

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Children, Adults, Health & Wellbeing Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	13th October 2025	
TITLE:	Attendance and Exclusions – Key Trends 2023/2024	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Exclusions and Attendance data report.		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report provides the panel with an overview of attendance and exclusions key trends across 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.
- 1.2 This report's summary of education performance is drawn from the council's Strategic Evidence Base (SEB) produced by the council's Business Intelligence team and data, and the DFE National statistics:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/>

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel / Committee is asked to;

- 2.1 Note our pupils' overall positive attendance for 2023-2024. Our overall absence rate, % persistent absentees and unauthorised absence rate sits below national and regional data.
- 2.2 We are aware that our attendance for children open to free school meals is an area that we need to address and this is a target that sits across the local authority.
- 2.3 Last year we saw a drop in the permanent exclusion rate, placing us below the national and regional average. This was despite there being an increase in most local authorities and nationally.
- 2.4 Last year we did see a rise in suspensions and this is a target for the local authority, working alongside schools and MAT colleagues.

- 2.5 Be assured that Local Authority Officers continue to collaborate strategically with schools and partners and the Regional Director's office to improve educational outcomes for all pupils in B&NES.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 Latest DFE data for school attendance (2023/2024): Our overall absence rate, % of persistent absentee and unauthorised absence rate is below national and regional data.
- 3.2 Our severe absentee showed a slight increase in 2023/2024 but internal data shows that this dropped during the latest academic year to 1.76% placing us below national and regional.
- 3.3 We have made considerable progress in addressing school attendance for children with a social worker. For both CIN and CLA our absence is below regional and national. We know that we still need to focus on our secondary pupils who are open to a child protection plan. Our latest internal data shows that this data is improving.
- 3.4 Our persistent absentee and severe absence for FSM pupils sits slightly above national. We still have a significant gap in attendance for our FSM cohort compared to FSM not eligible.
- 3.5 For our pupils with an EHCP, both persistent absence and severe absence sits slightly above the national levels but below regional. Our unauthorised absence for this cohort sits below regional and national suggesting that most of this absence is authorised.
- 3.6 Our data shows that pupils who are from an ethnicity major mixed or unclassified are more likely to show persistent absence. Whilst this trend is inline with national trends it remains an area of focus for the local authority.
- 3.7 Pupils who have ethnicity as major black or major mixed are more likely to show severe absence, this data is above the national data.
- 3.8 There has been a drop in the permanent exclusion rate, placing us below the national and regional average. This was despite there being an increase in most local authorities and nationally.
- 3.9 The permanent exclusion rate in the SEN support and SEN with EHCP cohorts has decreased in B&NES in 2023/24, whilst nationally the rates continued to increase in these cohorts.
- 3.10 In 2023/24, the permanent exclusion rate was highest in B&NES in Mixed/multiple ethnicity pupils and White pupils (0.12% and 0.1% respectively)
- 3.11 The suspension rate in 2023/2024 continued to rise, in line with the national and regional trends. Our suspension rate is slightly above national but below regional rates.
- 3.12 For our children who are cared for by us, there were no permanent exclusions, and our suspension rate sits below both the national and regional.
- 3.13 In 2022/2023, our data for children open to child protection was higher than regional and national. Our internal data for this past academic year shows no child with a permanent exclusion and our suspension rate has fallen to below both regional and national. We know that we still have a key target around reducing permanent exclusions and suspensions for children on a child in need plan.

3.14 Whilst our permanent exclusion rate has fallen for pupils who receive free school meals, our suspension data has seen a significant increase, placing us well above the national data

3.15 Rates of suspension in Mixed/multiple ethnicity pupils remain higher in B&NES than national and have been for a number of years. In 2022/23, the suspension rate in Black pupils fell below the national level for the first time since at least 2007/8.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 This report contains information on attendance and exclusions in B&NES schools. It directly relates to children and covers our statutory duties in relation to school attendance and exclusions.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 None

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 Disproportional suspensions of children from mixed global majority ethnicity.

7.2 Continue to support schools and MATS to close the school attendance gap for children who are eligible for FSM.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 Not applicable.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

10.1

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Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	