counts' logo you can add to your e-mail signature
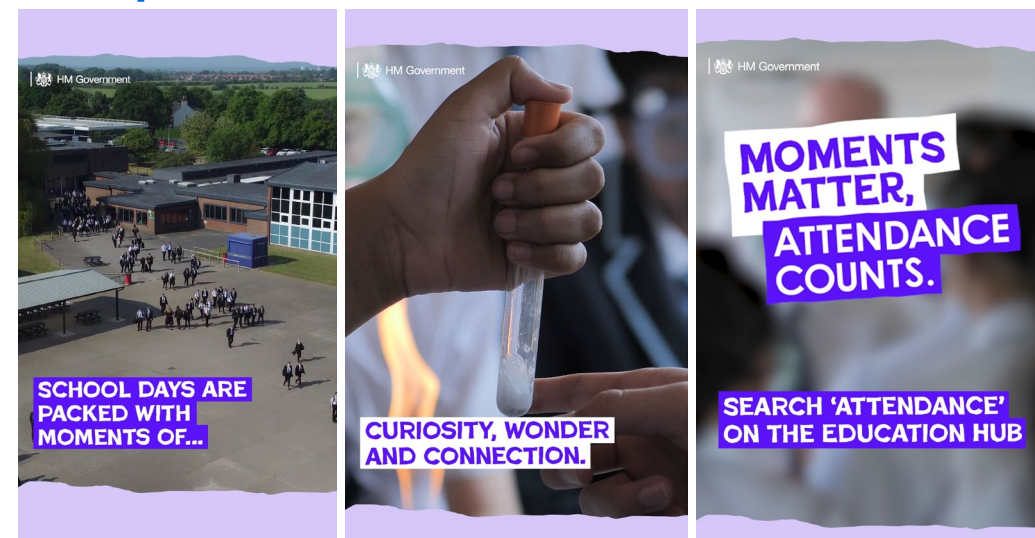
You can also share our promoted online videos, such as this one from Dr Radha Modgil.

We encourage you to share the latest graphics on your social media channels from 23 February 2024. Suggested post:

"From the first day of term to the last, the small moments in a school day make a real difference to your child. #AttendanceCounts"

Example 1

Example 2

Campaign colour palette

When using the campaign resources, use our colours for maximum impact.

Our colours
Our bright colour palette seeks to create a visual language that amplifies the excitement and positivity associated with school life.

For assets, we use a monochromatic colour scheme using a bright primary colour with a complimentary softer tone.

Our campaign colours adhere to AA accessibility standards. Only use the matching light and dark colours combinations. Do not mix and match colours.

Our fonts are Poster Cut Neue and Century Gothic Pro. We use Poster Cut Neue in Uppercase for our headlines and Century Gothic Pro Bold Sentence case for our body copy. The font Grandstander can be used as an alternative headline free google font.

C:78 M:37 Y:0 K:0	C:78 M:0 Y:98 K:0	C:0 M:80 Y:1 K:0	C:0 M:76 Y:100 K:0	C:0 M:91 Y:87 K:0	C:83 M:79 Y:0 K:0
R:0 G:99 B:234	R:1 G:173 B:27	R:248 G:82 B:194	R:255 G:97 B:0	R:255 G:70 B:55	R:80 G:4 B:245
HEX: #0063EA	HEX: #01AD1B	HEX: #F852C2	HEX: #FF6100	HEX: #FF4637	HEX: #5004F5

C:27 M:0 Y:1 K:0	C:12 M:0 Y:28 K:0	C:0 M:25 Y:0 K:0	C:0 M:31 Y:52 K:0	C:0 M:27 Y:19 K:0	C:15 M:22 Y:0 K:0
R:187 G:230 B:249	R:204 G:253 B:212	R:255 G:217 B:247	R:255 G:196 B:149	R:251 G:201 B:199	R:214 G:197 B:249
HEX: #BBE6F9	HEX: #CCFDD4	HEX: #FFD9F7	HEX: #FFC495	HEX: #FBC9C7	HEX: #D6C5F9

Attendance: the top facts to know & share

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The link between attendance and attainment is clear:

- In 2018/19, **just 40% of persistently absent (PA) children in KS2 achieved expected KS2 standards,** compared with 84% of pupils who regularly attended school.

- **36% of PA children in KS4 got 9 to 4 in their English and maths GCSEs**, compared with 84% of regular attenders.[1]

And it's never too late to benefit from good attendance:

- **More than half (54%)** of pupils who were **PA in Year 10 and then rarely absent in Year 11, passed at least 5 GCSEs**, compared to 36% of pupils who were persistently absent in both years.[2]

But attendance is important for more than just attainment:

- Regular school attendance can facilitate **positive peer relationships,** which is a **protective factor for mental health and wellbeing.**[3]

1: The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4, Academic year 2018/19 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK (explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)
2: Missing Children, Missing Grades | Children's Commissioner for England (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)
3: Mental Health and Attendance at School (Chapter 1) - Mental Health and Attendance at School (cambridge.org)

Further resources

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Guidance

- Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Is my child too ill for school?- NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools- GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Letter to school leaders on mild illness and school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Resources

- How to improve your child's school attendance and where to get support - The Education Hub (blog.gov.uk)
- Access your school attendance data - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Mental health resources for children, students, parents, carers and school/college staff- The Education Hub (blog.gov.uk)

Best practice

- Improving attendance: good practice for schools and multi-academy trusts - Case study - GOV.UK (wwww.gov.uk)
- Attendance - Teaching (blog.gov.uk)
- Attendance hubs-GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- What are reasonable adjustments and how do they help disabled pupils at school? - The Education Hub (blog.gov.uk)