

TITLE:	Working Together to Improve School Attendance
FOR CONSIDERATION BY:	Children’s Select Committee
REPORT DATED:	10th January 2023
DIRECTOR:	Kathryn Davis Interim Director of Education and Skills
REPORT AUTHORS:	Karen Green Team Manager, Education Welfare

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide a regular update on the Council’s implementation of the 2022 DfE guidance ‘Working Together to Improve School Attendance’.

2. Attendance Data

2.1 For the Autumn Term 2023-2024, the DfE Pupil Attendance and Absence data dashboard which provides live school attendance data shows that:

- National (England) attendance is 93.4%
- South West region attendance is 92.9%
- Wiltshire attendance is **93.6%**

We await the full published attendance data for the last academic year (2022-2023) and are aware that there is still some way to go to achieve the same attendance in Wiltshire that we had pre-pandemic (95.28%).

We are pleased that attendance in Wiltshire is on the right trajectory and that the work of the LA, schools and partners to support families with good attendance is reflected in the current data.

3. Communications

3.1 Wiltshire Council implemented an attendance communications strategy on 8th January 2024, utilising a range of assets for social media, digital screen graphics and posters. Materials have been shared with primary and secondary schools, GP practices and other partners.

3.2 The materials provide positive reminders about the importance of good school attendance, as well as acknowledging the challenges that some children and families may be experiencing. Reminders are shared about the support that is available from schools and from the Council’s Education Welfare Service.



4. **Department for Education Engagement**

- 4.1 Sara Griffiths, DfE Attendance Adviser, completed her final visit with Wiltshire Council on 10th January 2024, following extremely positive reports on Wiltshire's implementation of the 'Working Together' guidance. We look forward to welcoming Adam Luke (Senior Policy Adviser, School Attendance, DfE) to Wiltshire in February 2024.

5. **Recommendation:**

- 5.1 For the committee to note this update.