

Student Update

Attendance

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Reflecting on the autumn term and my return to my substantive position, I have received significant support from the school in my role as Senior Attendance Champion. The opportunities for Continuing Professional Development, a dedicated attendance team, and guidance from my line manager have all contributed to my ability to perform my duties effectively. The recent appointment of a full-time Family Liaison Officer has already made a positive impact by strengthening relationships with families, which has enabled us to implement more tailored interventions for those facing significant attendance challenges. Additionally, the provision of clerical support has enhanced the efficiency of the attendance team and bolstered the pastoral team's early intervention strategies.

During the first term, our primary objectives were to evaluate the existing attendance procedures at all levels within the school and to identify areas for improvement.

To achieve this, an internal attendance procedures document was developed that provides clear guidance on staff expectations and timing. This ensures a consistent approach across the school, enhancing the efficiency of our daily first response system. Additionally, teams were provided with structured guidance and scripts to facilitate early communication with parents, aimed at not only preventing students from becoming persistently absent (defined as having less than 90% attendance) but also celebrating improvement in attendance and punctuality to enhance parental engagement.

Weekly quality assurance processes are now in place to review every child's absence, which allows for the early identification of patterns and the timely intervention necessary to support both pupils and their families. This proactive approach is reflected in our attendance figures, with Ashton CSC achieving at present an attendance rate that is 0.6% above the FFT national average for secondary schools.

To further enhance attendance, trends and patterns throughout previous academic years were evaluated to identify specific periods of low attendance that warranted targeted improvement efforts. Data indicated a decline in attendance during November and the final week of December, prompting us to launch two initiatives: "No Days Off in November" and a form-time pizza party during the last week of term.

The pizza party initiative resulted in a notable increase in attendance rates, with figures rising by 1.7% from autumn 2023/24 to autumn 2024/25.

The "No Days Off in November" initiative, supported by several local businesses, allowed Ashton CSC to offer two Christmas hampers per year group as incentives for students who maintained perfect attendance throughout November. Families expressed immense gratitude for these hampers, which included all the ingredients necessary for a traditional Christmas dinner. For many recipient families, this initiative

not only provided a festive meal on Christmas Day but also ensured they could enjoy fresh, balanced meals in the days following the holiday—something that might not have been possible otherwise.

Overall year group % attendance

	Nov 24-25	Nov 23-24	Difference
Whole school	92.46	91.45	+1.01
Y7	96.01	92.96	+3.05
Y8	93.87	91.44	+2.43
Y9	91.21	89.75	+1.46
Y10	92.36	90.34	+2.02
Y11	89.57	93.20	-3.63

- All year groups apart from Y11 show improved attendance in Nov from previous year except Y11.

Number of students with 100% attendance compared to same year group

Current year	Nov 24	Nov 23	Nov 22
Year 7	99		
Year 8	78	74	
Year 9	69	69	77
Year 10	89	66	74
Year 11	76	77	70

Number of students with 100% attendance compared to previous year groups

	Nov 24	Nov 23	Nov 22
Year 7	99	74	77
Year 8	78	69	74
Year 9	69	66	70
Year 10	89	77	72
Year 11	76	69	77

Points to note:

- Number of current Y7 with 100% attendance in comparison to other year groups when they were in Y7 is high
- Year 8 slight increase by 4 students
- Year 9 and 11 very similar to their previous years
- Year 10 largest increase of 23 students from their previous years and large improvement from previous Y10 cohorts over the past 3 years.

The final priority of the term was to reduce the number of students arriving to school after registration has closed to ensure a reduction in missed learning.

	HT1	HT1	HT2	HT2
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	24-25		23-24		24-25		23-24	
	Pupils	sessions	Pupils	sessions	Pupils	sessions	pupils	sessions
Y7	1	3	3	4	4	4	7	15
Y8	11	20	12	31	11	18	11	15
Y9	14	21	27	71	13	34	26	67
Y10	15	45	19	58	19	44	19	54
Y11	21	64	3	3	21	48	9	15
WS	62	153	64	167	68	148	72	166

Half terms 1 and 2 show a decrease in U marks for all year groups except Y11. The number of sessions that Y11 have arrived after registration has closed has reduced from half term 1 to half term 2 but there is still more work to be done.

Note: Use of U mark is more consistently applied in 24/25 and therefore a reduction in figures overall is a huge success.

Autumn term attendance overview

School has started off positively in comparison to FFT national statistics. Overall school attendance for the term is 0.6% above national average of 91.9%. This positive trend is evident across all year groups except Year 9 where the attendance is -0.3% below the national average. In fact two year groups are identified as significantly above the FFT national average in the Autumn term; year 7 +1.1%, year 8 +1.3% with year 10 joining that trend in the first week of the Spring term with a difference of 1.1%.

As a school we continue to be significantly above FFT national averages for males, FSM6 and SEND students.

Comparing autumn term attendance from 23/24 to 24/25 shows an improvement of 1.7%.

Persistent absenteeism

A student is defined as being persistently absent if their attendance is below 90%.

We are currently broadly inline with FFT National Statistics. The overall school PA for the first term is 24%, 1% below the NA of 23%. The additional scripts and regular communication to parents has played a part in the lower school making advances in this area. Year 11 is significantly below the NA by over 6%. This is a key area of concern due to the upcoming GCSEs. To tackle this, additional resources have been redirected to support those most at risk. I will provide an update of the impact of the additional support in my next report.

In Class Behaviour

In school we have a four strikes warning system in each lesson. Students who distract from the teacher's delivery or their peers learning will be given either a warning or a consequence.

The first two times disruption occurs the teacher will warn the class and the individual student will receive a Warning 1, or Warning 2. If the learning is disrupted for a third time in the lesson, the student who did so will receive a Consequence 3. This is a 40minute after school detention. If any other student disrupts the learning after this, they will receive a consequence 4 and will be removed from the lesson and given a 1 hour detention.

Students can also receive a straight C4 for significant behaviours that cross the tolerance threshold.

The following tables show the number of C3 and C4 issued throughout the First Term over the 4 years of its implementation.

C3	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Yr 7	82	83	58	49
Yr 8	223	172	229	130
Yr 9	214	190	152	186
Yr 10	134	90	93	71
Yr 11	90	90	52	37
Whole School	743	625	584	473
Incidents / Week	50	42	39	32

C4	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Yr 7	68	40	58	8
Yr 8	297	244	155	78
Yr 9	325	183	220	141
Yr 10	118	91	94	100
Yr 11	137	67	52	33
Whole School	945	625	579	360
Incidents / Week	63	42	39	24

Since this system was introduced, there has been a steady decline in the number of students receiving consequences for their behaviours as a result of persistent disruption in any given class. In any given week there are over 1000 lessons taking place. In 2024/25 24 students on average each week were being removed from their lessons due to persistent disruptive behaviour.

The reduction in incidents of disruptive behaviour can be attributed to the consistent implementation of behaviour management strategies and the policy itself. Teachers and support staff have been provided with professional development on restorative practices and positive behaviour reinforcement through The Ashton Way, which have led to better engagement with students and the de-escalation of potential issues. Furthermore, the introduction of a consistent rewards system recognising positive

contributions has incentivised students to adhere to behavioural expectations, creating a more supportive and encouraging school environment. These measures have collectively contributed to a calmer, more focused school atmosphere where students feel supported and able to thrive. There is still work to be done and our aim is to continue to reduce the amount of lessons being disrupted by student behaviour.

Suspensions and Exclusions

Suspensions over time:

	Academic Year				% change	
	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	23/24 - 24/25	21/22 - 24/25
Number of suspensions	58	50	45	34	-24%	-41%
Number of students	43	38	27	28	4%	-35%
Number of repeat suspensions	15	12	18	6	-67%	-60%
Number of days	185.5	183	131.5	59	-55%	-68%

Over the past academic years, the school has made significant improvements in behaviour management, as reflected in the reduction of suspensions, repeat suspensions, and the number of days lost to disciplinary measures. The total number of suspensions has steadily decreased from 58 in 2021-22 to 34 in 2024-25, marking a 24% reduction in the past year and an overall 41% reduction since 2021-22. This progress is a result of consistent implementation of the school's behaviour policies, the promotion of and teaching of The Ashton Way, a greater understanding of early interventions, and the use of restorative practices to address issues before they escalate. Additionally, there has been a marked decline in repeat suspensions, dropping from 15 in 2021-22 to just 6 in 2024-25, representing a 67% reduction in the past year and 60% overall. This success can be attributed to proactive mentoring, and hot spotting key students

The number of days lost to suspensions has also decreased dramatically, which has had a positive impact on our overall attendance figures, from 185.5 in 2021-22 to 59 in 2024-25, a 55% reduction in the past year and a 68% reduction overall. This achievement reflects the school's emphasis on alternative disciplinary approaches that prioritise keeping students in school while addressing underlying behavioural challenges. While the number of students receiving suspensions initially declined between 2021-22 and 2023-24, there has been a slight increase from 27 to 28 students in the past year, representing a 4% rise. However, this still reflects a 35% reduction since 2021-22, indicating that fewer students are engaging in repeat behaviours leading to suspensions and demonstrating a long-term positive shift in their conduct.

Overall, the significant reductions in suspensions, repeat suspensions, and days lost highlight the success of the school's behaviour management strategies. The focus will remain on refining these approaches to maintain low suspension rates and further reduce the number of students involved in behavioural incidents. These results reflect the school's ongoing commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students. However, while these advancements are promising, there remains room for improvement. The school must continue to evaluate and refine its strategies to ensure that all students feel supported and engaged. Ongoing efforts to address the remaining behavioural challenges continue to be a focus in maintaining this positive trajectory, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive academically and personally within the school community.

Managed moves

We continue to support students across the district and beyond in having second opportunities with their education. We currently have 2 students out on Managed Moves and have successfully taken on 1 student this academic year. In addition to the numbers on the additional sheet, we have successfully re-integrated 2 students from Pupil Referral Units (one in year 9 and another in year 10) following permanent exclusions from their previous schools.

Student feedback

In addition to the Big Question, we have also completed our annual student survey. Early indications are pleasing. The analysis of which is currently being undertaken by our directors of learning, being overseen by Simon Pilkington. Key themes and trends are being identified and will be reported back to students, parents, and staff through various channels, including newsletters, parent forums, and student assemblies. Individual areas of concern are also being addressed and a full update, alongside actions and outcomes, will be given in my next report.