

Anglian Learning: Improving Attendance Through Relational and Graduated Approaches

A Trust-Wide Overview of Strategy, Implementation and Impact, developed in collaboration with Cambridgeshire Virtual School

Introduction & Rationale

Improving attendance continues to be a key priority across the Trust, both in terms of educational outcomes and safeguarding. Alongside this, there has been an increasing focus on pupils within the 90–95% attendance range, where early signs of disengagement can often be missed but may lead to more significant absence over time.

There is also a growing understanding across schools that attendance is not simply a compliance issue. For many pupils, absence is closely linked to factors such as emotional wellbeing, sense of belonging, relationships, and wider life circumstances. Where pupils feel disconnected, anxious, or unsupported, attendance is often one of the first indicators. As a result, improving attendance requires a more relational approach that focuses on understanding and addressing underlying barriers, rather than relying solely on monitoring and enforcement.

In response to this, a range of initiatives have been developed and piloted across Trust schools during the 2024–25 academic year. These approaches are designed to strengthen connection, improve readiness for learning, and support earlier identification of need. A particular focus has been placed on supporting pupils before absence becomes persistent, through targeted and preventative strategies.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Outline the key attendance initiatives developed and implemented
- Present emerging outcomes and impact, including summer term data
- Demonstrate how these approaches align with a graduated response
- Provide an overview of implementation across schools
- Identify next steps for further development and scaling

Attendance Framework & Graduated Response

The attendance work outlined in this report sits within the Trust's Attendance Framework, which has been developed to provide a clear, consistent, and graduated approach to improving attendance across schools.

The framework is built on the understanding that attendance is influenced by a range of factors, including wellbeing, relationships, routine, and wider life circumstances. As a result, the approach moves beyond viewing attendance as solely a behavioural or compliance issue, and instead focuses on early identification, relational practice, and targeted support.

The framework is structured across three levels:

- **Universal Support**

Whole-school approaches that promote positive attendance for all pupils. This includes creating a strong sense of belonging, consistent routines, and early identification of emerging concerns. Tools such as the Resilience Tracker sit within this level, supporting schools to identify pupils who may be at risk before patterns of absence develop.

- **Targeted Support**

Additional support for pupils whose attendance is beginning to decline or who are identified as at risk (for example, those within the 90–95% attendance range). This includes structured interventions such as Check In / Check Up / Check Out and enhanced breakfast provision, which aim to improve connection, routine, and readiness for learning.

- **Specialist Support**

More intensive and individualised approaches for pupils with persistent or complex barriers to attendance. This includes **Team Me** processes (previously referred to as Team Around the Pupil), alongside more structured planning approaches, ensuring that support is coordinated and responsive to need.

The initiatives outlined in this report have been developed within this structure, ensuring that support is matched to level of need and that schools have a clear pathway from early identification through to more intensive intervention. This approach aims to strengthen consistency across schools, support earlier intervention, and ensure that attendance is addressed in a way that is both relational and effective.

Overview of Key Initiatives

A range of targeted and universal initiatives have been developed and piloted across Trust schools during the 2024–25 academic year. These approaches are designed to support pupils at different stages of need, with a particular focus on early intervention, connection, and readiness for learning. Each initiative has been implemented flexibly across schools, allowing for adaptation based on context, staffing, and pupil need. While some approaches have been piloted in specific settings, others are beginning to be adopted more widely.

The following sections outline each initiative in more detail, including how they have been implemented, early outcomes from the summer term, and how they align with the Trust's graduated response.

Check In / Check Up / Check Out

Overview

Check In / Check Up / Check Out is a relational intervention designed to strengthen connections between pupils and trusted adults across the school day. The model focuses on consistent, structured interactions to support engagement and improve attendance.

The approach was piloted at Sawston Village College during the summer term, targeting pupils identified as being at risk of declining attendance.

Implementation

The pilot focused on 41 Year 10 pupils with attendance between 85% and 95%.

Each pupil was linked with a key adult who provided:

- A **morning check-in** during tutor time
- Informal **check-ups** during the day
- An **end-of-day check-out**

Interactions were recorded using a shared system, and staff were supported with guidance and regular updates. Communication with families was maintained throughout the project, including letters at the start of the intervention and follow-up communication to recognise pupil progress.

Summer Term Data & Outcomes

The pilot demonstrated a positive impact on pupil attendance:

- **30 out of 41 pupils (73.2%) improved their attendance**
- Average attendance increased from **92.3% to 92.9%**

These outcomes suggest that the intervention had a positive impact over a relatively short period. The improvements are particularly notable given the focus on pupils within the **85–95% attendance range**, where gains can be more difficult to achieve.

Impact

The pilot indicates that a structured, relational approach can support improvements in attendance. It also demonstrates that:

- Low-cost, scalable interventions can have a measurable impact
- Regular, structured adult contact can form part of an effective attendance strategy

The project also provided a model that can be adapted and implemented across other settings.

Link to Graduated Response

Check In / Check Up / Check Out sits within the **targeted level** of the Trust's graduated response. It supports:

- Early intervention for pupils at risk of persistent absence
- A structured and time-limited approach to attendance support
- Ongoing monitoring and review of impact

This aligns with an APDR-informed approach, where support is planned, implemented, reviewed, and adapted based on pupil need.

Enhanced Breakfast Wellbeing Provision

Overview

The Enhanced Breakfast Wellbeing Provision is a targeted intervention designed to support pupils with attendance concerns, morning anxiety, and disengagement at the start of the school day. The model provides a calm, structured, and relational start to the day, with the aim of improving attendance, reducing barriers to school entry, and increasing readiness to learn.

This approach was piloted at Netherhall School as part of a wider strategy to strengthen attendance through early, supportive intervention.

Implementation

The intervention targeted pupils identified with:

- Persistent or emerging attendance concerns
- Low emotional wellbeing or high levels of morning anxiety
- A history of lateness or disengagement from form time

A structured Breakfast Club was delivered each morning, offering:

- A healthy breakfast (e.g. porridge, berries, eggs)
- A calm and emotionally safe environment
- Opportunities for informal social interaction
- Consistent adult presence from familiar staff

Attendance was voluntary, with pupils invited to attend. Pupil voice was gathered through questionnaires to evaluate the impact on mood, connection, and readiness for learning.

Summer Term Data & Outcomes

The intervention demonstrated a positive impact for pupils who engaged:

- **15 out of 21 pupils attended regularly**
- **73.4% of pupils improved or stabilised their attendance**
- **46.7% showed a clear improvement in attendance over the project period**

In contrast:

- **None of the pupils who did not engage showed improvement in attendance**

Qualitative feedback from pupil voice highlighted:

- A positive shift in mood before school
- Increased feelings of safety and wellbeing
- Stronger social connection with peers and staff

Impact

The pilot indicates that providing a structured, relational start to the day can support both attendance and pupil wellbeing.

The data suggests that:

- Engagement in the provision is linked to improved or stabilised attendance
- A supportive morning environment can help reduce barriers linked to anxiety and disengagement

Pupil voice further highlights the importance of:

- Feeling safe and calm at the start of the day
- Opportunities for connection with peers and trusted adults

Link to Graduated Response

Enhanced Breakfast Wellbeing Provision sits within the **targeted level** of the Trust's graduated response.

It supports:

- Early intervention for pupils at risk of persistent absence
- Removal of practical and emotional barriers to attendance
- A relational, preventative approach before escalation to more intensive support

The intervention aligns with an APDR-informed model, where support is:

- Planned based on identified need
- Implemented consistently
- Monitored through attendance and pupil feedback
- Reviewed to inform next steps

Team Around the Pupil (Team Me) Approach

Overview

The *Team Me* approach (adapted from the Team Around the Pupil model) is a relational, attachment-aware strategy designed to support pupils who require a higher level of connection, stability, and coordinated adult support.

It is used for pupils who may have experienced adversity, disruption, or trauma, and who present with ongoing challenges linked to attendance, engagement, or regulation.

The aim of the approach is to build a consistent network of trusted adults around the pupil, increasing their sense of safety, belonging, and connection within school.

Implementation

Team Me has been introduced this year as part of the Trust's graduated response to attendance and wellbeing.

The model involves a small, consistent team of adults, typically:

- A **Key Adult** (providing regular 1:1 relational support)
- The **Class Teacher or Form Tutor** (supporting engagement in learning)
- A **Senior Lead** (coordinating the approach and communication with home)

Support is structured and consistent, including:

- Daily informal check-ins
- Weekly 1:1 time with a Key Adult
- Regular team reviews to monitor progress and adjust support

The approach is designed to align staff around a shared understanding of the pupil, reduce fragmentation in support, and strengthen home–school communication. It sits alongside existing planning systems (e.g. PEPs, EHCPs) rather than creating additional processes.

Early Implementation & Emerging Impact

As a newly introduced approach, Team Me is currently in the **early stages of implementation**, with initial use focused on **one pupil at The Meadow Primary School**.

At the start of the intervention, the pupil was on a significantly reduced timetable, attending school only until **10:30am each day**. Through the implementation of Team Me, this has increased to **2:30pm daily attendance**, representing a substantial improvement in school engagement and time in school.

In addition, early indications suggest that the model:

- Supports improved coordination between staff
- Provides a clearer structure for relational support
- Strengthens communication with families

At this stage, impact is evidenced through:

- Increased time in school for the pupil
- Staff feedback
- Greater consistency in adult support

This initial implementation is being used to refine the approach before wider rollout.

Impact

The introduction of Team Me represents a shift towards a more structured, relational approach to supporting pupils with more complex needs.

It provides:

- A coordinated framework for multi-adult support
- Greater consistency in how pupils are supported across the school day
- A clear focus on belonging, connection, and relational stability

The model also supports staff by creating opportunities for:

- Collaborative problem-solving
- Shared understanding of pupil need
- A more proactive approach to support

Link to Graduated Response

Team Me sits within the **targeted to specialist level** of the Trust's graduated response.

It is used where:

- Universal and targeted strategies have not been sufficient
- Pupils require a higher level of relational and coordinated support

The approach aligns with APDR principles by:

- Identifying need through behaviour, attendance, and wellbeing
- Planning structured, relational support
- Implementing consistent adult involvement
- Reviewing progress through regular team discussions

Team Me provides a bridge between targeted intervention and more specialist or multi-agency support where required.

Structured Attendance Support Plans

Overview

Structured Attendance Support Planning has been introduced as a consistent, school-led approach to supporting pupils with ongoing or emerging attendance concerns.

The model is based on an Assess–Plan–Do–Review (APDR) cycle and is designed to move schools away from reactive responses towards a more structured, reflective, and relational approach to attendance.

It provides a clear framework for identifying need, planning appropriate support, and reviewing impact over time, ensuring that interventions are purposeful, coordinated, and responsive to individual circumstances.

This approach is embedded within the Trust's Attendance Toolkit and supports schools to take a more graduated and needs-led approach to attendance.

How it Works (Assess – Plan – Do – Review)

The model follows a structured cycle:

Assess

Schools gather a clear picture of the pupil's attendance, alongside underlying factors such as wellbeing, behaviour, family context, and sense of belonging. This stage focuses on understanding *why* attendance may be a concern, rather than focusing solely on percentages.

Plan

Appropriate strategies are identified based on need. This may include relational interventions (e.g. Check In / Check Up / Check Out), provision-based support (e.g. Breakfast Provision), or more targeted approaches (e.g. Team Me). Clear actions, responsibilities, and intended outcomes are agreed.

Do

Support is implemented consistently, with identified staff taking responsibility for delivering the planned strategies. There is a strong emphasis on consistency, communication, and maintaining a relational approach throughout.

Review

Progress is reviewed regularly, using attendance data alongside wider indicators such as engagement and wellbeing. Plans are then adapted as needed, ensuring that support remains responsive and effective over time.

This structured cycle ensures that attendance support is ongoing, evidence-informed, and reflective, rather than a one-off intervention.

Where it Has Been Used

This approach has been introduced across schools within the Trust and is increasingly being used to structure attendance discussions and planning.

It is currently being used in schools including:

- Stapleford Primary School
- The Meadow Primary School

In these settings, it has been used within:

- attendance support meetings
- pupil progress discussions
- SEN and pastoral planning processes

It has supported staff to:

- clearly identify pupils requiring additional support
- map interventions more effectively
- ensure greater consistency in how support is implemented and reviewed

The approach is still in the early stages of embedding and is continuing to be refined through ongoing use and feedback from schools.

Early Impact

Early evidence from schools such as Stapleford and The Meadow indicates that the APDR approach:

- provides greater clarity for staff when planning attendance support
- strengthens consistency in how support is implemented and reviewed
- supports earlier identification of need
- reduces reliance on reactive or escalation-based responses

In addition, early data from schools using this approach shows emerging improvements in attendance for targeted pupils, alongside stronger engagement with families and a clearer understanding of underlying barriers.

This approach is beginning to create greater consistency across schools, ensuring that attendance support is structured, relational, and responsive to need.

Link to Graduated Response (Targeted → Specialist)

Structured Attendance Support Planning sits at the core of the Trust's graduated response, supporting movement between targeted and specialist levels of intervention.

It enables schools to:

- identify when universal strategies are no longer sufficient
- implement targeted interventions in a structured and consistent way
- escalate appropriately to more intensive or specialist support where required

By using a consistent APDR cycle, schools are better able to:

- track what has been implemented
- evaluate impact over time
- make informed decisions about next steps

This ensures that support is progressive, evidence-informed, and tailored to individual need, rather than based on attendance thresholds alone.

Practice Example

A detailed example of this approach in practice can be found in Appendix 4 (Stapleford Community Primary School Case Study), where the structured, relational APDR model has contributed to sustained improvements in attendance, with overall attendance reaching 96.4%—above both national and local averages

Resilience Tracker (Universal Approach)

Overview

The Resilience Tracker is a universal tool designed to support early identification of pupils who may be at risk of poor attendance, reduced engagement, or wider vulnerability.

It brings together key information that schools already hold—such as attendance, wellbeing, safeguarding, SEND, and pupil voice—into a single, structured view. This allows staff to build a more complete understanding of each child, rather than relying on isolated data points.

The tracker is not intended to label or categorise pupils, but to support professional curiosity and earlier, more informed conversations. It enables schools to move from reactive responses to a more proactive, preventative approach.

A full breakdown of the factors included within the tracker is provided in the appendix.

How it supports early identification

The strength of the tracker lies in its ability to highlight patterns across multiple areas of a pupil's experience.

By combining indicators such as attendance, wellbeing, safeguarding, SEND, and relationships, staff are better able to identify emerging concerns before they escalate into more entrenched difficulties, such as persistent absence.

For example, a pupil may still be attending regularly but show declining wellbeing, reduced engagement, or limited protective factors (such as a lack of trusted adult relationships or peer connections). The tracker makes these patterns visible, allowing schools to act earlier through universal or targeted support.

It also supports consistency across staff by providing a shared framework for understanding vulnerability, rather than relying on individual interpretation.

How schools are using it (or could use it)

The tracker is currently being developed and refined, with early implementation beginning at The Meadow.

A key feature of the model is how information is presented to staff. Data from the tracker is translated into a clear, two-page pupil overview document:

- **Page 1: Vulnerability Factors** – highlighting areas of risk across attendance, wellbeing, safeguarding, and learning
- **Page 2: Protective Factors** – identifying strengths, relationships, and opportunities that can be built upon

This format ensures that information is accessible, practical, and directly usable by teachers and support staff, rather than remaining as raw data within a spreadsheet.

Schools are beginning to use the tracker to:

- bring together key pupil information into one accessible place
- identify pupils who may benefit from early, low-level support
- inform discussions during pupil progress meetings and attendance reviews

- strengthen links between attendance, wellbeing, and provision

Link to universal provision

The Resilience Tracker sits firmly within a universal, whole-school approach. It does not replace existing systems but strengthens them by ensuring that key information is connected and used effectively.

It supports high-quality universal provision by:

- enabling earlier identification of need
- informing Quality First Teaching adaptations
- highlighting opportunities to strengthen belonging, relationships, and engagement
- ensuring that support is responsive rather than reactive

Where concerns are identified, the tracker provides a clear pathway into more targeted support, including structured attendance planning (APDR) and, where appropriate, specialist intervention. In this way, it acts as the foundation of a graduated response—ensuring that the right support is in place at the right time, starting with strong universal practice.

To understand the early impact of these approaches, attendance data has been analysed comparing pupils involved in targeted projects with a matched comparison group.

Initial Impact Analysis

Initial analysis of attendance data suggests a positive impact of targeted approaches, particularly at primary level.

Primary Phase

Pupils involved in attendance-focused projects showed an **increase in attendance of +4.6%** from the summer term to the current period.

In comparison, a matched group of pupils not involved in the projects showed a **decline of -1.32%** over the same period.

Approach	School	Cohort	Key Outcome	Type of Impact
Check In / Check Out (2024–25)	Sawston VC	41 pupils (85–95%)	73% of pupils improved attendance; +0.6% average increase	Direct improvement
Breakfast Wellbeing Group (2024–25)	Netherhall	21 pupils	73% of pupils improved or maintained attendance	Attendance + wellbeing
Check In / Check Out (2025–26)	Sawston VC	Targeted boys cohort	Attendance decreased by 0.6%, compared to - 2.01% in comparison group	Relative improvement (reduced decline)
Touch Base (2025–26)	Sawston VC	Targeted cohort	Attendance decreased by 0.55%	Stabilising impact
Breakfast Wellbeing Group (2025–26)	Netherhall	Targeted cohort	Data collection ongoing	To be evaluated
Team Me	Meadow	Individual pupil	Attendance increased from 10:30 to 2:30 daily	Significant individual impact
APDR Process	Stapleford	14 pupils	Average attendance improved by +1.9% since Summer 2025	Targeted improvement

Resilience Tracker	Meadow	Early phase (whole-school use)	Supporting earlier identification of need	Preventative / system impact
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This represents a **difference of +5.92%**, suggesting that the approaches not only supported improvement, but also counteracted the wider trend of declining attendance.

Secondary Phase

At secondary level, pupils involved in projects showed a **slight decrease in attendance of -0.9%**. However, this compares favourably to a **larger decrease of -2.01%** seen in comparison pupils. This represents a **difference of +1.11%**, indicating that while attendance challenges remain, the approaches may be helping to reduce the rate of decline.

Interpretation

While this is early-stage data, the findings suggest:

- A **strong positive impact in primary settings**
- A **protective effect in secondary settings**, where attendance decline appears to be mitigated

These outcomes align with expectations, given the differing structures and challenges across phases, and reinforce the importance of early, preventative approaches in primary schools. Further data over a longer period will be required to confirm sustained impact.

Several patterns emerge across the approaches:

- Relational, structured interventions show the clearest short-term improvements in attendance
- Provision-based approaches support both attendance and emotional readiness for learning
- Individualised, high-support models can lead to significant gains for pupils with more complex needs
- System-level approaches strengthen early identification and consistency, with impact likely to be seen over a longer period

Next Steps and Development Priorities

The approaches outlined in this report represent the early stages of a more structured, relational, and graduated approach to attendance across the Trust. While initial impact is encouraging, further work will be needed to embed, refine, and scale these approaches to ensure consistency and long-term impact.

The following priorities are recommended to support the next phase of development:

1. Embedding and Consistency

A key priority is ensuring that the approaches are implemented consistently across schools and become part of established practice, rather than remaining as standalone initiatives.

This will involve:

- embedding approaches within existing systems such as pupil progress meetings, attendance reviews, and SEN processes
- ensuring clarity around roles and responsibilities for implementation

- supporting staff to apply approaches consistently, particularly in relation to relational practice and early intervention

2. Scaling Successful Approaches

Early evidence suggests that several approaches are having a positive impact, particularly those focused on structured, relational support and early intervention.

The next phase should focus on scaling these approaches more widely across the Trust, including:

- expanding Check In / Check Up / Check Out to additional cohorts and settings
- developing and extending Enhanced Breakfast Wellbeing Provision where appropriate
- further refining and implementing the Team Me approach for pupils with more complex needs

3. Strengthening Data and Evaluation

While early data is promising, there is a need to strengthen the consistency and depth of evaluation across all approaches.

This should include:

- continuing to collect comparative attendance data to assess impact over time
- tracking longer-term outcomes to understand sustainability of improvements
- developing clearer measures of impact beyond attendance, including wellbeing, engagement, and sense of belonging
- refining tracking systems, including the ongoing development of the Resilience Tracker

4. Developing Universal Systems

Alongside targeted and specialist interventions, there is a continued focus on strengthening universal provision to support earlier identification and prevention.

This should involve:

- further development and wider rollout of the Resilience Tracker as a universal tool
- strengthening processes for identifying pupils at risk of declining attendance at an earlier stage
- ensuring that insights from the tracker inform Quality First Teaching and classroom-level adaptations
- reinforcing the role of belonging, relationships, and engagement as central to attendance improvement

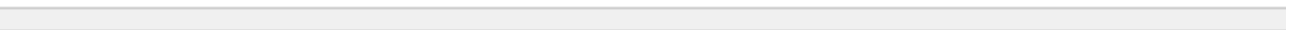
This work provides a foundation for a more consistent, relational approach to attendance across the Trust, which can continue to be developed and embedded over time.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Resilience Tracker – Factors Overview

Core Pupil Information - Tutor Group - Year - Sex - DOB - County		Background Characteristics - EAL - PP - Social Care Status - Safeguarding Concerns - Child Protection - Child in Need - EHA Involvement		Care History - CiC - Previous CiC - Adversities	
Attendance 23/24 Attendance 24/25 Attendance - Attendance History - Current Attendance		Early Years GLD		Attainment - Reading - Writing - Maths	
SEND & Needs - SEN Register - Area of Need - Diagnosis - Pupil Profile - Communication Passport		Planning APDR Targets		Classroom Support - Quality First Teaching Adaptations - OAP	
				Interventions - Group interventions - One-to-One Targeted Interventions - Specialist Involvement	
Wellbeing - Stirling Wellbeing Score - Positive Emotional State - Positive Outlook - How I Feel About School - Average Wellbeing Check-In		Relationships & Belonging - Trusted Adult Identified - Close Friendships		Enrichment & Experience - Clubs - Travelling to School - Opportunities and Experiences - Interests - Values	
Bromcom Pupil Voice SEN Provision Map Parent Questionnaire					

Vulnerability Profile									
Full Name				Date Of Birth					
Sex	Male	County							
Year	5	Tutor Group							
Vulnerabilities									
English as an Additional Language	N	Pupil Premium	Yes						
LAC	N	Previous LAC	N	Social Care Status					
Child Protection		Child in Need		EHA Involvement					
Safeguarding Concerns	3	Behaviour MyConcerns							
SEND									
SEN Register	Y	Area of Need	Moderate Learning Difficulty		Diagnosis				
Level of SEND Support									
Pupil Profile		Communication Passport	Yes	EHCP					
Attendance									
23/24 attendance		24/25 attendance	83.04999999999997	Current Attendance	99999993	78.06999999999993			
Early Learning Goals									
Communication and Language	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Physical Development	Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the World	Expressive Arts and Design			
Current Attainment									
Writing		Reading		Maths					
Wellbeing									
Adversities		Stirling Wellbeing Score							
Positive Emotional State Score			Positive Outlook Score						
How I Feel About School Assessment									
Average Check In Score 2.2857142857									



Provision and Protective Factors			
Quality First Teaching Adaptations	Tasks broken into smaller steps , Additional processing time, Instructions chunked , Adult checks understanding , Verbally rehearsal before starting, Independent work time shortened with review breaks, Sentence starters provided for speaking or writing, W/	OAP	visual word map, Support partners, Guided Practice,, Visual prompts, wobble cushion/ chair band, additional resources e.g. maths, Movement breaks
Assess Plan Do Review Targets			
Target 1			
Target 2			
Target 3			
Interventions			
Autumn Group Interventions	Reading Fluency, Maths 4 operations fluency		
Spring Group Interventions	KS2 Plus 1, KS2 Reading - Back to Basics		
Summer Group Interventions			
1:1 Targeted Interventions	-		
Specialist Involvement	-		
Pupil Voice			
Opportunities and Experiences		Clubs	-
Interests		Values	
Close Friendships			
Trusted Adult Identified			

Appendix 3: Intervention Menu / Approach Overview

Check In, Check Up, Check Out

A daily relational check-in system to improve attendance and connection

Overview

A structured approach to strengthening pupil-staff relationships through brief, consistent check-ins across the school day. Designed to build emotional safety, reinforce belonging, and improve attendance through increased adult visibility and connection.

How It Works

- Each pupil is paired with a consistent adult (e.g. form tutor, TA, pastoral staff)
- Check In – morning welcome during tutor time or arrival
- Check Up – midday contact in corridors, break, or lunch
- Check Out – end-of-day reflection or short goodbye
- Interactions are warm, informal, and not always focused on attendance
- Staff log contact using a shared spreadsheet
- Success stories shared fortnightly to maintain consistency
- Families receive communication at the start and midway through the project

Staffing & Time

- Can be delivered by existing school staff – no formal mentoring required
- Each interaction takes 2–5 minutes
- Can be embedded into tutor time and informal daily contact

Resources Needed

- Simple staff guidance and prompt sheets
- Shared log or attendance tracker
- Family letter templates
- Optional: Fortnightly summary template for internal updates

Contact for Support

For guidance, templates, or support embedding this model:

Sam Barnes – Attendance

Specialist Practitioner

Email: sbarnes@anglianlearning.org

Model School: Sawston Village



Target Group

- Pupils with attendance between 85%–95%
- Particularly effective for those at risk of falling below key thresholds
- Initial pilot focused on Year 10 girls, but adaptable across year groups



Evidence of impact

- 73.2% of pupils improved their attendance during the pilot
- Average attendance rose from 92.3% to 92.9% in just two months
- Clear gains among pupils who remained consistently engaged
- Staff consistency improved after receiving fortnightly updates with progress

Top Tips for Implementation

- Prioritise consistency over depth – frequent small contacts build trust
- Use data to identify pupils who are close to attendance thresholds
- Share small wins often – staff buy-in improves with visible success
- Adapt contact points to fit your school day – don't overcomplicate



CAMBRIDGESHIRE
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Enhanced Wellbeing Morning Club

A structured, nurturing breakfast offer to boost attendance and readiness to learn

Overview

A targeted morning club supporting pupils with low attendance, anxiety, or disengagement by offering a calm, nutritious, and relational start to the school day. Designed to build connection, emotional safety, and routine.

How It Works

- Daily club before school, staffed by consistent, trusted adults
- Healthy breakfast: e.g. porridge, berries, scrambled eggs
- Calm environment for informal connection and quiet routines
- Pupil-led activities (e.g. games, conversation, music) optional
- Attendance is invitation-based to preserve emotional safety



Evidence of impact

- 73.4% of targeted pupils improved or stabilised attendance
- Pupils who dropped out of the offer showed no attendance improvement
- Pupil feedback showed improvements in:
 - Mood and morning anxiety
 - Feeling 'ready to learn'
 - Sense of belonging and social connection



Target Group

- Pupils with persistent or emerging attendance concerns
- Pupils experiencing high morning anxiety
- Pupils regularly late or missing form



"I like to eat in the morning. It gets me energised."



"A calm safe space."

Staff and resources

Staffing & Time

- 2-3 trusted staff members (pastoral/TA/teacher)
- 30-45 mins daily before registration
- Food prep can be simple or supported by kitchen team

Resources Needed

- Breakfast supplies (low-cost: porridge, fruit, eggs)
- Seating space for relaxed interaction
- Optional: menu planner, activity ideas, feedback forms

Top Tips for Implementation

- Focus on relationships over routine – warmth matters
- Consistency of adults builds trust and routine
- Let pupils shape the space – autonomy builds engagement
- Track both attendance and mood for full impact

Contact for Support

For resources, rollout advice, or a visit to see it in action:

Sam Barnes – Attendance Specialist Practitioner

Email: sbarnes@anglianlearning.org



CAMBRIDGESHIRE
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LEARN ASPIRE THRIVE ACHIEVE



Stapleford Community
Primary School

Case Study: Attendance Support at Stapleford Community Primary School

Project Details

Stapleford Community Primary School, a 1FE primary academy with a nursery and wrap-around provision, have been implementing strategies from Anglian Learning's Attendance Toolkit, working closely with Attendance practitioner, Sam Barnes. The aim being to improve attendance rates among pupils facing multiple barriers, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Pupil Premium (PP) pupils, and children in care or care experienced. The approach was rooted in the school's vision of fostering a strong, inclusive community where every child feels they belong and can thrive academically and socially.

The rationale behind the approach was grounded in the understanding that consistent attendance is fundamental to accessing the full breadth of the curriculum and achieving positive educational outcomes. Given the school's diverse demographic—with over 20 languages spoken and 20% of pupils identified with SEND—addressing attendance barriers is critical to ensuring equity and inclusion. The approach sought to remove obstacles to attendance through a relational, belonging-focused approach that aligns with the school's CARE values: Curiosity, Ambition, Resilience, and Excellence.

The intended impact was to increase overall attendance, reduce persistent absence particularly in vulnerable groups, and foster a school culture where pupils feel valued and motivated to attend regularly.

Implementation

The Attendance Toolkit was implemented through a multi-faceted approach, combining data-driven analysis with relational strategies and community engagement. Pupils were identified in each year group, pupils that had multiple vulnerabilities. These children then completed a pupil survey to identify specific barriers to attendance, and these were then followed by individual meetings with parents to discuss these findings and uncover additional challenges. A support plan was developed based on these findings and discussions. The support plan followed an Assess, Plan, Do, Review approach.

Central to the approach was the emphasis on "belonging by design". Staff create a welcoming environment where pupils are warmly greeted each day, and absence is acknowledged positively with messages such as "we missed you" to reinforce that every child's presence matters. The school consistently communicated upcoming exciting curriculum opportunities and enrichment activities to build anticipation and engagement.

The school leveraged the Anglian Learning Trust Attendance Toolkit as a resource to support consistent attendance practises. Universal strategies included offering a breakfast club that provided a soft start to the day with healthy food and social time, particularly benefiting vulnerable pupils. To reinforce positive attendance, the headteacher sent praise postcards recognising improvements, and attendance data was regularly shared with staff and families via reports and newsletter updates.

Key stakeholders involved included class teachers, support staff, the leadership team, and families. Teachers play a vital role in daily attendance monitoring and follow-up, while leadership oversee data analysis and strategic interventions.

Significant milestones included:

- Completion of the pupil survey and parent meetings.
 - Attendance support plans (APDR approach)
 - Consistent attendance messaging.
 - Implementation of the breakfast club as a universal support.
 - Regular sharing of attendance progress and recognition of improvements.
 - Demonstrable improvements in attendance for targeted pupils, as reflected in termly DfE data comparing Stapleford to similar schools.
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Evaluation and Impact

The attendance approach has had a measurable positive impact on attendance at Stapleford Community Primary School. Overall attendance for the 2025-2026 academic year currently stands at 96.4%, exceeding both the national average (94.9%) and the local authority average (95%). This represents an improvement from 95.9% in the previous year, indicating sustained progress.

The school's attendance ranks highly in comparison to similar schools, securing 1st place in the DfE Autumn Term report and 2nd place in the Spring Term, showcasing the effectiveness of the project relative to peer institutions.

Analysis of individual pupil attendance reveals targeted improvements among vulnerable groups:

- Pupils with historically poor attendance or multiple barriers, such as SEND, PP, and those known to social care, have shown increased attendance rates compared to the previous year. For example, a Year 4 pupil known to social care improved from 66.5% attendance to 92.1%, and several pupils with SEND and PP status have shown steady attendance gains following parent meetings and tailored support.
- The relational approach and consistent communication appear to have positively influenced pupils' sense of belonging and motivation to attend school.

The impact is evident in improved attendance figures, positive pupil and parent engagement, and strong comparative performance against similar schools. These outcomes contribute not only to better educational access and achievement but also to pupils' well-being and personal development.

This case study highlights the value of integrating inclusive, community-focused practises with robust monitoring and leadership oversight to address attendance challenges effectively. Stapleford's experience offers actionable insights for other primary schools aiming to enhance attendance and promote equity under the current OFSTED inspection framework.

By continuing to refine and expand this work, Stapleford Community Primary School is well placed to sustain its progress and ensure every child benefits from joyful, consistent learning opportunities.