



# School Attendance, 2022/23

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 2022/23, overall levels of absence in Lancashire-12 schools (7.06%) were lower than the national (7.37%), regional (7.34%), and neighbouring unitary authorities' rates (Blackburn with Darwen 7.76% and Blackpool 8.15%). The level of persistent absenteeism in Lancashire-12 schools (21.0%), under the definition which includes pupils having an overall absence rate of 10 per cent or above, was also lower than the national and regional rates (both 21.1%) and the neighbouring unitary authority rate (Blackpool 21.4%), however was higher than the Blackburn with Darwen (19.7%) rate.

The overall absence rate for Lancashire-12 was lower than the previous year (7.1%) and remains below comparator rates. The county is in the second quartile nationally and ranked 49 out of 152 authorities.

## 2 Key findings for the Lancashire-14 area

### 2.1 Primary and secondary attendance

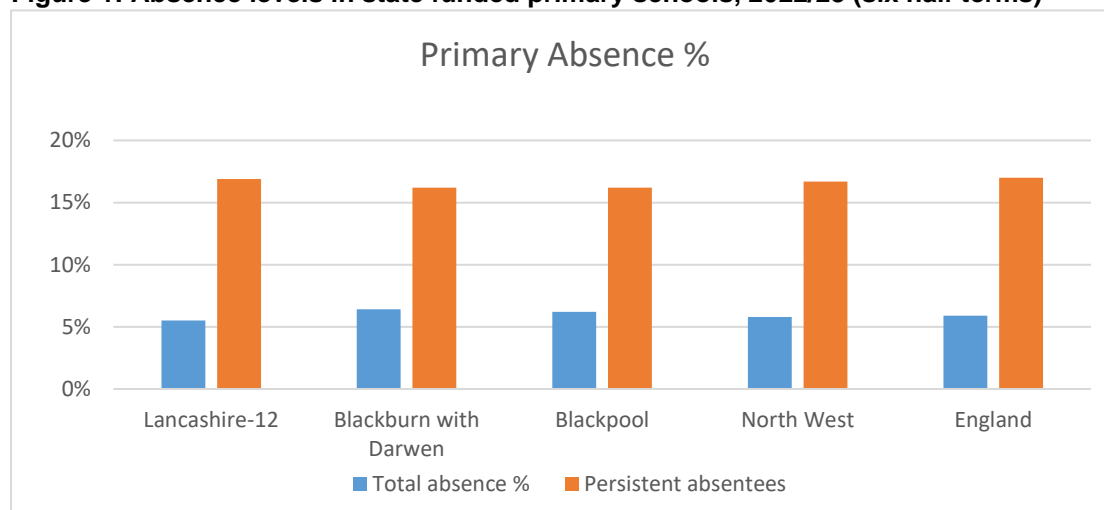
During 2022/23, the proportion of overall absence levels in primary schools within Lancashire-12 (5.5%) (Table 1 and Figure 1) was lower than the national (5.9%), regional (5.8%), Blackburn with Darwen (6.4%), and Blackpool (6.2%) averages. The level of persistent absenteeism for Lancashire-12 (16.9%) (defined as pupils having an overall absence rate of 10 percent or above of authorised or unauthorised absence) was higher than the regional (16.7%) and neighbouring unitary authority rates (16.2% in both Blackburn with Darwen and in Blackpool) and was lower than the national (17.0%) rate. For overall absence levels Lancashire-12 is currently in quartile 1 and ranks as the 26<sup>th</sup> local authority in the latest national rank, with the worst performing local authority being Newham which is currently in quartile 4 and ranks as the 151<sup>st</sup> \* local authority.

**Table 1: Absence levels in state funded primary schools, 2022/23 (six half terms)**

Absence Type	Total absence %	Persistent absentees %
Lancashire-12	5.5	16.9
Blackburn with Darwen	6.4	16.2
Blackpool	6.2	16.2
North West	5.8	16.7
England	5.9	17.0

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

\* Only 151 authorities are counted here because the Isles of Scilly have just one (all age) school which is classed in the data table as a secondary school

**Figure 1: Absence levels in state funded primary schools, 2022/23 (six half terms)**

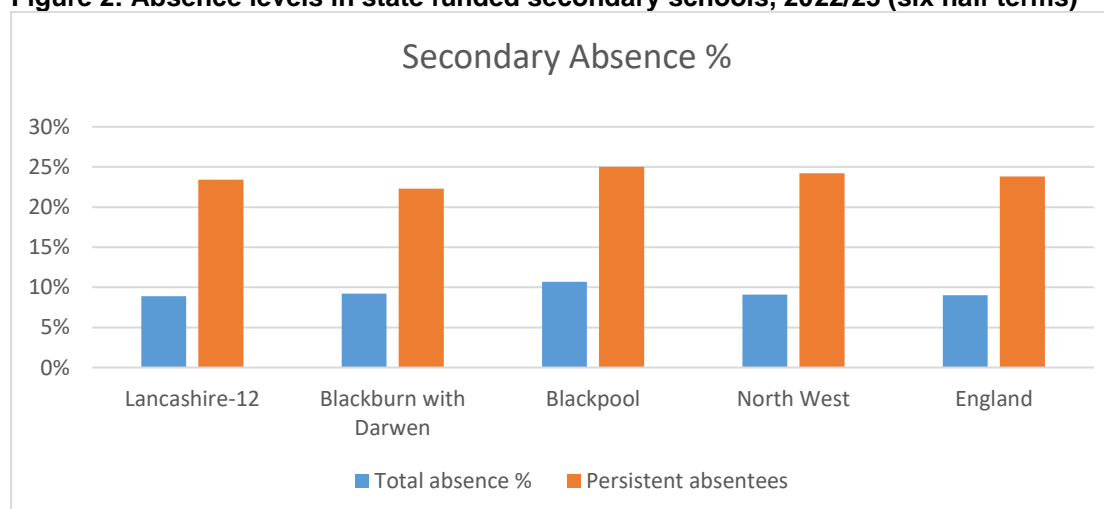
Source: DfE/LCC Business Intelligence

During 2022/23, the overall absence levels in secondary schools within Lancashire-12 (8.9%) (Table 2 and Figure 2) was lower than the national (9.0%), the regional (9.1%), Blackburn with Darwen (9.2%) and Blackpool (10.7%) rates. Lancashire-12 is currently in quartile 3 and ranks as the 79<sup>th</sup> local authority in the latest national rank, with the worst performing local authority being Middlesbrough which is currently in quartile 4 and ranks as the 151<sup>st</sup> \* local authority. The level of persistent absenteeism in Lancashire-12 (23.4%) was also lower than the national (23.8%), regional (24.2%) and Blackpool (25.0%) rates but was higher than the Blackburn with Darwen (22.3%) rate.

**Table 2: Absence levels in state funded secondary schools, 2022/23 (six half terms)**

Absence Type	Total absence %	Persistent absentees %
Lancashire-12	8.9	23.4
Blackburn with Darwen	9.2	22.3
Blackpool	10.7	25.0
North West	9.1	24.2
England	9.0	23.8

Source: DfE/LCC Business Intelligence. \* Only 151 authorities are counted here because the City of London has just one school which is a primary school

**Figure 2: Absence levels in state funded secondary schools, 2022/23 (six half terms)**

Source: DfE/LCC Business Intelligence

### 3 Attendance in districts

At the district level (table 3) overall absence was high in Burnley (8.4%), Pendle (7.9%), West Lancashire (7.4%) and Hyndburn (7.3%). The figures for Burnley, Pendle and Hyndburn reflect a link in some areas between school attendance and deprivation where the levels of relative deprivation are also high. Lancaster (7.6%) 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, 2022/23 (six half terms)**

District	Total absence %	Persistent absence %
Burnley	8.4	22.0
Chorley	6.2	20.4
Fylde	7.1	22.2
Hyndburn	7.3	18.9
Lancaster	7.6	22.2
Pendle	7.9	19.9
Preston	6.6	20.2
Ribble Valley	6.1	20.2
Rossendale	6.5	20.2
South Ribble	6.7	22.8
West Lancashire	7.4	20.6
Wyre	7.2	22.3

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](#).

Addressing absence and their causes is an ongoing focus for the Authority.

Causes:

- Absence continues to be an issue post Covid with mental health being the highest cause of absence after sickness.

Actions:

- The Attendance Strategy will be consulted on in the Autumn. The case work service for attendance is being scoped hopefully for launch in April 2025. Attendance team continue to visit all schools to offer challenge and support. Several attendance working groups of schools sharing best practice around attendance continue to develop.