Pupil attendance
A policy priority

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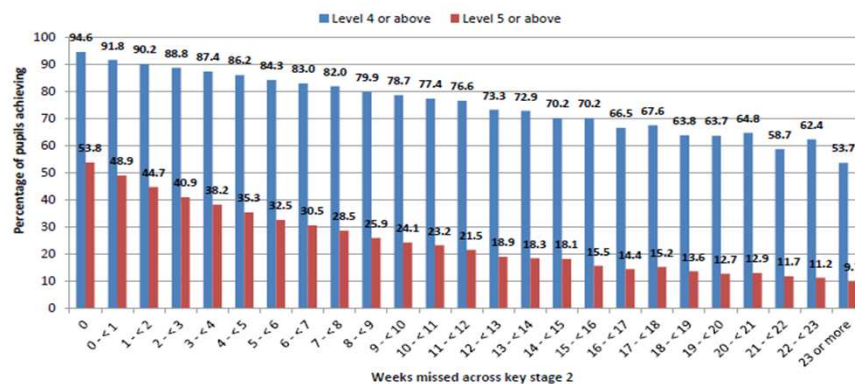
The link between attendance and attainment

In February 2015, the DfE published a report 'The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4'. The report showed clearly that as students miss more lessons in secondary schools, their attainment across a range of measure declines with a similar effect at KS2.

4.2.2 Number of weeks missed due to overall absence

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils in state-funded mainstream schools achieving stated levels at the end of KS2 in 2013/14 academic year by the number of weeks missed due to overall absence across KS2

The link between attendance and attainment

Figure 7: Percentage of pupils in state-funded mainstream schools achieving stated qualifications at the end of KS4 in 2013/14 academic year by the number of weeks missed due to overall absence across KS4
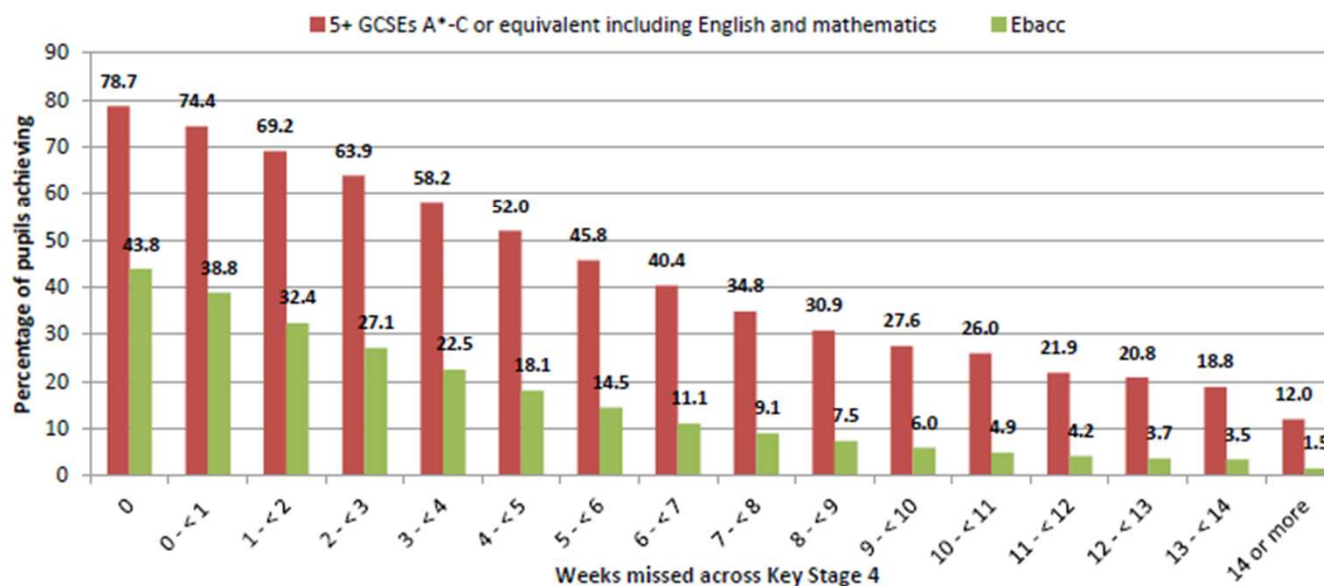
The link between attendance and attainment

There has been lots of research on the impact of exclusions on attainment and future life chances.

Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) (2017) – official exclusions are the tip of the iceberg especially if you consider the increase in EHE, use of Alternative Provision and Managed Moves

- The most vulnerable children are most likely to be excluded. One in two has a recognised mental health need.
- Excluded children are four times more likely to be from the poorest families and eight out of 10 of them have a special education need or disability.
- Boys are much more likely to be asked to leave their school, with three boys permanently excluded for every girl.
- Black pupils from Caribbean backgrounds are still significantly overrepresented in pupil referral units, though most pupils (70%) are white British.

The link between attendance and attainment

Barnardo's study – Not present and not correct (2010)

- One in 20 secondary students will experience at least one fixed-term exclusion each year.

- Two-thirds of fixed period exclusions in secondary schools were given to pupils who had already received at least one earlier in the year.

- Barnardo's research found that fixed term exclusion does little to improve behaviour.

- The risks associated with permanent exclusion, which affects about one in 500 secondary school pupils (0.17 per cent) are even greater.

- This is because those young people most likely to undergo extended or repeated periods of exclusion are the ones who need more adult supervision, not less. Excluding them from the stable routines of school and leaving them in a chaotic home background or risky neighbourhood only worsens their behaviour.

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The link between attendance and attainment

Anne Longfield, the children's commissioner for England, said in July 2018: "I am extremely worried that some schools are gaming the system by off-rolling children who may present challenges, including a high number with SEND into alternative provision or home education, in a bid to improve the school's overall exam results."

A DfE review of exclusions is underway

Pupil absence

- Pupil absence, though around the national average, **is increasing in Tameside**. In 2016/17 Tameside had an absence rate of 4.7% having been 4.6% in the previous year.

- The percentage of pupils persistently absent, though again around national, is increasing year on year, with the overall persistent absence figure for the borough being 10.4% in 2016/17 (up from 9.8%).

- In terms of our most vulnerable pupils, **persistent absence amongst Children in Need is extremely high**. The PA rate for CIN is 39.50% which is well above the national average of 31.50%

Exclusions

- There were 100 permanent exclusions in the 17/18 academic year.

- The rate of primary and secondary permanent exclusions both increased in 17/18.

- Provisionally, the rate of fixed term exclusion has increased year on year overall. Fixed term exclusions have increased year on year in secondary schools.

Tameside compared to statistical neighbours

Statistical Neighbours

		2015/16	2016/17
371	Doncaster	0.01	0.01
359	Wigan	0.00	0.01
807	Redcar and Cleveland	-	0.06
372	Rotherham	0.12	0.07
370	Barnsley	0.06	0.07
394	Sunderland	0.08	0.07
805	Hartlepool	0.08	0.12
812	North East Lincolnshire	0.24	0.17
357	Tameside	0.22	0.22
876	Halton	0.10	0.22
342	St. Helens	-	-
	Statistical Neighbours	0.09	0.09
981	North West	0.11	0.14
970	England	0.08	0.10

In 2016/17 the overall rate of permanent exclusions in Tameside was more than double the national average.

When compared to statistical neighbours, Tameside had the highest rate of perm ex. alongside Halton.

Tameside compared to North West LAs

LA	2015/16	2016/17
Wigan	0.00	0.01
Blackburn with Darwen	0.01	0.02
Warrington	0.03	0.02
Knowsley	0.02	0.05
Cheshire East	0.08	0.06
Cheshire West and Chester	0.05	0.06
Sefton	0.07	0.10
Cumbria	0.07	0.11
Stockport	0.10	0.11
Oldham	0.18	0.12
Wirral	0.11	0.12
Manchester	0.09	0.13
Trafford	0.12	0.14
Bolton	0.10	0.16
Rochdale	0.17	0.18
Salford	0.18	0.18
Lancashire	0.18	0.21
Tameside	0.22	0.22
Blackpool	0.12	0.22
Halton	0.10	0.22
Liverpool	0.15	0.22
Bury	0.19	0.28
St. Helens	-	-

In 2016/17 only Bury had a higher permanent exclusion rate than Tameside in the North West.

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Tameside comparisons - number of pupils in Pupil Referral Services

	Jan-18			2016/17	
	Total School pop	PRS	% school pop in PRS	Permanent exclusion rate	Difference
ENGLAND	**8132327**	**16732**	**0.21%**	**0.10%**	**-0.11%**
NORTH WEST	**1148067**	**3299**	**0.29%**	**0.14%**	**-0.15%**
STAT NEIGHBOURS	**360238**	**960**	**0.27%**	**0.11%**	**-0.16%**
GM	**470901**	**1450**	**0.31%**	**0.15%**	**-0.15%**
TAMESIDE	**36584**	**121**	**0.33%**	**0.22%**	**-0.11%**

Whilst Tameside might have a high rate of permanent exclusions, the number of pupils in the Pupil Referral Service is not as high comparatively
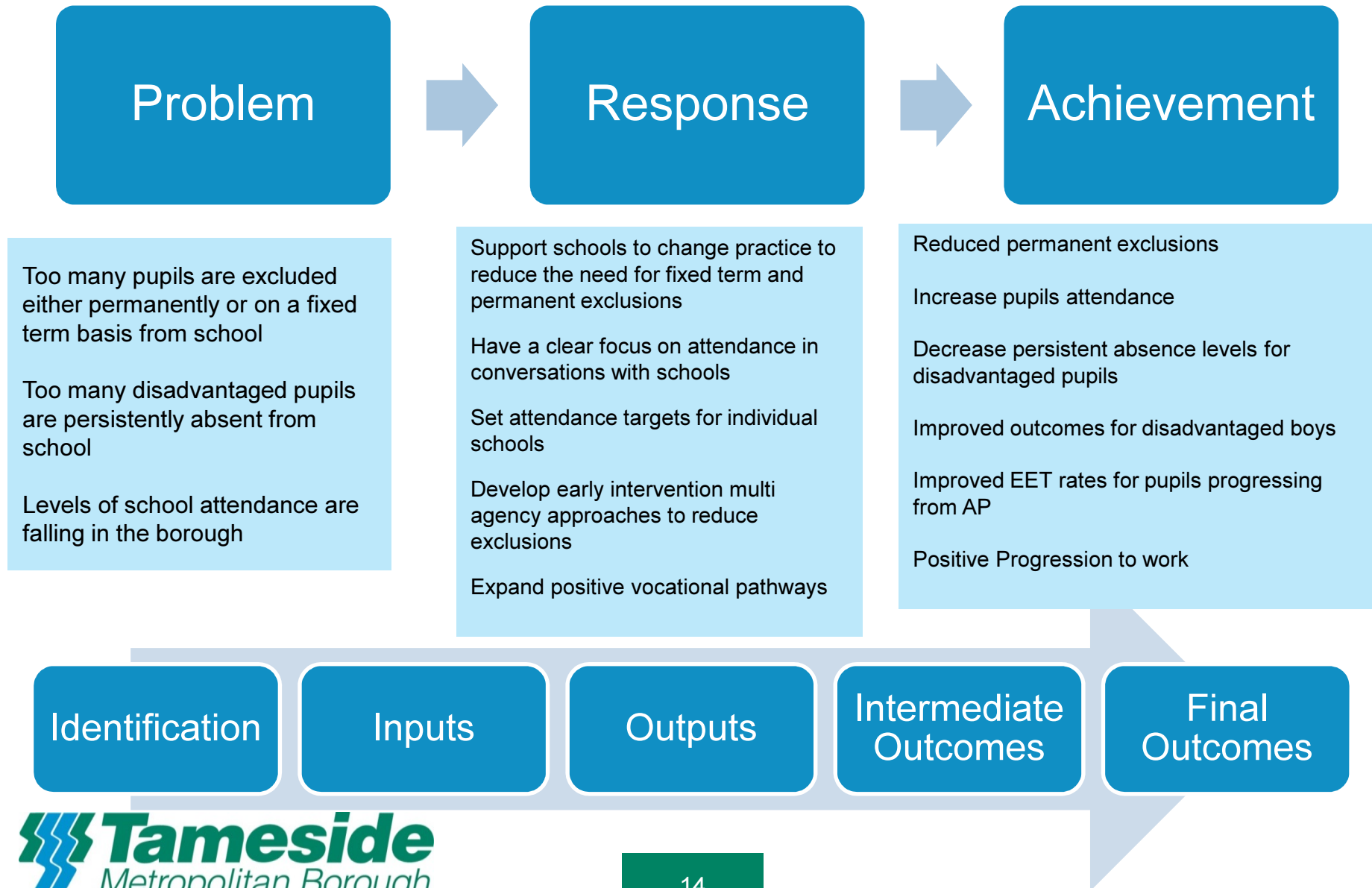
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How we will get better

- Exclusions is not a single agency issue so will require a coordinated approach to improve

- Changes to government legislation in 2013 have attempted to improve attendance. Schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time and can issues a penalty notice. Penalty notices for holidays in term time don't work in improving attendance so we cannot rely on this as the only intervention

- Encouraging schools to identify patterns of absence early and work with pupils and families to identify and remove barriers to attendance. Early and timely intervention is provided to prevent problems arising in the first place or escalating

How we will get better

- Work with other agencies to support schools and pupils, for example, the team around the school

- Support appropriate interventions with pupils through the neighbourhood model and early intervention services

- Work to develop a range of appropriate alternative provision in the borough

- Have a clear focus on attendance in conversations with school

- Work to develop attendance targets with schools to monitor the effectiveness of interventions

- Continue to encourage outstanding teaching in all schools to motivate pupils to attend and engage in learning

- Support schools to change practice to reduce the need for fixed term and permanent exclusions

Strategic planning: Theory of Change Model

Problem → Response → Achievement

Problem

Too many pupils are excluded either permanently or on a fixed term basis from school

Too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent from school

Levels of school attendance are falling in the borough

Response

Support schools to change practice to reduce the need for fixed term and permanent exclusions

Have a clear focus on attendance in conversations with schools

Set attendance targets for individual schools

Develop early intervention multi agency approaches to reduce exclusions

Expand positive vocational pathways

Achievement

Reduced permanent exclusions

Increase pupils attendance

Decrease persistent absence levels for disadvantaged pupils

Improved outcomes for disadvantaged boys

Improved EET rates for pupils progressing from AP

Positive Progression to work

Identification → Inputs → Outputs → Intermediate Outcomes → Final Outcomes

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Defining, prioritising and implementing our response

What change is required?

1 Recapturing the focus on persistent absence	2 Ensure pupils with long term medical conditions are supported	3 Enabling schools to recognise safeguarding issues presenting through behaviour	4 Developing a multi agency approach to identifying and supporting young people at risk of permanent exclusion	5 Supporting schools to identify individual needs and barriers to learning as early as possible

How will we do it?

Regular register audits to identify patterns of absence in schools	Working with partners in a team around the school approach	Work with providers to develop a range of effective alternative provision that schools can access	Clear individual school targets for improving attendance
Offer schools comprehensive training on good attendance practice	Identifying and sharing good practice	Support schools to use a range of interventions to improve attendance	Work with schools to review curriculum options and pupil engagement

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Attendance action plan

1 Recapture the focus on persistent absence					
	Inputs	Intended final impact & outputs (3yrs)	Signs of success (1 - 2 yrs)	Additional resources	When
Short term impact (2019)					
A1a	Offer comprehensive training package on managing pupil attendance	Greater awareness of attendance issues within schools			Sep-18
A1b	Issue attendance handbook to all schools to include all poloicies and procedures	Greater awareness of attendance issues within schools			Spring term 19
A1c	Conduct regular register audits with schools	Greater awareness of attendance issues within schools	All schools with high levels of PA audited		Summer term 19
A1d	Set realistic improvement targets for all schools to reduce persistent absence	Reduced levels of persistent absence	All schools with high levels of PA have actions in place to address patterns of absence		Summer term 19

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Attendance action plan

	Inputs	Intended final impact & outputs (3yrs)	Signs of success (1 - 2 yrs)	Additional resources	When
1 Recapture the focus on persistent absence					
Mid/long term impact					
A1e	Establish patterns of absence within individual schools and advise schools on action to address patterns	Increased attendance	All schools with high levels of PA have actions in place to address patterns of absence		Autumn term 19
A1f	Identify good practice and share through attendance training	Greater awareness of attendance issues within schools			19/20
A1g	Regularly communicate persistent absence data to all schools to enable effective benchmarking	Greater awareness of attendance issues within schools			Autumn term 19

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Attendance action plan

	Inputs	Intended final impact & outputs (3yrs)	Signs of success	Additional resources	When
2 Ensure pupils with long term medical conditions are supported					
Short term impact (2019)					
A2a	Communicate medical policy to all schools		All absences of pupils with 15 days or more absence due to medical issues notified to LA		Sep-18
A2b	Ensure medical panel considers referrals within timescales	Impact of long term absence is minimised	All complex cases referred to the medical panel		Sep-18
A2c	All pupils receive provision appropriate to their needs	Impact of long term absence is minimised	Medical panel identify appropriate provision		Sep-18

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Attendance action plan

	Inputs	Intended final impact & outputs (3yrs)	Signs of success	Additional resources	When
3. Enabling schools to recognise safeguarding issues presenting through behaviour					
Short term impact (2019)					
A3a	Check current safeguarding training package for schools is appropriate	All schools attend training regularly	Schools informed of refreshed training offer		Spring term 19
A3b	Ensure MASH is supported by colleagues in education	Safeguarding referrals are effectively dealt with	Information timescales are adhered to	Possible additional staffing dependent on demand	Feb-19
A3c	Ensure guidance for schools is up to date and available	Guidance issued to all schools			Spring term 19
Mid/long term impact					
A3d	Collate information on school participation in safeguarding training	All schools attend training regularly			Autumn term 19

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Attendance action plan

4. Developing a multi agency approach to identifying and supporting young people at risk of permanent exclusion					
	Inputs	Intended final impact & outputs (3yrs)	Signs of success	Additional resources	When
Short term impact (2019)					
A4a	Ensure MASH is supported by colleagues in education	Safeguarding referrals are effectively dealt with	Information timescales are adhered to	Possible additional staffing dependent on demand	Feb-19
A4b	Ensure colleagues attend team around the school and neighbourhood meetings	Reduction in permanent exclusions	Meetings attended and impact assessed		Nov-18
A4c	Conduct review of current alternative provision in the borough	Alternative provision offer is fit for purpose	Review undertaken		Sep-18

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Attendance action plan

	4. Developing a multi agency approach to identifying and supporting young people at risk of permanent exclusion				
Mid/long term impact					
A4d	Evaluate participation in panels to develop services that support schools to identify pupils at risk of permanent exclusion	Reduction in permanent exclusions	Meetings attended and impact assessed		Jun-19
A4e	Refreshed traded services offer to schools	Reduction in permanent exclusions	Schools quality questionnaire informs traded offer		Jan-20
A4f	Develop new alternative provision model in line with recommendation from review	Alternative provision offer is fit for purpose	Review outcomes identify potential models for future commissioning		Jul-19

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Attendance action plan

	Inputs	Intended final impact & outputs (3yrs)	Signs of success	Additional resources	When
5. Supporting schools to identify individual needs and barriers to learning as early as possible					
Short term impact (2019)					

SEE SEND SUPPORT ACTION PLAN