

# **School Attendance, 2021/22**

**Key findings for the Lancashire-14 area**

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# 1 Overview and background information

Attendance at school is linked directly with better performance in examinations and an increased likelihood of securing employment. Some of those pupils who are absent from school have an increased likelihood of becoming involved in youth offending. They are also more likely to be involved in risk taking behaviours, such as alcohol and drug use. During 2021/22, overall levels of absence in Lancashire-12 schools (7.14%) were lower than the national (7.55%), regional (7.53%), and neighbouring unitary authorities' rates (Blackburn with Darwen 7.38% and Blackpool 7.90%). The level of persistent absenteeism in Lancashire-12 schools (21.2%), under the definition which includes pupils having an overall absence rate of 10 per cent or above, was also lower than the national (22.5%), regional (22.6%) and neighbouring unitary authority's rates (Blackburn with Darwen 23.6% and Blackpool 25.6%).

The overall absence rate for Lancashire-12 was lower than the previous year (4.4%) and remains below comparator rates. The county is in the second quartile nationally and ranked 46 of 152 authorities.

## 2 Key findings for the Lancashire-14 area

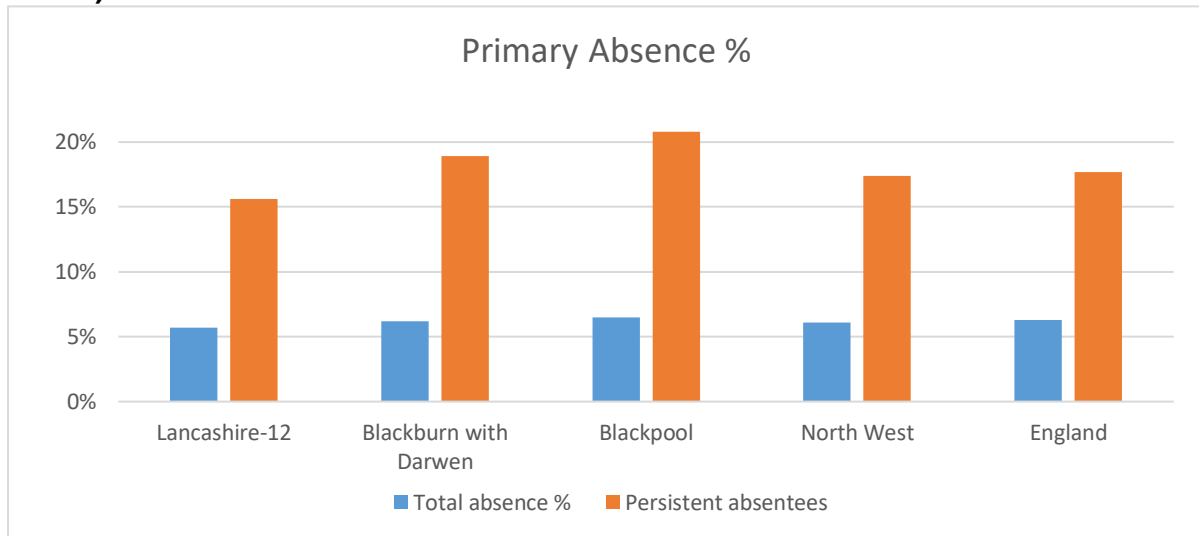
### 2.1 Primary and secondary attendance

During 2021/22, the proportion of overall absence levels in primary schools within Lancashire-12 (5.7%) (Table 1 and Figure 1) was lower than the national (6.3%), regional (6.1%), and Blackburn with Darwen (6.2%), and Blackpool (6.5%) averages. The level of persistent absenteeism for Lancashire-12 (15.6%) (Defined as pupils having an overall absence rate of around 10 percent of authorised and/or unauthorised absence) was significantly lower than the national (17.7%), regional (17.4%) and neighbouring unitary authority rates (18.9% in Blackburn with Darwen and 20.8% in Blackpool). Lancashire-12 is currently in Quartile Banding A and ranks as the 27<sup>th</sup> local authority in the Latest National Rank, with the worst performing local authority being Middlesbrough which is currently in Quartile Banding D and ranks as the 151<sup>st</sup> local authority.

**Table 1: Absence levels in state funded primary schools, 2021/22 (six half terms)**

Absence Type	Total absence %	Persistent absentees %
Lancashire-12	5.7	15.6
Blackburn with Darwen	6.2	18.9
Blackpool	6.5	20.8
North West	6.1	17.4
England	6.3	17.7

Source: Department for Education (DfE)/Lancashire County Council (LCC) Business Intelligence

**Figure 1: Absence levels in state funded primary schools, 2021/22 (six half terms)**

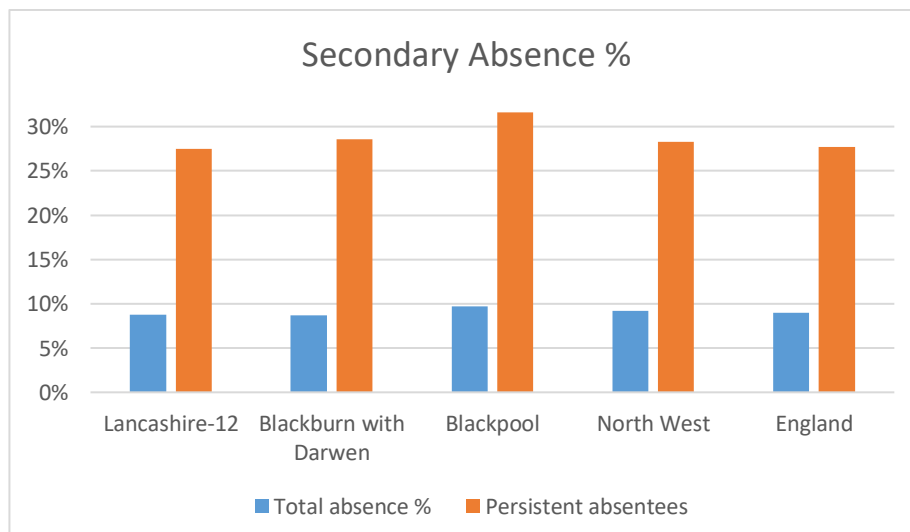
Source: DfE/LCC Business Intelligence

During 2021/22, the overall absence levels in secondary schools within Lancashire-12 (8.8%) (Table 2 and Figure 2) was lower than the national (9.0%), the regional (9.2%) and Blackpool (9.7%) rates and was slightly lower than Blackburn with Darwen (8.7%). The level of persistent absenteeism in Lancashire-12 (27.5%) was also lower than the national (27.7%), regional (28.3%) and unitary authority rates (28.6% in Blackburn with Darwen and 31.6% in Blackpool).

**Table 2: Absence levels in state funded secondary schools, 2021/22 (six half terms)**

Absence Type	Total absence %	Persistent absentees %
Lancashire-12	8.8	27.5
Blackburn with Darwen	8.7	28.6
Blackpool	9.7	31.6
North West	9.2	28.3
England	9.0	27.7

Source: DfE/LCC Business Intelligence

**Figure 2: Absence levels in state funded secondary schools, 2021/22 (six half terms)**

### 3 Attendance in districts

At district level (table 3) reflecting the link between school attendance and deprivation, overall absence was high in Burnley (8.0%), West Lancashire (7.5%), Pendle (7.5%) and Hyndburn (7.2%) where levels of relative deprivation are highest. However, Lancaster (7.2%) district which is not considered to be highly deprived had a high level of overall and persistent absence based on school location.

**Table 3: Absence levels in state funded schools by Lancashire-12 district, 2021/22 (six half terms)**

District	Overall absence %	Persistent absence %
Burnley	8.0	25.2
Chorley	6.6	17.9
Fylde	7.7	22.4
Hyndburn	7.2	22.6
Lancaster	7.2	21.2
Pendle	7.5	23.9
Preston	7.0	20.2
Ribble Valley	6.1	16.4
Rossendale	6.6	18.3
South Ribble	7.0	19.5
West Lancashire	7.5	24.6
Wyre	7.5	22.0

Source: DfE/LCC Business Intelligence

The children and young people dashboard created as part of the Neighbourhood JSNA, includes district and ward level data on pupil absence. This resource can be accessed [here](#) although it is currently being updated.

Addressing absence and their causes is an ongoing focus for the Authority. The absence rate in 21/22 still reflects Covid restrictions and sending groups of children home to isolate. Secondary absence is high in schools with poor outcomes and judgements, these schools have since had new leadership and are therefore improving this. Working with DfE advisor and other multi agencies we are consulting on a new attendance strategy and toolkit. Each school now has assigned a link attendance advisor to visit them once per term.