



TIPS FOR BEING ATTENDANCE CURIOUS WITH TAMESIDE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

We all know that children and young people being in learning is a good thing from attending early years provision, attending schools and those being educated at home. Where attendance is proving difficult for some of our children and young people to achieve, we want to empower professionals to be attendance curious with the families that they work with.

Attending learning has long term impacts on children's life chances, including attainment, employment prospects and future earnings. Pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. Children eligible for free-school meals, children with special educational needs (SEN) and children in need have lower attendance rates on average and are more likely to require support to attend school regularly.

Every professional that interacts with a child or young person or their family, has a role to play in helping them to attend learning regularly.

Evidence from a recent Children's Commissioner report showed that children who miss one of the first few days of the new term for unauthorised reasons are much more likely to miss long periods of their schooling than their peers who attended those first few days. These children had a predicted overall absence of almost 45%, or 31 days across the term.

September marks a fresh start and we want this years to be the warmest welcome back to school and schools will be seeking to be inclusive and supportive for a great start to the school year.

Please use these top tips for talking to our children, young people and their families to make us all attendance curious and give them the best start to the academic year:

If you feel like you need more information on attendance in learning or support with a specific issue for a Tameside family, please contact the Attendance Advice Line on 0161 342 2112.



- 1. Start with open-ended questions:** Ask parents/carers, children and young people how they feel about attending school and if they have any concerns or challenges related to attendance.
- 2. Highlight the benefit of regular school attendance:** Discuss the positive impact consistent attendance has on a child's attainment, social development and well-being. For early years learners; reception age or primary school children, regular school attendance helps build a healthy routine and supports their growing minds. For secondary school age children, regular school attendance is important for their well-being and educational attainment. In both scenarios, emphasise that every day at school matters to their learning and wellbeing.
- 3. Explore barriers to attendance:** Encourage parents/carers, children and young people to share any difficulties they might be facing that could impact attendance, such as transport issues, health concerns, or personal challenges. Even where parents/carers, children and young people haven't had good experiences of school, reassure them that teachers will be open for discussion and sympathetic to helping them overcome barriers to attendance.
- 4. Discuss reasonable adjustments:** Inform parents/carers, children and young people about the concept of reasonable adjustments for children with SEND, if applicable, in the education system. Help them understand what school can offer to support attendance and participation in learning.
- 5. Discuss the role of family engagement:** Emphasise the importance of family involvement in supporting attendance. Encourage parents/carers to establish daily routines, create a positive learning environment at home, and reinforce the value of education with their child.
- 6. Provide information about attendance policies and procedures:** Encourage parents to speak with teachers openly and to familiarise themselves with their schools' attendance policy, including guidelines for reporting absences, requesting leave and addressing punctuality.
- 7. Offer resources for improving attendance:** Share the [parents guidance](#) which offers practical tips and templates for monitoring and improving attendance. The [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) resource can help parents/carers with making judgements on when their child is too unwell to attend. The NHS advises that children with coughs and colds
- 8. Address mental health concerns:** Recognise that mental health challenges can impact attendance. Refer parents to relevant mental health guidance resources to help them understand and address any underlying issues their child might be facing. Absence is not generally a good way of managing anxiety about school.

