

A profile of pupil absence in England

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Executive Summary

Aim

- The aim of this topic paper is to provide a comprehensive view of the latest statistical trends and analysis on absences in the maintained education sector in England.

Headline absence trends

- Since 2006/07, levels of overall absence across all maintained schools have dropped from 6.49% to 6.04%. During this period, the authorised absence rate has dropped from 5.49% to 5.00%; and unauthorised absences have increased from 1.00% to 1.04%. Also over this period, the persistent absentee (PA)¹ rate across all maintained schools dropped from 8.5% to 6.8%.
- The majority of absences are caused by a minority of pupils. Over half of the maintained school population miss less than 5% of the school year.
- Special schools have the highest levels of overall absence, followed by state-funded secondary and primary schools (rates for academic year 2009/10 were 10.27%, 6.88% and 5.21% respectively).

Chapter 1: Characteristics of pupils absent from school

- Although levels of absence have dropped across all ethnic groups, the largest drops were seen in Irish Traveller and Gypsy Roma pupils – who historically have the highest levels of absences.
- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) have over twice the odds of being a persistent absentee as similar pupils who are not eligible for FSM.
- Pupils with Special Education Needs (SEN) have greater odds of being persistently absent than pupils without SEN. Those at School Action Plus have the highest odds of being persistently absent (almost three times that of pupils without SEN) followed by statemented pupils (2.8 times the odds) and pupils at School Action (almost twice the odds of being persistently absent than pupils without SEN).

Chapter 2: Reasons for absence

- Persistent absentees and other pupils have different reasons for being absent. Compared to *other* pupils, PA pupils have greater proportions of all absence due to *unauthorised other circumstances* (26% vs. 6%) and *authorised other* (9% vs. 8%).
- Girls are more likely to have absences due to illness than boys; boys however, are more likely to have absences due to exclusions than girls.
- Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African, Indian and pupils of Mixed White and Asian ethnicity report higher proportions of absences due to *religious observance* compared to all other ethnic groups.

¹ A persistent absentee is defined as a pupil having 46 or more sessions of absence (authorised or unauthorised) during the academic year, around 15% of overall absence.

Chapter 3: Contextual background of absentees

- Persistent absentees are more likely to come from lone parent households or households with no parents, compared to their non-PA peers.
- Almost a third of persistent absentees come from households where the principal adult/s are not in any form of current employment – this compares to just over a tenth of non-PAs
- Evidence suggests that persistent absentees are more likely to be bullied, excluded from school and be involved in risky behaviours (experiment with drugs, alcohol etc.) than non-PAs.

Chapter 4: Absence and its impact

- There is a clear link between absence and attainment. As levels of pupil absences increase, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4, decrease.
- In 2009/10, pupils who have never been classified as persistent absentees over the Key Stage 2 period, were twice as likely to achieve level 4 or above (including English and maths) as pupils who were PAs for each of the four Key Stage 2 years (78% of non-PAs achieve this level compared to only 38% of PAs).
- Pupils who were persistently absent over both the Key Stage 4 years in 2009/10, were just under four times less likely to achieve 5+ A*-C grades in GCSE (and equivalents) including English and maths, as other non-PA pupils.
- Once a range of pupil characteristics have been controlled for, persistent absenteeism over the final Key Stage 4 year is found to have a strong relationship with GCSE attainment. This translates to PAs dropping one grade in each of their GCSEs, when compared to non-PA pupils.

Chapter 5: Post 16 outcomes for young people

- Just under a third of young people who were persistently absent during the final year of their compulsory school education, are not in education, employment or training (NEET) at the age of 18. This compares to just over a tenth of their non-PA peers.
- Young people who were not persistently absent during the final year of compulsory school education are far more likely to be studying for a degree by the age of 18, than their peers who were persistently absent (30% vs. 7%).
- Young people who were not persistently absent during the final year of compulsory school education are almost three times more likely to attend a Russell Group university than young people who were persistently absent.

Glossary

DfE	: Department for Education
SC	: School Census
NPD	: National Pupil Database
LSYPE	: Longitudinal Study of Young People in England
FSM	: Free School Meal
SEN	: Special Educational Needs
EAL	: English as an Additional Language
IDACI	: Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index
NS-SEC	: National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification
KS2	: Key Stage 2
KS4	: Key Stage 4
HE	: Higher Education
AA	: Authorised Absence
UA	: Unauthorised Absence
OA	: Overall Absence
PA	: Persistent Absence/Absentee

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Introduction

Aim

The aim of this topic paper is to provide a comprehensive view of the latest statistical trends and analysis on absences in the maintained education sector in England.

The paper is set out to initially expand on the absence information already available in the public domain, by providing detailed breakdowns on absences by various school and pupil characteristics in Chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 3 then investigates the attitudes, beliefs, aspirations and experiences of pupils who are persistently absent by the end of their compulsory school education, compared to those of their peers. This chapter also contrasts the family background and parental attitudes and aspirations for these pupils against that of their peers. The final two chapters (Chapters 4 and 5) examine the effects and outcomes that high levels of absences have on individuals, particularly in terms of academic achievement and post 16 destinations.

This paper is not intended to be a regular publication and aims to only provide a current view of absences based on evidence available at this point in time.

Background

Prior to 2005 the Department for Education (DfE) collected absence data at school level via the Absence in School Survey. In 2005 the DfE began collecting termly pupil-level absence data via the School Census (SC) for maintained secondary schools, City Technology Colleges and Academies. In 2006 the scope of this data collection was extended to include maintained primary and special schools. In addition to absence data, the School Census collects information on a variety of pupil characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, Free School Meal eligibility and Special Educational Needs.

This paper draws on the data collected via the School Census to present the latest trends and statistics on absence for pupils in the maintained education sector in England. It will also present analysis from the National Pupil Database (NPD) which links the School Census with attainment in national tests and examinations, and from linking the School Census to the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) and to school level perceptions information from the Tellus4 survey. Combining these data sources provides a more comprehensive view of factors leading to young people becoming absent from school and the impact this has on their lives.

Absence measures

Parents of children of compulsory school age (aged between 5 and 15 at the start of the academic year) are, by law, required to ensure that their children receive a suitable education through regular attendance at school. To this end, Local Authorities (LA) have a statutory duty to ensure that pupils attend school.

Attendance registers are taken twice a day at school: once at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. In the registers, schools are required to record whether pupils are present, engaged in an approved educational activity or are absent. Where a day pupil of compulsory school age is absent, schools have to indicate in the register whether the absence is authorised by the school or unauthorised.

Authorised absence is absence with permission from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided (for example, illness).

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences. Arriving late for school, after the register has closed, is recorded as unauthorised absence.

This paper explores the prevalence and characteristics of authorised and unauthorised absences, as well a combination of the two, in **overall absence**.

Also of interest are **persistent absentees**² who are defined as having 46 or more sessions of absence (authorised or unauthorised) during the academic year, around 15 per cent of overall absence.

Annex A contains a full definition of each absence measure.

Data sources

Prior to 2005/06 the Department's main source of absence data was the Absence in Schools Survey. This school-level survey was conducted in May each year and collected information on the number of day pupils of compulsory school age and the number of sessions missed due to authorised or unauthorised absences from maintained primary, secondary, all special and independent schools, City Technology Colleges and Academies in England.

In 2006, the Department moved to collect information on pupil absences from the **School Census (SC)**, which covered all but independent schools. This enabled us to look at the distribution of absence among individual pupils for the first time and investigate whether absences within schools are mostly accounted for by a minority of pupils or spread out more evenly across all pupils, or whether it is somewhere in between the two.

The School Census is conducted three times a year for maintained primary and state-funded³ secondary schools and annually for special schools.

² Prior to October 2011, a persistent absentee was defined as a pupil having 64 or more sessions of absence (authorised or unauthorised) during the academic year, around 20 per cent of overall absence. However, the time series analyses in this paper has been recalculated to reflect the current definition of persistent absentees - as being absent for around 15 per cent of the school year.

³ Maintained secondary schools, City Technology Colleges and Academies are collectively referred to as *state-funded* secondary schools.

Collecting data via the SC has also allowed for a greater degree of detail to be recorded on the reasons for absence and on the characteristics of the absentees. As a result, it is now possible to link pupil absences to information held in the **National Pupil Database (NPD)** and other databases including:

- Tellus4 Survey
- Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE)

Full details of the data sources used in this report can be found in Annex B.

Methodological notes

Absence data for an academic year

The School Census collects absence data on a termly basis and covers **2.5** terms out of a possible 3 in an academic year (autumn, spring and the first half of the summer term). References to data relating to an academic year in this publication are in fact for these school terms only. This is consistent with data published in other DfE publications.

School coverage

Unless otherwise stated, the analysis in this paper covers maintained primary, secondary and all special schools as well as City Technology Colleges and Academies in England.

School Census pupil information

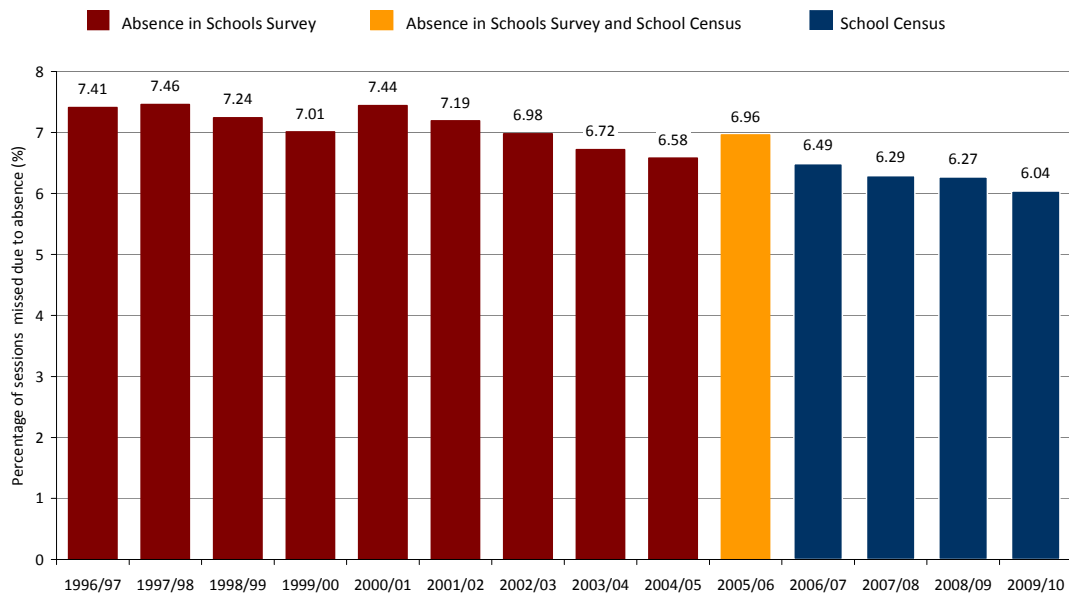
The information collected in the census relates *to pupil enrolments* rather than the number of pupils. Where a pupil has moved throughout the year, they are counted more than once as they have recorded attendance in more than one school. Also, where a pupil has a dual registration, their absence may be returned from both schools, if both schools return absence data via the census. However, for ease of reference, *pupil enrolments* will be referred to as simply *pupils* throughout this publication.

Absence in England

Absence trends

The overall absence rate for all schools has generally declined⁴ from 1996 to 2010 and currently stands at 6.04%. During this period, the two instances which have seen a slight increase in absences, 2000/01 and 2005/06, can be partly attributed to the impact of the ‘foot and mouth’ outbreak in 2000/01 and the ‘flu and norovirus’ in 2005/06 (Chart A).

Chart A: Trend in all school absences, 1996-2010



Similar patterns of overall absences are observed over this period in each of the separate maintained primary, secondary and special school sectors.

Since the full introduction of the absence data collection via the School Census in 2006/07, overall absence in maintained primary schools has remained fairly stable, while overall absence in state-funded secondary schools has reduced by 0.99 percentage points. During this same period, overall absences in special schools has declined by 0.35 percentage points.

Table A shows the persistent absentees (PAs) rates observed across different school types since 2006/07.

Table A: Persistent absentee rates by school type, 2006/07 to 2009/10

Percentage of pupils who are persistent absentees (%)	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Maintained Primary Schools	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.4
State-funded Secondary Schools	12.5	10.9	10.2	9.2
Special Schools	17.9	17.3	18.0	17.1
All schools	8.5	7.7	7.4	6.8

Source: National Pupil Database

⁴ Note, comparisons between 1996/97 and 2006/07 should be treated with caution due to differing data collection methods and school coverage.

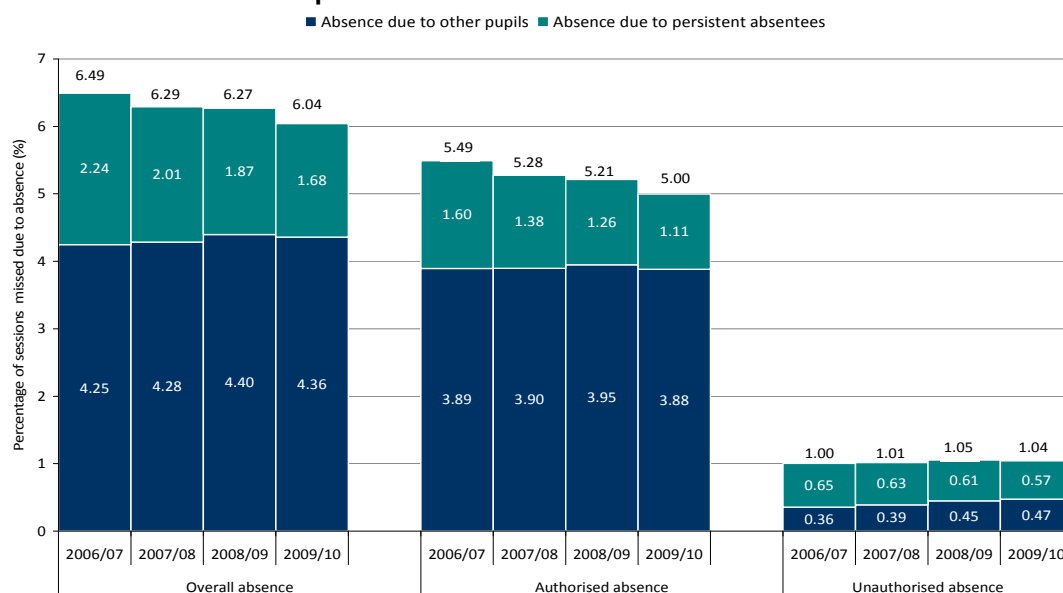
The table highlights that PA rates, overall and in mainstream schools are steadily falling. Currently 6.8% of the total pupil population in England are persistently absent, down from 8.5% in 2006/07.

Of the three main school types, special schools, have the highest PA rates. These schools cater for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) either in the form of learning difficulties (such as profound and multiple learning difficulty; behaviour, emotional and social difficulty; and speech, language and communication needs) or disabilities. This makes learning more challenging for pupils with SEN compared to pupils without SEN. As a result, pupils with SEN may be more likely to be absent from school than other pupils. Another possible reason for greater levels of absence in special schools might be due to the fact that pupils with certain types of SEN or disability may require extra medical attention that is not facilitated within the school – regular physiotherapy sessions for example – and do not count as an approved educational activity.

Persistent absentee rates in state-funded secondary schools are double that observed in maintained primary schools. One possible reason for this high-level of persistent absenteeism may be due to the growing nature of independence in pupils of secondary school age - with older pupils less likely to be supervised as far as the school gate by their parents than younger pupils.

Chart B below shows the amount of absences accounted for by persistent absentees and their non-PA peers. From the chart, it is immediately clear that over a third of overall absence, a fifth of all authorised absences and over half of all unauthorised absences are caused by persistent absentees.

Chart B: PA and non-PA split in absences across all schools



Source: National Pupil Database

From the above chart, it is also apparent that authorised absences for all schools in England has declined since 2006/07 (from 5.49% to 5.00% in 2009/10), while simultaneously, unauthorised absences have slightly increased (from 1.00% in 2006/07 to 1.04% in 2009/10).

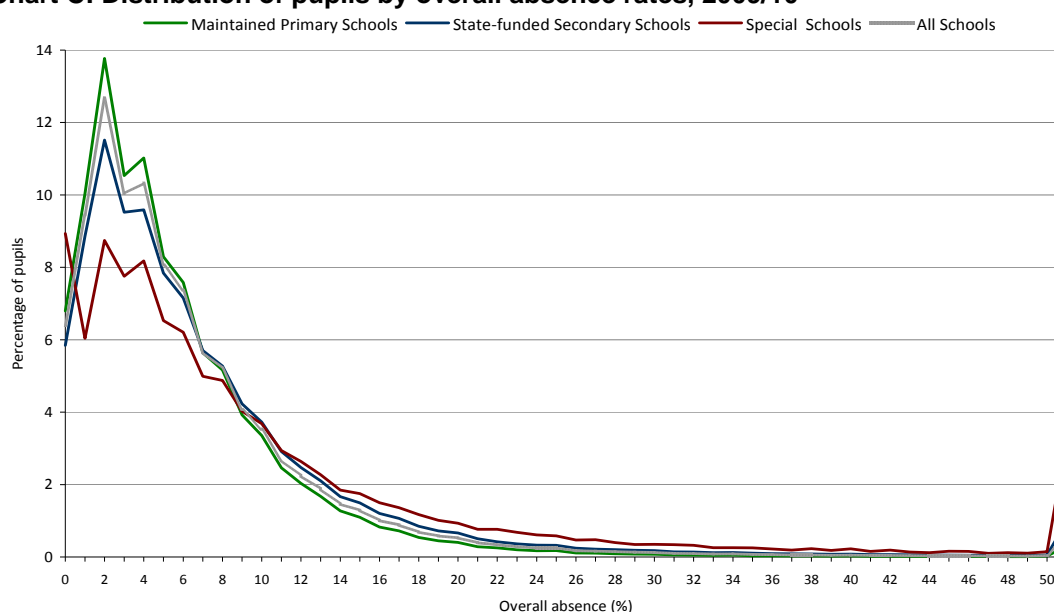
Distribution of pupil absences

The majority of absences are caused by a minority of pupils.

Over half the pupil population miss less than 5% of school sessions – this includes around 7% of primary school pupils, 6% of secondary school pupils and almost 9% of special schools pupils who have no absences. In contrast, 0.65% of all pupils are absent for more than half the academic year.

Chart C below presents the distribution of pupils by their overall absence rates in each school sector in 2009/10.

Chart C: Distribution of pupils by overall absence rates, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

In 2009/10 on average, primary school pupils missed almost 8 days of school. Pupils from state-funded secondary schools missed around 10 school days and pupils from special schools missed a little over 14 school days.

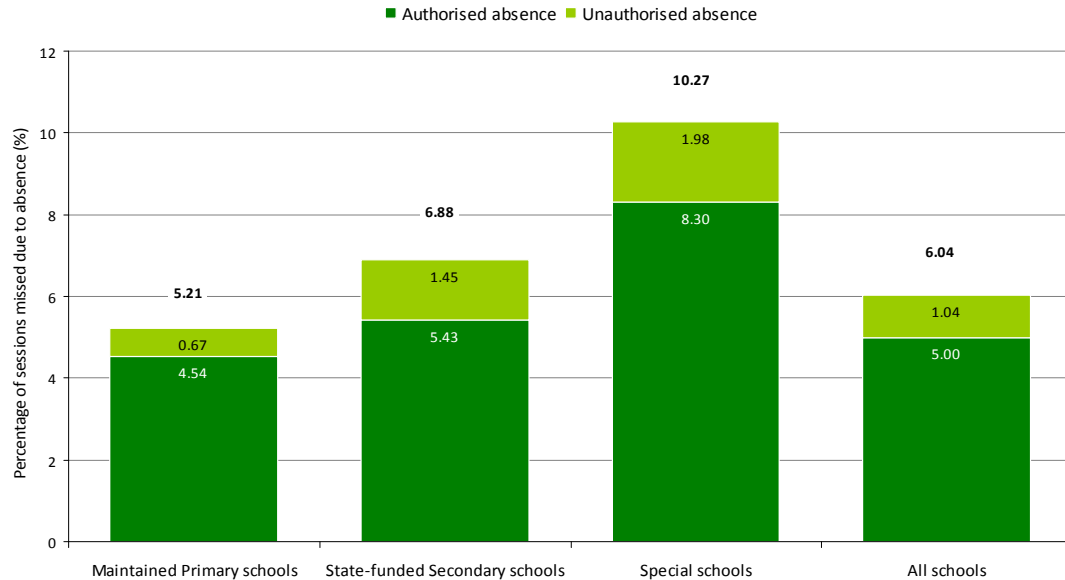
School absences

As seen earlier, levels of absence vary by school type. The following Charts show how these differences shape up across different school types, governance structures, religious denominations, and admission policies.

The patterns in the levels of overall absence observed for maintained primary, state-funded secondary and special schools (Chart D) mirror that observed for persistent absentee rates in Table A earlier.

As before, special schools have the highest levels of overall absences at 10.27% in 2009/10, followed by state-funded secondary schools, with overall absence rates of 6.88%. Maintained primary schools have the lowest levels of overall absence (5.21%). Around a fifth of all absences in state-funded secondary and special schools were unauthorised in 2009/10, compared to only one in eight in maintained primary schools.

Chart D: Absence rates by school type, 2009/10

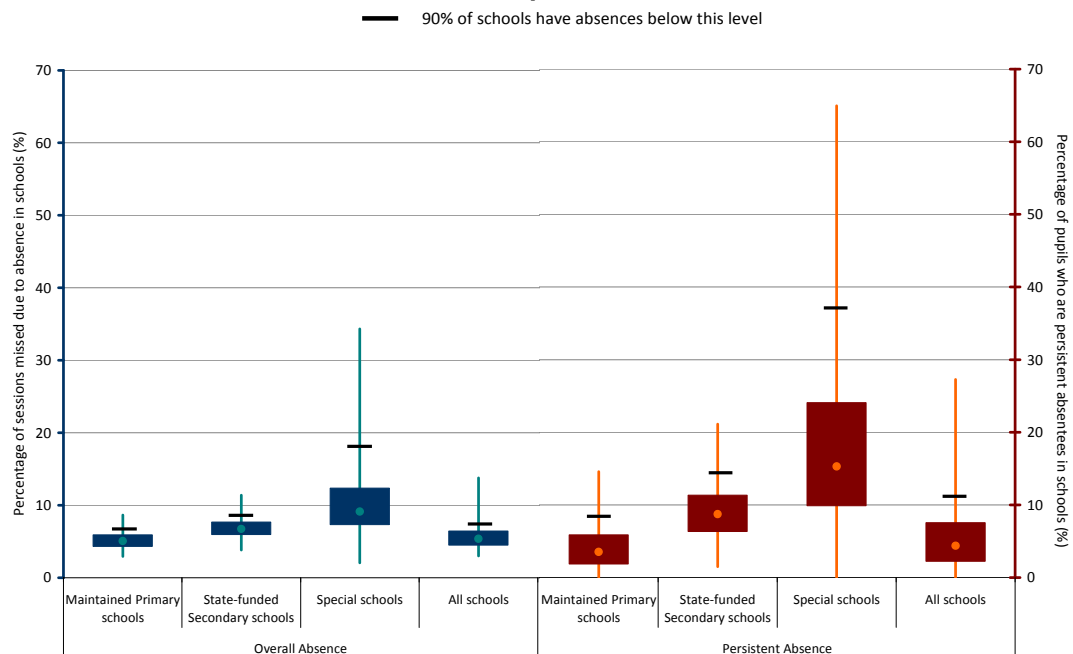


Source: National Pupil Database

It is also interesting to look into school-level absences (the levels of absences reported by schools for all their pupils) to see how they are distributed across different absence bands.

Chart E⁵ below clearly illustrates that the majority of schools have relatively low absence rates, with fewer than one in ten having extremely high rates. So, only a minority of schools actually have very high levels of absences.

Chart E: School distribution of overall and persistent absence rates, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

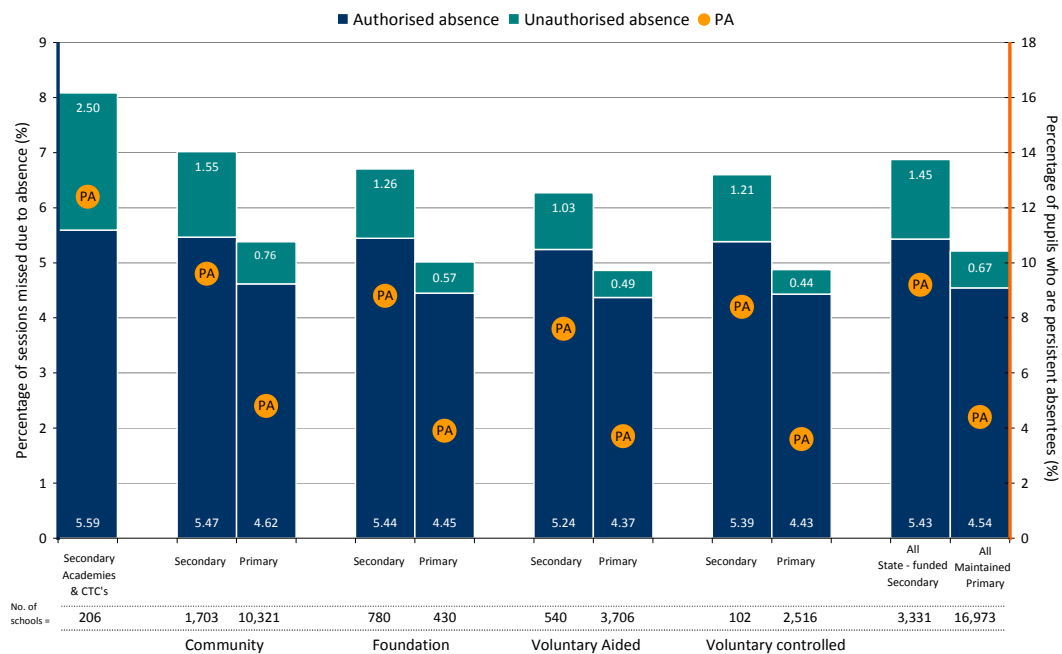
⁵ Note, the end-points from the box-plots in Chart E are the 1st and 99th percentile values of overall absence. The lower ends of the box-plots mark the 25th percentile values and the upper end, the 75th. The median values are represented by circles.

As well as variations in absence levels across different schools types, the governance structures in place across different schools also have some relationship with the absence levels observed. Chart F below shows the levels of authorised and unauthorised absences, as well as the persistent absentee rates across different governance structures for maintained primary and state-funded secondary schools.

The patterns of absence across Community, Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools are similar for both the primary and secondary school sectors – with Community and Foundation schools having higher levels of absence compared to the voluntary sector. In 2009/10, one in ten primary school absences in Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools were unauthorised - this compares to one in six of secondary school absences.

Academies and City Technology Colleges (CTCs) have the highest overall absence rates within the secondary school sector - with a correspondingly high proportion of absences classed as unauthorised (almost a third). This is not entirely surprising as most Academies (and CTCs) had in the past, replaced underperforming maintained secondary schools. As a result, these schools have historically had higher levels of absences.

Chart F: Absence by school governance types across maintained primary and state-funded secondary schools, 2009/10



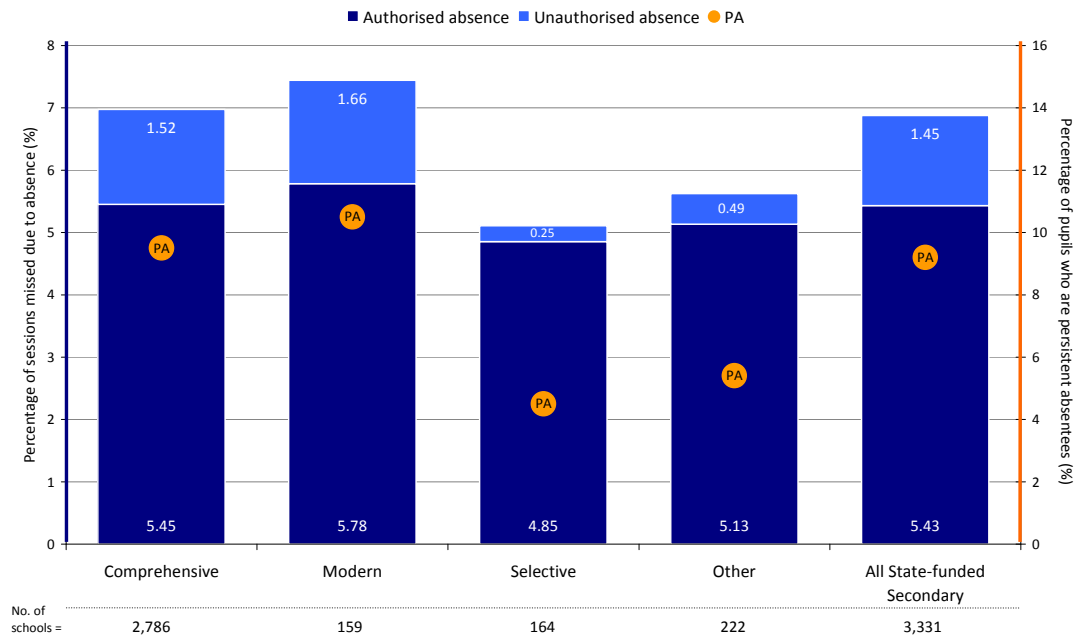
Source: National Pupil Database

Now to focus on absences by the different admission policies employed across the *state-funded secondary* school sector (Chart G). From the chart it is apparent that secondary schools with a Modern or Comprehensive admissions policy (which include Academies and CTCs) have by far the highest absence rates – with over a fifth of all absences unauthorised.

In sharp contrast, secondary schools with a selective admissions policy – namely Grammar schools, have the lowest levels of overall absence where only 5% of all absences are unauthorised. Again, this finding is not surprising as selective schools recruit highly academically able pupils, who intrinsically have low levels of absences – as Chapter 4 will later explore.

The persistent absentee rates for schools with these admissions policies mirror the patterns observed for overall absence.

Chart G: Absence by school admission in state-funded secondary schools, 2009/10



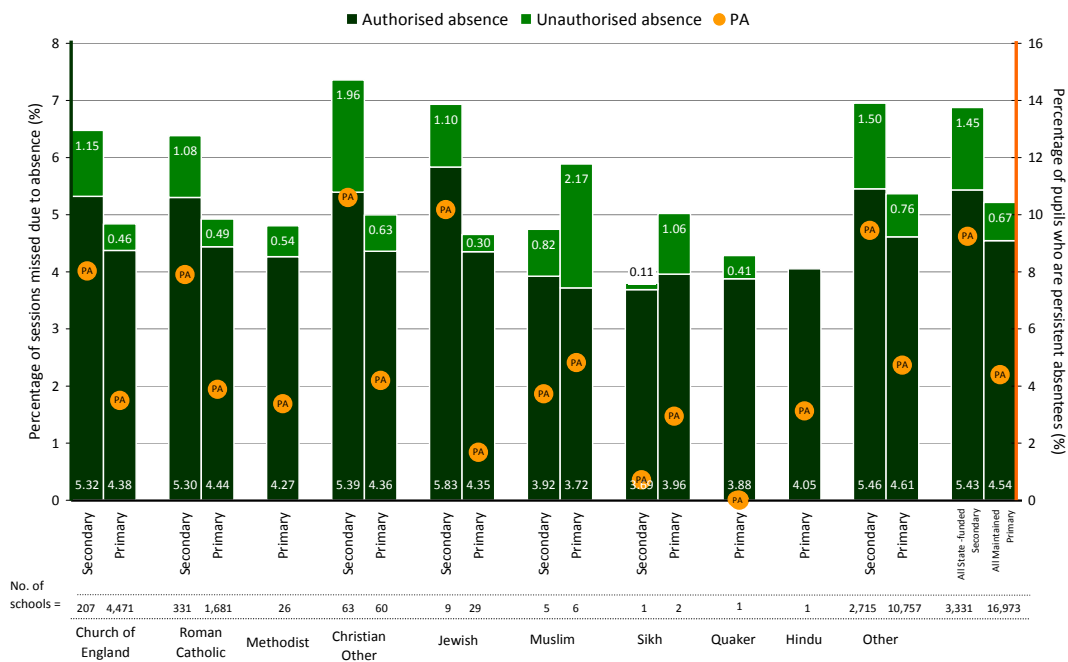
Source: National Pupil Database

Finally, absence levels across different religious denominations also show a distinct pattern, with high degrees of variability (Chart H).

In the primary sector, faith schools – bar Muslim schools - have lower absence and persistent absentee rates than other non-faith schools. In this sector, Muslim and Sikh schools have the greatest proportions of absences unauthorised, although this reduces dramatically for these same denominations in the secondary sector. Also interestingly, Muslim and Sikh schools are the only religious denominations to have lower secondary school absences compared to the levels observed in the primary sector.

It should be noted however, that although absence rates for primary Hindu, primary Quaker and secondary Sikh schools are the lowest; these rates apply only to a single school under each religious denomination and so reflect the attendance policies employed in these particular schools.

Chart H: Absence by religious denomination across maintained primary and state-funded secondary schools, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

The final two maps in this section show the geographical distribution of overall absence and persistent absence as at 2009/10 by the Lower Layer Super Output Areas⁶.

In general, there is a correlation between both maps – that is, areas with high levels of overall absence, also tend to have high levels of persistent absenteeism; likewise, areas with low levels of overall absence, tend to have low levels of persistent absenteeism.

It is interesting to also see that local authorities with pockets of high deprivation (Liverpool, Manchester, Kingston upon Hull and Tower Hamlets, for example) and coastal areas have some of the highest levels of overall and persistent absence.

The next chapter will detail absences by pupil characteristics and show through modelling, the effects certain pupil characteristics have on the odds of being a persistent absentee.

⁶ For more information, see: <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/Info.do?page=aboutneighbourhood/geography/superoutputareas/soa-intro.htm>

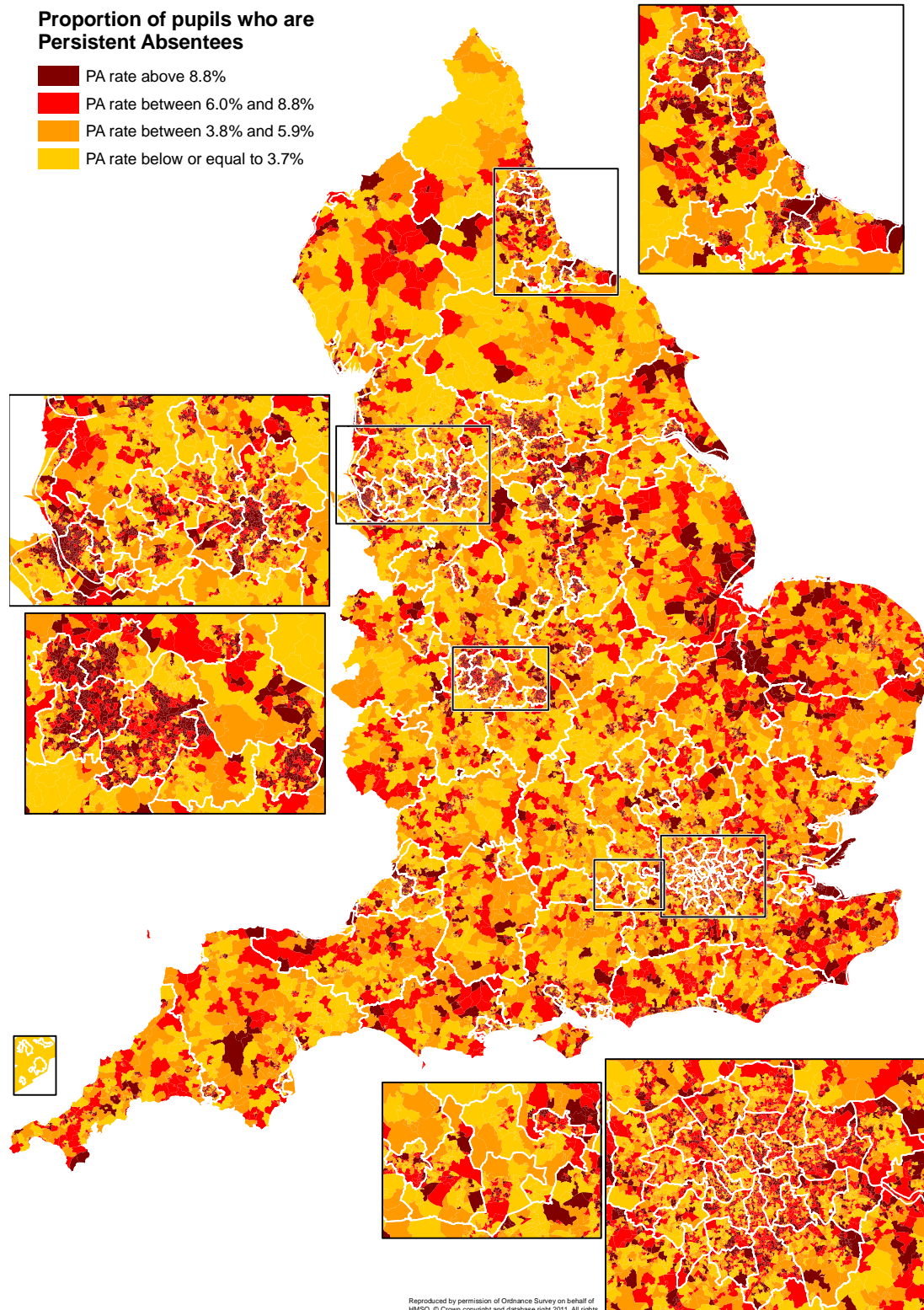
Map 1: Geographical distribution of overall absence, 2009/10



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Map 2: Geographical distribution of persistent absentee, 2009/10



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Chapter 1: Characteristics of pupils absent from school

Key findings

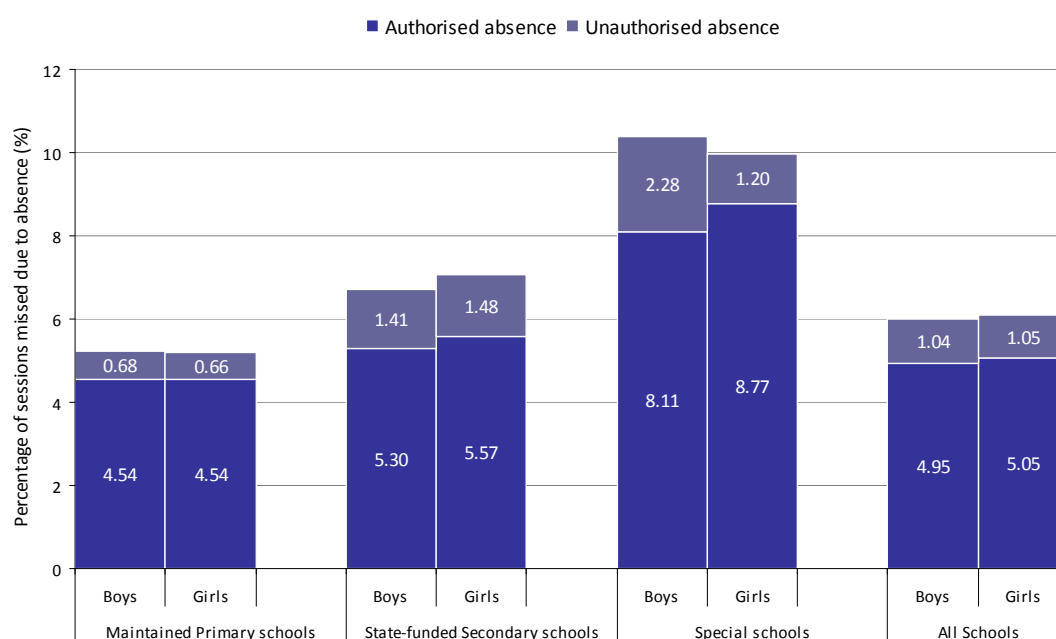
- Gender differences in absence rates are minimal in primary schools but begin to appear in secondary, with girls having more absences than boys.
- Irish Traveller and Gypsy Roma pupils consistently have the highest overall absence rates, compared to other ethnic groups, for each of the past four years. However, despite this, the level of absence for these ethnic groups has reduced the most over this period. In contrast, pupils from Chinese, Indian and African ethnic backgrounds, tend to have the lowest overall absence rates and are least likely to be persistently absent from school.
- Pupils with *any* Special Education Needs (SEN) provision are more likely to be absent from school than pupils with no identified SEN. In 2009/10, pupils at School Action Plus had the highest overall absence level across all SEN provision types in all schools, at 9.19% – this was 1.5 times the level for all pupils.
- Overall absences, particularly unauthorised absences, increase with each progressive national curriculum year in secondary school. Overall absences are highest for pupils at the end of compulsory secondary education (year 11) and lowest in the final year of primary school.
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) have lower levels of absences than pupils whose first language is English.
- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) have consistently had higher rates of authorised and unauthorised levels of absence than pupils not eligible for FSM. Persistent absentee rates among FSM pupils are 2.5 times that seen in non-FSM pupils.
- There is a linear increase in overall absences (in both primary and secondary schools) corresponding to each additional decile of local area deprivation on the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). In 2009/10, the overall absence rate at the most deprived IDACI decile was 1.6 times that of the least deprived, while in secondary schools it was 1.7 times that of the least deprived.
- Controlling for a range of factors across all schools:
 - Girls have 20% higher odds of being persistent absentees than boys.
 - Irish Traveller and Gypsy Roma pupils have almost 9 and 8 times the odds (respectively) of being a PA compared to White British pupils.
 - Pupils with SEN have greater odds of being PA than pupils without SEN.
 - The odds of being PA increase for every higher year in secondary school.
 - Pupils with EAL have reduced odds of being a PA compared to pupils with English as a first language.
 - Pupils eligible for FSM have 2.2 times the odds of non-FSM pupils of being persistent absentees.
 - Pupils living in the most deprived IDACI quartile have almost twice the odds of being a persistent absentee compared to similar pupils living in the least deprived IDACI half.

This chapter will detail the patterns and trends in different absence types by the pupil characteristics available from the School Census and conclude (Section 1.8) by modelling the likelihood of being a persistent absentee, associated with each of these individual characteristics.

1.1 Gender

Differences in absence rates by gender are minimal for pupils in primary schools; however in secondary schools, girls tend to have higher authorised and unauthorised absence rates than boys (Chart 1.1). In special schools (which cover all ages) girls have more authorised absence but boys have more unauthorised absence.

Chart 1.1: Absence by gender and school type, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

As observed earlier, absence rates have been steadily falling since 2006/07. Within the gender context, overall absence fell slightly more for girls than it has for boys (0.46 percentage points fall in overall absence amongst girls compared to the 0.44 percentage points for boys).

In the line with the above finding, the levels of persistent absenteeism observed between boys and girls have begun to converge, as the PA rate for girls fell at a faster rate than for boys.

Table 1.1: Trends in overall absence and persistent absentee rates

	Percentage of overall sessions missed (%)				Percentage of pupils who are persistent absentees (%)			
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Boys	6.43	6.22	6.20	5.99	8.4	7.6	7.2	6.7
Girls	6.56	6.36	6.33	6.10	8.7	7.9	7.5	6.9
All pupils	6.49	6.29	6.27	6.04	8.5	7.7	7.4	6.8

Source: National Pupil Database

1.2 Ethnicity

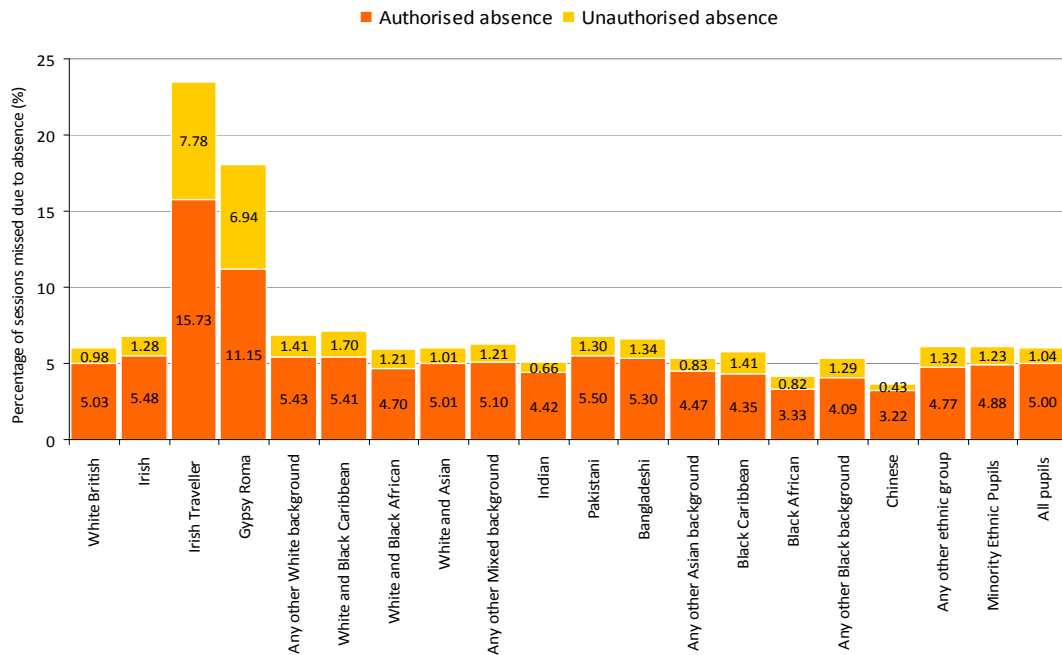
Absence patterns between ethnic groups have remained fairly static over time and across different school types. Chart 1.2 illustrates these patterns for authorised and unauthorised absences across all schools in England.

From the chart below it is apparent that Irish Traveller pupils, followed closely by Gypsy Roma pupils⁷, have by far the highest absence rates – with levels of authorised and unauthorised absences for Irish Traveller pupils over 3 and 7 times that of all pupils (respectively). Similarly, authorised absences among Gypsy Roma pupils are double that for all pupils, while the unauthorised absence rate is over 6 times as high.

Compared to all pupils, Irish pupils and pupils from a Mixed White and Black Caribbean background, consistently have higher absence rates across both primary and secondary schools. Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils also have higher than average absence rates in primary schools.

In contrast, Chinese pupils have consistently had the lowest levels of absences in primary, secondary and special school since 2006/07.

Chart 1.2: Authorised and unauthorised absence levels across all schools, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

Over the past four years, overall absence has steadily fallen for all pupils, and is almost half a percentage point below the 2006/07 level (Table 1.2).

Interestingly the ethnic groups with the highest levels of overall absence, Irish Traveller and Gypsy Roma, have shown the greatest reductions since 2006/07 - with reductions in overall absences of 2.49 and 2.04 percentage points respectively. Most white and mixed ethnic minority groups have also shown considerable reductions in over this period. Pakistani pupils, however, have shown a notable increase (0.29 percentage points) in overall absences across all schools.

⁷ Note, the population sizes for Irish Traveller and Gypsy Roma pupils are comparatively very small and so, subject to greater year-on-year volatility.

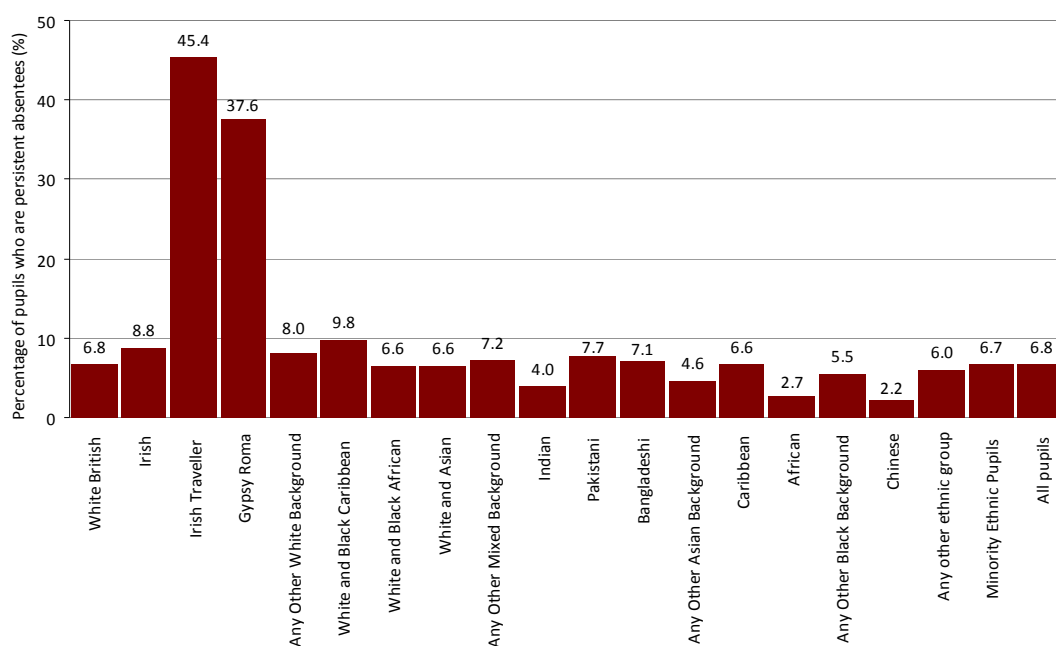
Table 1.2: Trend in overall absence for all schools, 2006/07 – 2009/10

Percentage of overall sessions missed (%)	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2009/10 - 2006/07 percentage points difference
White	6.52	6.26	6.27	6.09	-0.43
White British	6.46	6.18	6.19	6.01	-0.45
Irish	7.45	7.12	7.11	6.75	-0.70
Irish Traveller	25.99	23.77	24.44	23.50	-2.49
Gypsy/ Roma	20.13	19.98	19.05	18.09	-2.04
Any other White background	6.95	7.08	7.01	6.84	-0.11
Mixed	6.83	6.64	6.67	6.46	-0.37
White and Black Caribbean	7.60	7.29	7.3	7.12	-0.48
White and Black African	6.29	6.08	6.07	5.90	-0.39
White and Asian	6.09	6.08	6.22	6.02	-0.07
Any other Mixed background	6.66	6.50	6.53	6.31	-0.35
Asian	5.98	6.43	6.68	6.08	0.10
Indian	5.19	5.29	5.34	5.08	-0.11
Pakistani	6.51	7.19	7.68	6.80	0.29
Bangladeshi	6.69	7.52	7.48	6.64	-0.05
Any other Asian background	5.27	5.33	5.54	5.30	0.03
Black	5.08	4.99	5.09	4.77	-0.31
Black Caribbean	6.20	5.89	5.95	5.76	-0.44
Black African	4.21	4.32	4.51	4.15	-0.06
Any other Black background	6.08	5.86	5.74	5.38	-0.70
Chinese	3.66	3.45	3.59	3.65	-0.01
Any other ethnic group	6.25	6.38	6.56	6.09	-0.16
Minority Ethnic Pupils	6.22	6.36	6.49	6.11	-0.11
All pupils	6.49	6.29	6.27	6.04	-0.45

Source: National Pupil Database

Persistent absentee rates (Chart 1.3) generally mirror the pattern seen above, with Irish Traveller and Gypsy Roma pupils having PA rates almost 7 and 6 times the national average (respectively). Chinese and Black African pupils consistently have the lowest rates, at around a third and two fifths of that for all pupils (respectively).

Chart 1.3: Persistent absentee levels across all schools, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

1.3 Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) have learning difficulties or disabilities⁸ that make it more challenging for them to learn than their peers. Pupils with SEN are more likely to be absent from school.

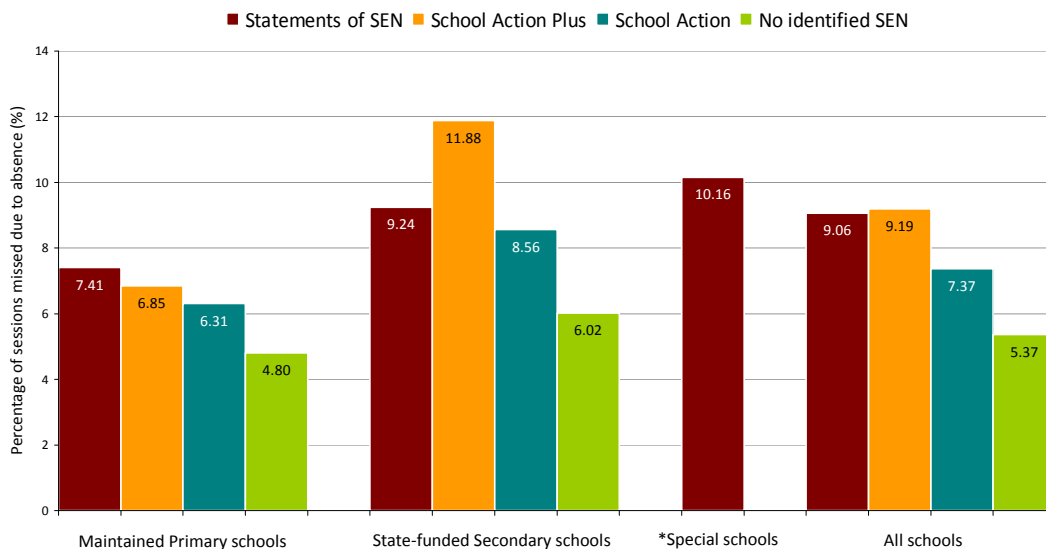
There are three levels of provision of SEN:

- **School Action** (a teacher identifies a child with SEN and provides interventions);
- **School Action Plus** (as with school action, but with help from external services);
- **Statement** (the LA provides written statement of SEN needs of the child).

The School Census records up to two levels of special needs, classed as primary and secondary need. The scope of the analyses in this paper is restricted to the primary need.

Chart 1.4 shows a distinct pattern in overall absences by SEN provision according to the school phase. Maintained primary schools have increased levels of overall absences in line with the severity of SEN provision - pupils with Statements had 1.5 times the overall absence rate of pupils with no SEN in 2009/10. Levels of unauthorised absences in primary schools were highest for pupils at School Action and School Action Plus, with just over a sixth of all absences unauthorised. Secondary schools on the other hand, have the highest overall absence rates for pupils at School Action Plus - with rates almost double that of pupils with no SEN. Over a third of all absences were unauthorised for this group in 2009/10.

Chart 1.4: Overall absence rates by school types and SEN provision, 2009/10



*Absence figures for children with no SEN, or at School Action or School Action Plus are not included in the breakdown for special schools due to the very small numbers in these categories – their attendance data is included in the full data for all schools.

Source: National Pupil Database

⁸ The following special educational needs are recorded in the School Census: Specific learning difficulty; Moderate learning difficulty; Severe learning difficulty; Profound and multiple learning difficulty; Behaviour, emotional and social difficulty; Speech, language and communication needs; Hearing impairment; Visual impairment; Multi-sensory impairment; Physical difficulty; Autistic spectrum disorder; Other difficulty/disability.

The persistent absentee rates for each SEN provision across all schools mirror the patterns of overall absences seen above (Charts 1.4 and 1.5). In 2009/10, the persistent absentee rate for pupils with statements of SEN or at School Action Plus was over 3 times that of pupils with no identified SEN; the rate for pupils at School Action was twice that of pupils with no identified SEN.

Although PA rates have steadily fallen over the past four years for all SEN provision groups (Chart 1.5), because they have fallen faster for pupils without SEN, the odds ratio for a pupil with SEN being a persistent absentee, relative to a pupil with no identified SEN, has in fact gradually increased. In 2006/07, the odds of being a persistent absentee for a pupil with a statement of SEN was 2.94 times the odds of pupil with no identified SEN; by 2009/10, the odds ratio had increased to 3.49. Similarly, the odds ratio of a pupil at School Action Plus (relative to a pupil with no SEN has increased from 3.27 to 3.58 and the odds ratio for a pupil at School Action has increased from 2.19 to 2.28. This means that the gap between pupils with and without SEN, in terms of their odds of being a persistent absentee, has grown.

Chart 1.5: Trend in persistent absentee rates by SEN provision



Source: National Pupil Database

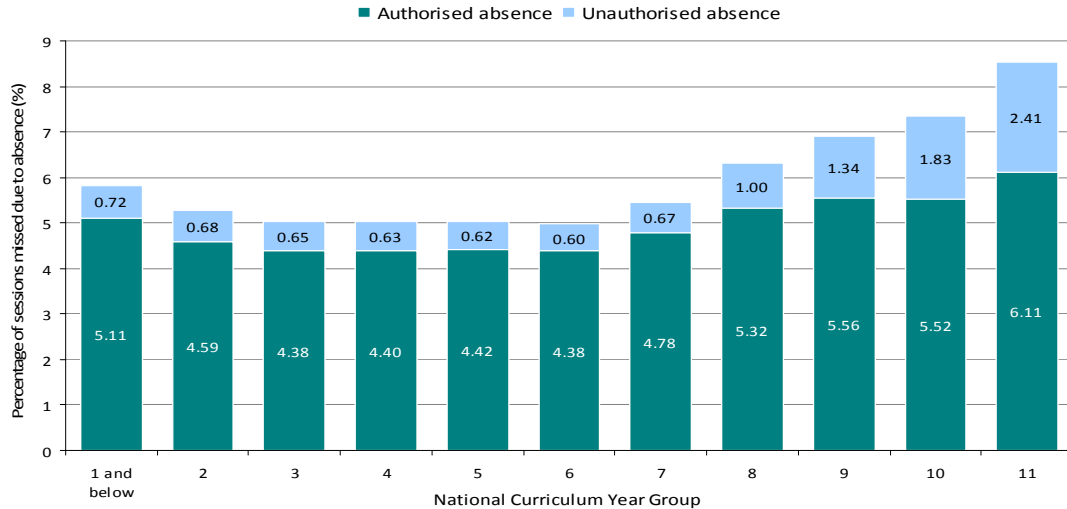
1.4 Age - National Curriculum Year (NCY)

We noted earlier that secondary schools have much higher levels of absences than primary schools. Investigating absence patterns across the different year groups show a clear link of increasing absence levels with increasing age.

Chart 1.6 illustrates how absence rates vary by different year groups across all schools in England in 2009/10. Immediately it is apparent that there is a clear trend of increasing absences (particularly unauthorised) from the start of secondary school (year 7) onwards. Overall absences are lowest during the

final year of primary school (year 6) and highest during the final year of secondary school (year 11). Overall absences in year 11 are almost double year 6's level, while unauthorised absences are over four times that of the level seen in year 6.

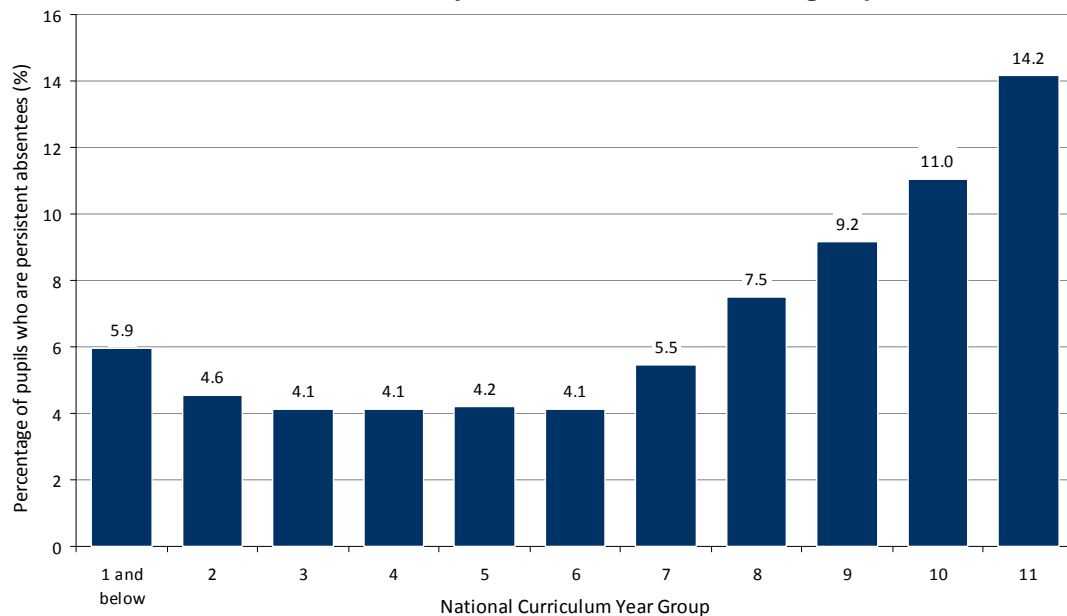
Chart 1.6: Absence rates by National Curriculum Year group, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

Persistent absentee rates across all schools follow the patterns observed above, with the PA rates of year 11 over 3 times that of year 6's⁹.

Chart 1.7 Persistent absentee rates by National Curriculum Year group, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

Research¹⁰ also shows that there is a continuous pattern of increased absences with age that occurs not only between year groups (as above), but also within them.

⁹ It is worth noting however, that year 11 pupils are given authorised study leave over this academic year to help pupils prepare for their final Key Stage 4 exams.

¹⁰ Month of Birth and Education (Jul 2010)

<http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/RSG/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-RR017>

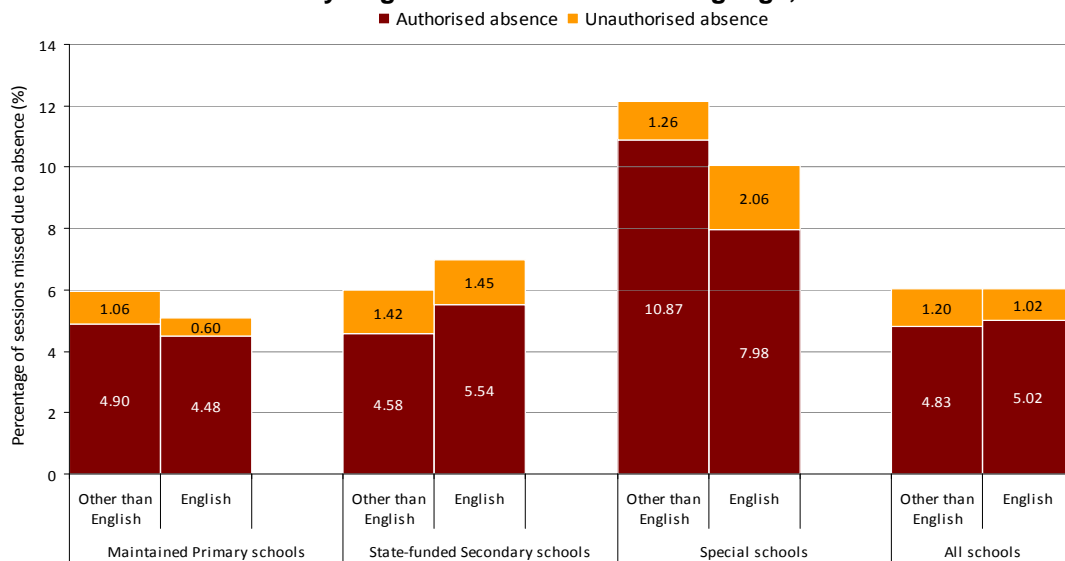
1.5 English as an Additional Language (EAL)

English as an Additional Language (EAL) is recorded in the School Census for children who have English as a secondary language. Therefore, it is important to note that this classification does not necessarily apply strictly to recent migrant pupils, but in fact also includes children who are multilingual and fully fluent in English, as well as those who are just acquiring English.

Patterns in absences differ by school types for EAL pupils (Chart 1.8). The primary school sector has greater authorised and unauthorised levels of absences for EAL pupils than for pupils with English as a first language. Around 18% of all absences for EAL pupils were unauthorised in 2009/10 compared to just 12% for their non-EAL counterparts.

Contrary to the above findings, absence rates for EAL pupils in secondary schools are less than that for non-EAL pupils. However, the proportion of absences unauthorised for EAL pupils remain slightly higher than that for non-EAL pupils (24% for EAL pupils compared to 21% for non-EAL pupils). Special schools show a stark difference in both authorised and unauthorised absence levels by EAL. Although the EAL pupils have higher overall absence rates (12.13% compared to 10.04%), a greater proportion of it is authorised (90%) compared to non-EAL pupils (79%).

Chart 1.8: Absence rates by English as an Additional Language, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

Persistent absentee rates follow the overall absence patterns observed above for different school types. However, EAL pupils have considerably lower PA rates than non-EAL pupils, though this difference has reduced over past four years (from 1.4 in 2006/07 to 0.7 percentage points in 2009/10).

Table 1.3: Trend in persistent absentee rates by English as an Additional Language

First Language	Percentage of pupils who are persistent absentees (%)			
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
First language is known or believed to be other than English	7.3	7.3	7.0	6.2
First language is known or believed to be English	8.7	7.8	7.4	6.9
All pupils	8.5	7.7	7.4	6.8

Source: National Pupil Database

1.6 Free School Meal Eligibility (FSM)

Pupils are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) if their parent/s are in receipt of any of the following:

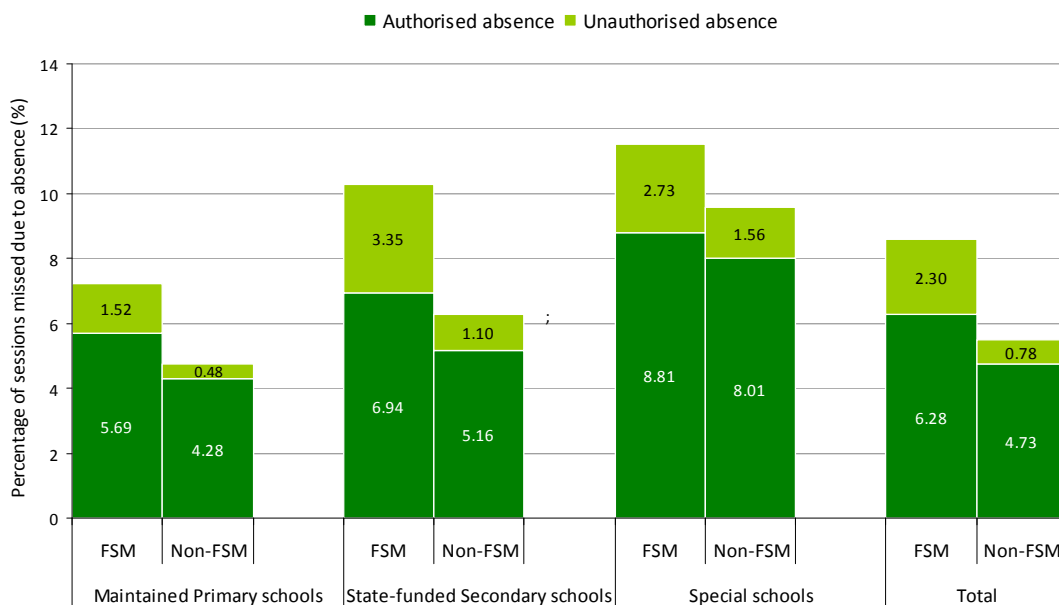
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income below the first threshold for Child Tax Credit as specified by HM Revenue & Customs for that particular financial year.
- the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

The FSM analyses considered in this paper are based on pupils who were known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals.

Chart 1.9 shows a stark difference in absence rates by Free School Meal eligibility within different school types. This difference is particularly pronounced for pupils in state-funded secondary schools where the overall absence rate for FSM pupils is 4.02 percentage points above that of non-FSM pupils. Significant differences also exist in the maintained primary and special school sectors where differences of 2.46 and 1.97 percentage points exist (respectively).

Unauthorised absence rates among FSM pupils tend to be 3 times higher than non-FSM pupils in maintained primary and state-funded secondary schools, and almost twice as high in special schools.

Chart 1.9: Absence rates by FSM eligibility for different school types 2009/10

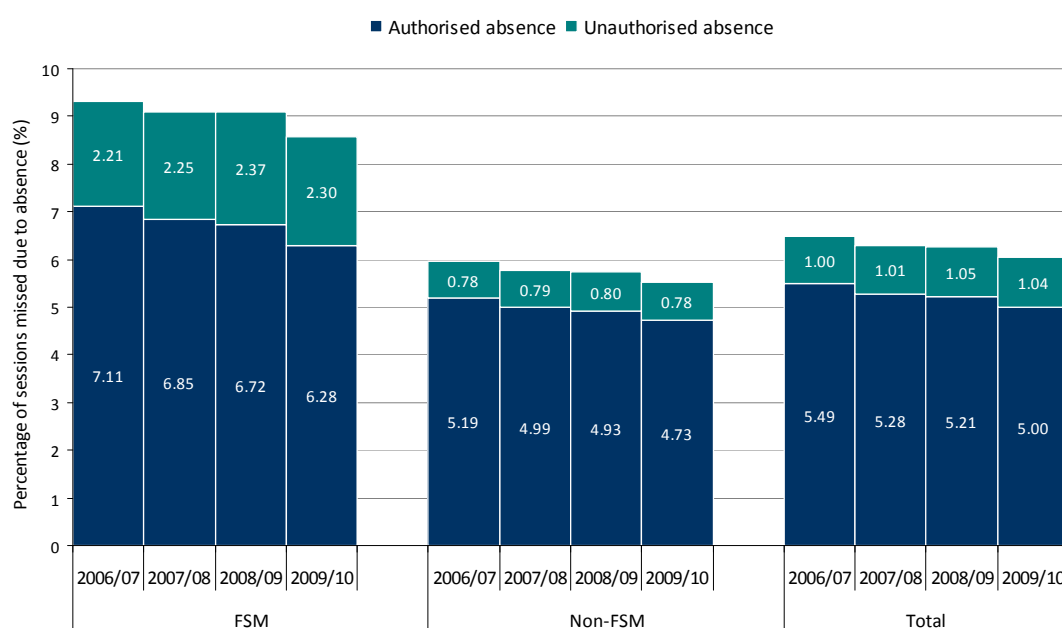


Source: National Pupil Database

Since 2006, the authorised absence rates among both FSM and non-FSM pupils have steadily declined. However, the levels of unauthorised absence in both groups have remained broadly stable.

Also throughout this period, authorised absences have consistently been a third higher for FSM eligible pupils than for non-FSM pupils, and unauthorised absences three times higher.

Chart 1.10: Trend in absence by FSM eligibility across all schools, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

In line with the findings above, the persistent absentee rates for FSM pupils have consistently been around two and half times higher than that for non-FSM pupils; the persistent absentee rates for both groups have declined by approximately one fifth since 2006/07 (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4: Trend in persistent absentee rates by FSM eligibility

FSM eligibility	Percentage of pupils who are persistent absentees (%)			
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Known to be eligible for FSM	17.2	16.0	15.1	13.7
Other pupils	6.9	6.2	5.9	5.3
All pupils	8.5	7.7	7.4	6.8

Source: National Pupil Database

1.7 Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) is a measure of the proportion of children living in income deprived households within the local area. An 'income deprived' household is defined as either a household in receipt of Income Support and Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based) or in receipt of Working Family Tax Credit/Disabled Persons Tax Credit with an equivalent income below 60% of the national median before housing costs. The IDACI is the proportion of children under the age of 16 living in such households for a particular area and takes a value between 0 and 1.

So, like FSM eligibility, the IDACI is a proxy measure of poverty among children. Whilst it captures greater variations in the circumstances of each child than FSM – here allocating them to one of ten categories based on the level of area deprivation – it reflects the area they live in rather than the individual circumstances of their family in particular.

The table below shows the trend¹¹ in authorised and unauthorised absences in maintained primary and secondary¹² schools by the IDACI decile for pupil residence. As seen in the case of FSM eligibility earlier, absence rates tend to increase with increased levels of deprivation and from the table below it is apparent that this finding holds true when measuring area deprivation through the IDACI.

Table 1.5: Absence trend by IDACI decile

IDACI decile	Percentage of sessions missed due to authorised absence (%)				Percentage of sessions missed due to unauthorised absence (%)			
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Maintained Primary								
0-10% most deprived	5.32	5.41	5.39	4.87	1.06	1.18	1.28	1.31
10-20%	5.25	5.36	5.18	5.02	0.84	0.94	1.03	1.08
20-30%	5.12	5.18	5.08	4.95	0.69	0.74	0.82	0.87
30-40%	4.93	4.97	4.88	4.83	0.55	0.57	0.67	0.68
40-50%	4.70	4.70	4.71	4.64	0.42	0.45	0.52	0.54
50-60%	4.47	4.47	4.53	4.46	0.33	0.36	0.44	0.42
60-70%	4.27	4.26	4.29	4.26	0.26	0.28	0.34	0.35
70-80%	4.09	4.05	4.12	4.07	0.21	0.23	0.28	0.30
80-90%	3.88	3.89	3.94	3.93	0.18	0.19	0.25	0.25
90-100% least deprived	3.66	3.63	3.71	3.72	0.15	0.16	0.20	0.21
Maintained Secondary								
0-10% most deprived	7.50	6.63	6.53	5.67	2.95	2.84	2.98	2.63
10-20%	7.28	6.72	6.31	5.93	2.42	2.41	2.26	2.30
20-30%	7.01	6.56	6.18	5.89	2.01	1.98	1.90	1.90
30-40%	6.76	6.32	5.96	5.80	1.66	1.64	1.56	1.56
40-50%	6.39	5.96	5.84	5.58	1.33	1.30	1.31	1.25
50-60%	6.08	5.69	5.63	5.39	1.08	1.06	1.08	1.02
60-70%	5.79	5.42	5.42	5.23	0.89	0.86	0.91	0.85
70-80%	5.54	5.16	5.20	4.99	0.74	0.73	0.78	0.72
80-90%	5.30	4.94	5.06	4.83	0.63	0.62	0.68	0.60
90-100% least deprived	5.00	4.58	4.84	4.54	0.51	0.50	0.55	0.48

Source: National Pupil Database

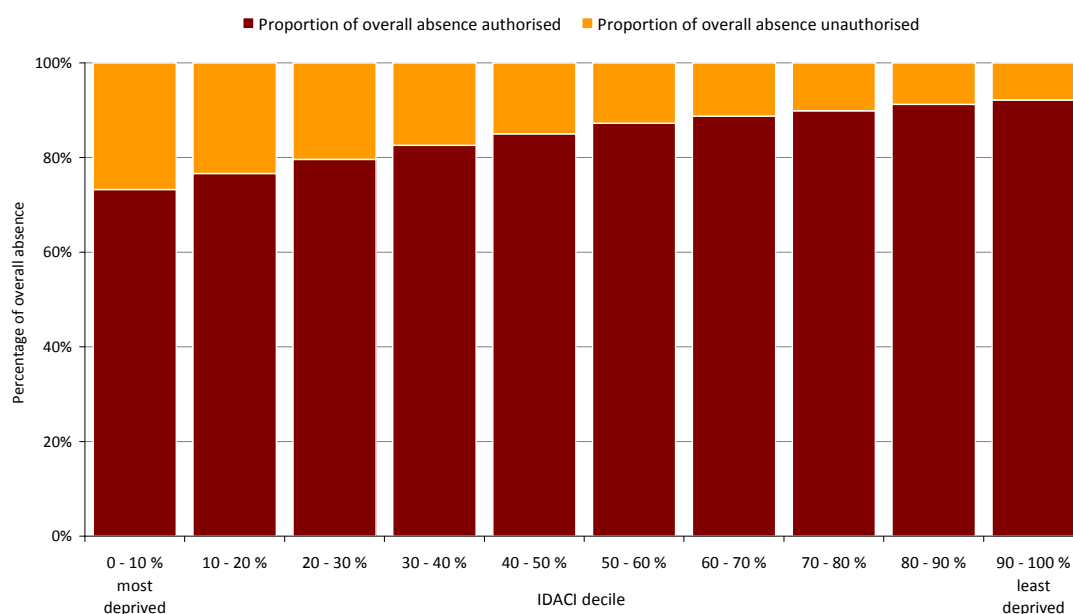
¹¹ IDACI bands for 2008 to 2010 are based on 2007 IDACI scores. Care should be taken when comparing to IDACI figures for 2007 and earlier which are based on 2004 IDACI scores.

¹² The maintained secondary schools sector excludes CTCs and Academies.

Generally every increased IDACI decile is associated with correspondingly higher levels of absences. The absence gaps between the most deprived 10% and the least deprived 10% for *unauthorised* absence have remained stubbornly resilient over time; they have widened in primary schools by one fifth; and only narrowed by one tenth in secondary schools, since 2006/07. By contrast, the deprivation gaps for authorised absence have shrunk considerably, by almost one third in primary schools, and by one half in secondary schools.

Deprived areas tend to have a greater proportion of their overall absences unauthorised (Chart 1.11). This proportion reduces for every subsequent IDACI decile as the level of deprivation decreases. This reduction is particularly noticeable for the six most deprived deciles but less so for the remaining four.

Chart 1.11: Authorised/unauthorised absences as a proportion of overall absence in all schools, 2009/10



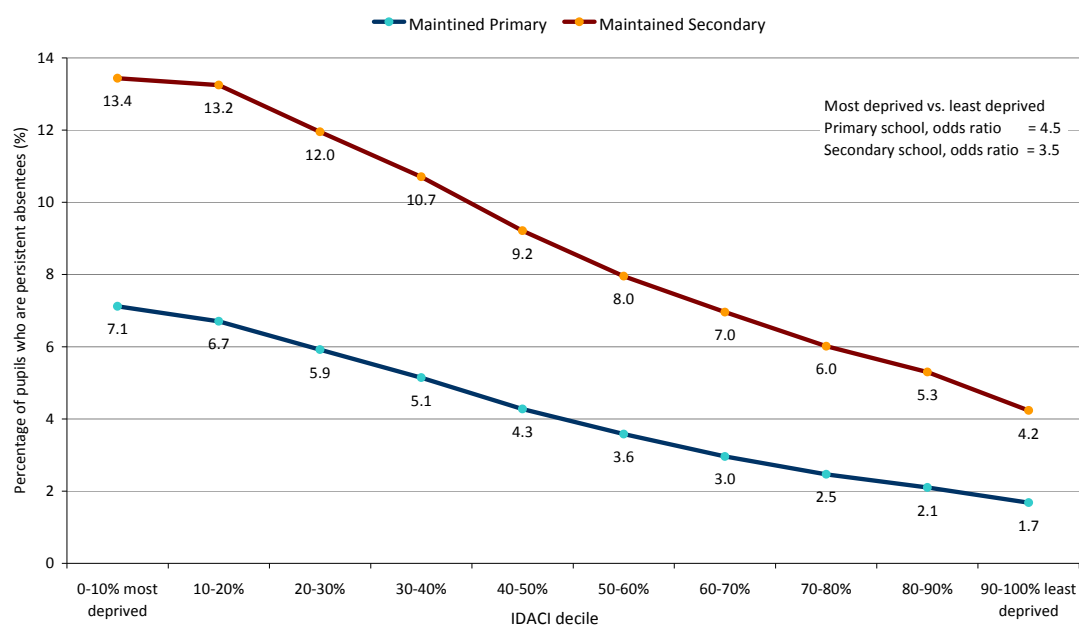
Source: National Pupil Database

The persistent absentee rates observed in maintained primary and secondary schools also reduce at every subsequent IDACI decile (Chart 1.12).

In primary school pupils, the odds of being a persistent absentee are 4.5 times higher for pupils living in the most deprived IDACI decile compared to those living in the least deprived decile. Similarly, secondary school pupils living in the most deprived IDACI decile have 3.5 times the odds of pupils living in the least deprived IDACI decile.

So there is a clear instance of higher persistent absenteeism with increased levels of deprivation.

Chart 1.12: Persistent absentee rate by IDACI decile, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

1.8 Modelling characteristics on the odds of being a persistence absentee

So far, the analysis in this chapter has highlighted the variation in differing levels of absences recorded against different pupil characteristics. It is interesting to extend this focus further to assess how having a certain characteristic (e.g. belonging to a certain ethnic group or having a particular Special Educational Need), may affect the likelihood of having higher instances of absence. For example, does an English speaking, Year 9, *Black Caribbean* girl with no SEN and entitled to FSM, have a greater likelihood of being a persistent absentee compared to her *White British* neighbour with the same characteristics?

This section attempts to answer these questions by modelling the likelihood of being a persistent absentee, using the logistic regression method, on the pupil characteristics considered earlier. The advantage of this approach is that it verifies whether the differences seen in previous sections are actually associated with a single characteristic or a combination of a number of characteristics. For example, Mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils have higher than average eligibility for Free School Meals; and pupils from this ethnic group also have a higher than average persistent absentee rate (9.8% compared to 6.8% for all pupils). Logistic regression helps isolate which of these factors – ethnicity or FSM eligibility – is responsible for the increased odds of persistent absence.

Chart 1.13 shows the individual effect on the odds each characteristic has on a child of being a persistent absentee, while holding all other characteristics constant and equal. In this case, a value of an odds ratio greater than 1 implies an increased likelihood of a child with that particular characteristic

being a persistent absentee. Conversely, an odds ratio less than 1 implies a reduced likelihood of the child being a persistent absentee, holding all other characteristics equal.

The effects shown in this chart are all relative to a child with the following reference characteristics:

- Male
- White British
- No Special Educational Need
- In Primary school (national curriculum year group 6 or below)
- English as first language
- Not eligible for Free School Meals
- Living in the least deprived half of IDACI ranked areas

The findings from the regression (Chart 1.13) reiterate the patterns observed earlier in this chapter. Pupil characteristics with higher instances of absences tend to increase the likelihood of a pupil with that characteristic being a persistent absentee – compared to an equivalent pupil from the corresponding control characteristic group. Therefore, holding all other characteristics constant, it is apparent that:

- The odds of being a persistent absentee are 20% higher for girls than they are for boys.
- The odds of being a persistent absentee are almost 8 times higher for Gypsy Roma pupils and 9 times higher for Irish Traveller pupils than they are for White British pupils. On the other hand, Black, Chinese and Asian pupils have reduced odds of being a persistent absentee compared to their White British counterparts - with African pupils having only a quarter of the odds of White British pupils of being a persistent absentee; Chinese pupils have a third of the odds and Indian pupils have around two thirds the odds.
- Pupils eligible for FSM have over twice the odds being a persistent absentee as similar pupils who are not eligible for them.
- Returning to the example of Mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils who are more likely to be eligible for Free School Meals than average, it becomes apparent from the model that there is only a small effect on the odds of being a persistent absentee (odds ratio = 1.12) for this ethnic group once the much larger effect of FSM eligibility (odds ratio = 2.22) is controlled for in the model.
- Pupils with Special Education Needs have greater odds of being persistently absent than pupils with no SEN. Those at School Action Plus have the highest odds of being persistently absent (2.97 times

that of non-SEN pupils) followed by statemented pupils (2.79 times the odds) and pupils at School Action (almost twice the odds of being persistently absent than non-SEN pupils).

- The odds of being a persistent absentee increase for every higher year group in secondary school. Pupils in Year 7 have 1.2 times the odds, while those in Year 11 have almost 4 times the odds of being persistently absent than pupils with similar characteristics in primary school.
- Having English as an Additional Language, slightly decreases the odds of a pupil being persistently absent by 8% compared to an English speaking pupil with similar characteristics.
- Pupils living in the most deprived IDACI quartile have almost twice the odds of being a persistent absentee compared to similar pupils living in the least deprived IDACI half.

Reviewing the importance of the various pupil characteristics to the odds of being a persistent absentee, the largest increases in odds are for pupils with Irish Traveller or Gypsy Roma heritage, older pupils, pupils with SEN and those who are eligible for FSM; the largest decreases in odds are for pupils with African, Chinese, Indian and Caribbean ethnicity

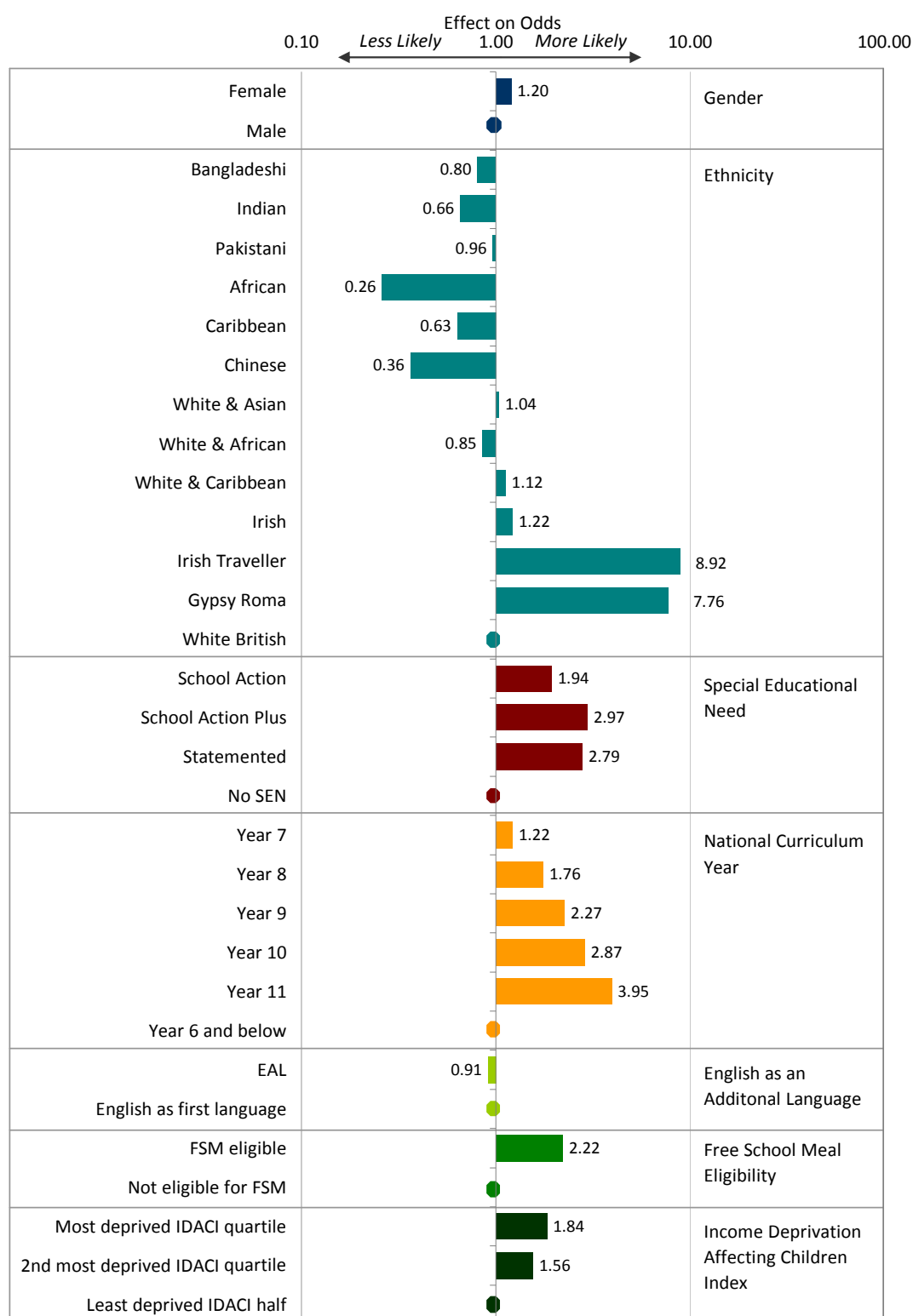
It is possible to convert the odds effects described above into probabilities of being a persistent absentee for pupils with particular combinations of characteristics from the model. The individual effects (Chart 1.13) are multiplied together to find an overall effect which is then converted to a probability¹³.

For example, an **English speaking, Year 10, Indian girl** living in the **least deprived IDACI half** and at **School Action Plus** and entitled to **free school meals** has odds of being a persistent absentee ($1.00 * 2.87 * 0.66 * 1.20 * 1.00 * 2.97 * 2.22$) = 14.99 times those for the **reference pupil** - who is an English speaking, White British boy living in the same neighbourhood, still in primary school and with no Special Educational Needs and not eligible for Free School Meals.

The model gives the odds of being a persistent absentee for the reference pupil of 0.02 or 2%. The example pupil has 14.99 times those odds of being a persistent absentee ($14.99 * 0.02$) = 0.30, or $(0.3 / [1 + 0.3]) = 23\%$. So, the example pupil's probability of being a persistent absentee is 23%, compared with the reference pupil's 2% probability, and the overall average probability of 6.8%.

¹³ Probability = Odds / (1+Odds)

Chart 1.13: Effect of various pupil characteristics on the odds of becoming a PA across all schools, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

The analyses in this chapter have shown that absences vary greatly both between different characteristics *and* within certain characteristics. It is useful to unpick this further and assess what might cause these variations. Chapter 2 will examine this by looking into the reasons behind absences.

Chapter 2: Reasons for absence

Key findings

- Persistent absentees and other pupils have different reasons for being absent. Compared to *other* pupils, PA pupils have greater proportions of all absence due to *unauthorised other circumstances* (26% vs. 6%) and *authorised other* (9% vs. 8%).
- Girls are more likely to have absences due to illness than boys; boys however, are more likely to have absences due to exclusions than girls.
- Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African, Indian and pupils of Mixed White and Asian ethnicity report higher proportions of absences due to *religious observance* compared to all other ethnic groups.
- Pupils at School Action Plus, followed by pupils at School Action, have the highest levels of absences due to *unauthorised other circumstances* and *no reason yet*.
- Pupils at the end of primary school have a far greater proportion of their absences due to family holidays compared to pupils at the end of secondary school (12.3% in year 6 vs. 3.0% in year 11).
- Pupils with EAL are more likely to be absent due to *religious observance* than non-EAL pupils - with 6.2% of all EAL absences due to *religious observance* compared to just 0.2% for non-EAL pupils.
- Just over a quarter of all absences reported by FSM pupils were due to *unauthorised reasons* – this compares to a seventh of all absences reported by non-FSM pupils.
- Pupils from increasingly deprived IDACI quartiles tend to have increasingly high proportions of absences classed as *unauthorised other, no reason yet*, and *exclusions* compared to pupils from wealthier/less deprived backgrounds.
- Evidence from the 2010 Tellus4 survey suggests that the less absence pupils have, the more they find classes engaging and the more utility they perceive to derive from school.

Since the full introduction of the absence data collection via the School Census in 2006, the Department has been able to collect detailed reasons behind pupil absences. These reasons are broadly classed into the following authorised and unauthorised categories¹⁴:

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	Family holiday not agreed
Medical/dental appointments	Arrived late
Religious observance	Other unauthorised circumstances
Study leave	No reason yet
Traveller absence	
Agreed family holiday	
Agreed extended family holiday	
Excluded, no alternative provision	
Other authorised circumstances	

This chapter considers the reasons behind pupil absences according to their characteristics.

¹⁴ Further details on the reasons classifications can be found at: http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/doc/a/aa-ac/absence_and_attendance_codes.doc

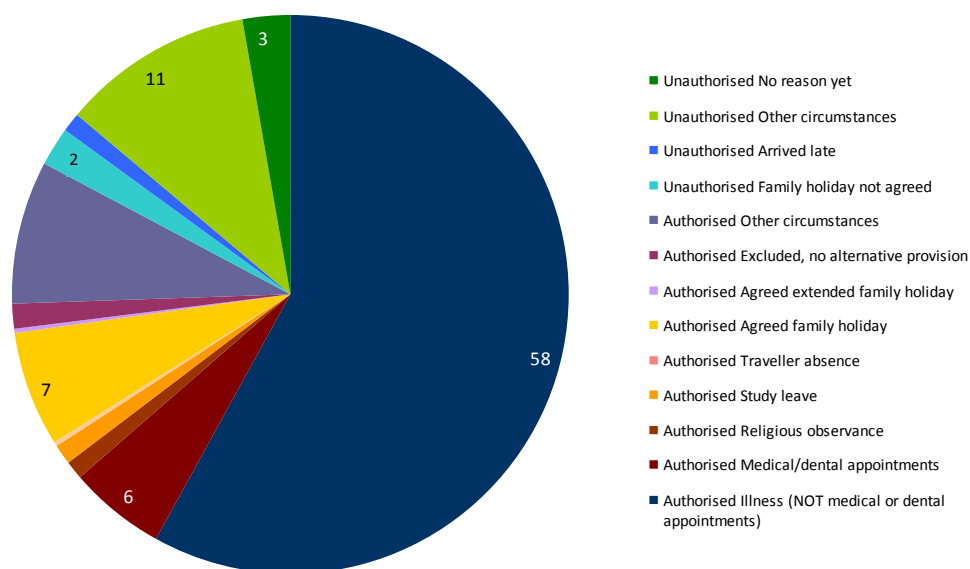
2.1 Distribution of reasons for absence by school type

The largest contributor to overall absences is Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments) constituting almost 60% of all absences across all schools in England (see Table D.1, Annex D). Other authorised circumstances, agreed family holidays and medical or dental appointments are the next leading authorised absence reasons, accounting for around 8%, 7% and 6% of all absences in 2009/10 respectively (Chart 2.1).

The leading reason given for unauthorised absence is 'other', explaining 11% of all absences in 2009/10. This is followed by 'no reason yet' and unauthorised family holidays (contributing to 3% and 2% of all absences respectively).

Interestingly since 2006/07, absences due to 'agreed family holidays' have steadily declined (from 0.61% in 2006/07 to 0.41% in 2009/10) while absence rates due to *unauthorised* family holidays over this same period have almost doubled (from 0.07% to 0.13%).

Chart 2.1: Reasons for absence distribution across all schools, 2009/10



Percentage of sessions missed due to stated reason (%)

Source: National Pupil Database

Patterns of reasons for absence are different between persistent absentees (PAs) and other pupils. Chart 2.2 breaks down the above chart to display this pattern across all schools in England.

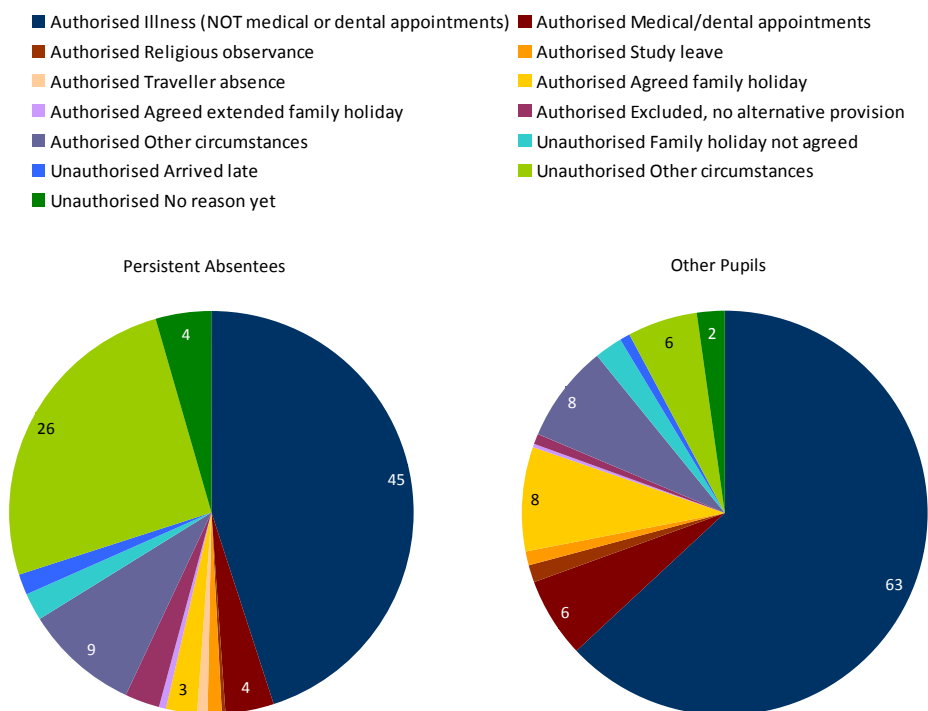
From the chart it is apparent that persistent absentees have a large proportion of the all absences due to *illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)* and *unauthorised other absence*- accounting for around 45% and 26% of all absences respectively. This compares to 63% of all absences due to *illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)* in other pupils and only 6% due to *unauthorised other absences*.

Furthermore, PAs have twice the amount of absences unauthorised due to *no reason yet* compared to other pupils (4% compared to 2%). Authorised exclusions and traveller absence also account for a greater proportion of all absences among PA pupils than they do for other pupils.

Persistent absentees tend to have an almost equal proportion of all absences authorised due to *other circumstances* as their non-PA peers (9% vs. 8% of all absences are classed as *other authorised* respectively).

In contrast however, PA pupils have a much smaller proportion of their overall absences due to authorised family holidays compared to other pupils.

Chart 2.2: Reasons for absence for PAs and Other Pupils across all schools, 2009/10



Percentage of sessions missed due to stated reason (%)

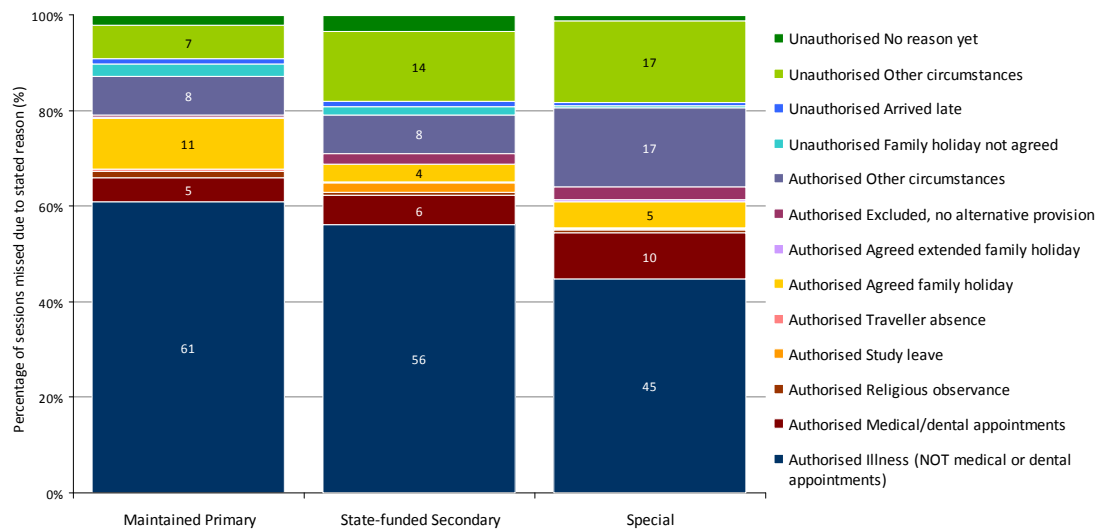
Source: National Pupil Database

Reasons for absences vary considerably across the different school types (Chart 2.3). In general, a greater proportion of absences in primary schools are authorised compared to secondary and special schools – in 2009/10, almost 9 out of 10 absences were authorised in primary schools compared to around 8 in 10 in secondary and special schools.

The Chart 2.3 illustrates the breakdown in the reasons for absences further by the different school types. Immediately it is apparent that greater proportions of absences in primary schools are due to illnesses (NOT medical or dental appointments), authorised family holidays and unauthorised family holidays (around 61%, 11% and 3% respectively) compared to both secondary and special schools. There are however, generally higher proportions of absences reported due to medical or dental appointments, exclusions, other authorised circumstances and other unauthorised circumstances across secondary and special schools.

Absence rates by school types are available in Table D.1 Annex D.

Chart 2.3: Reasons for absence distribution across all school types, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

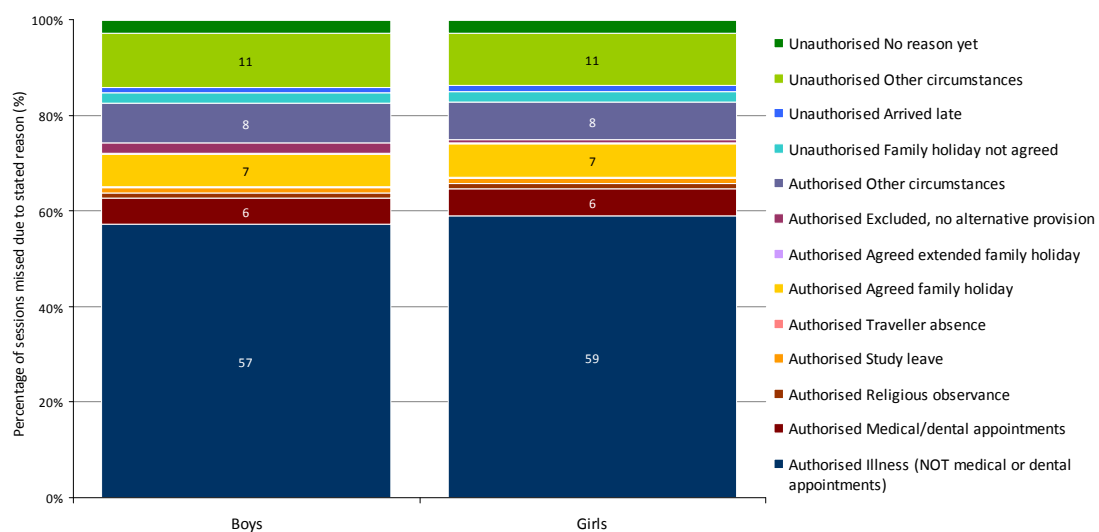
2.2 Distribution of reasons for absence by gender

Gender differences behind reasons for absences are minimal (see Chart 2.4) - boys and girls are absent for almost the same reasons.

It is worth noting however, that boys are twice as likely to report absences due to exclusions compared to girls (in 2009/10, 2 % of all absences for boys were due to exclusions compared to just 1% for girls).

This pattern in reasons for absences also holds true for 2008/09. Absence rates by gender are available in Table D.2 Annex D.

Chart 2.4: Reasons for absence distribution by gender, 2009/10



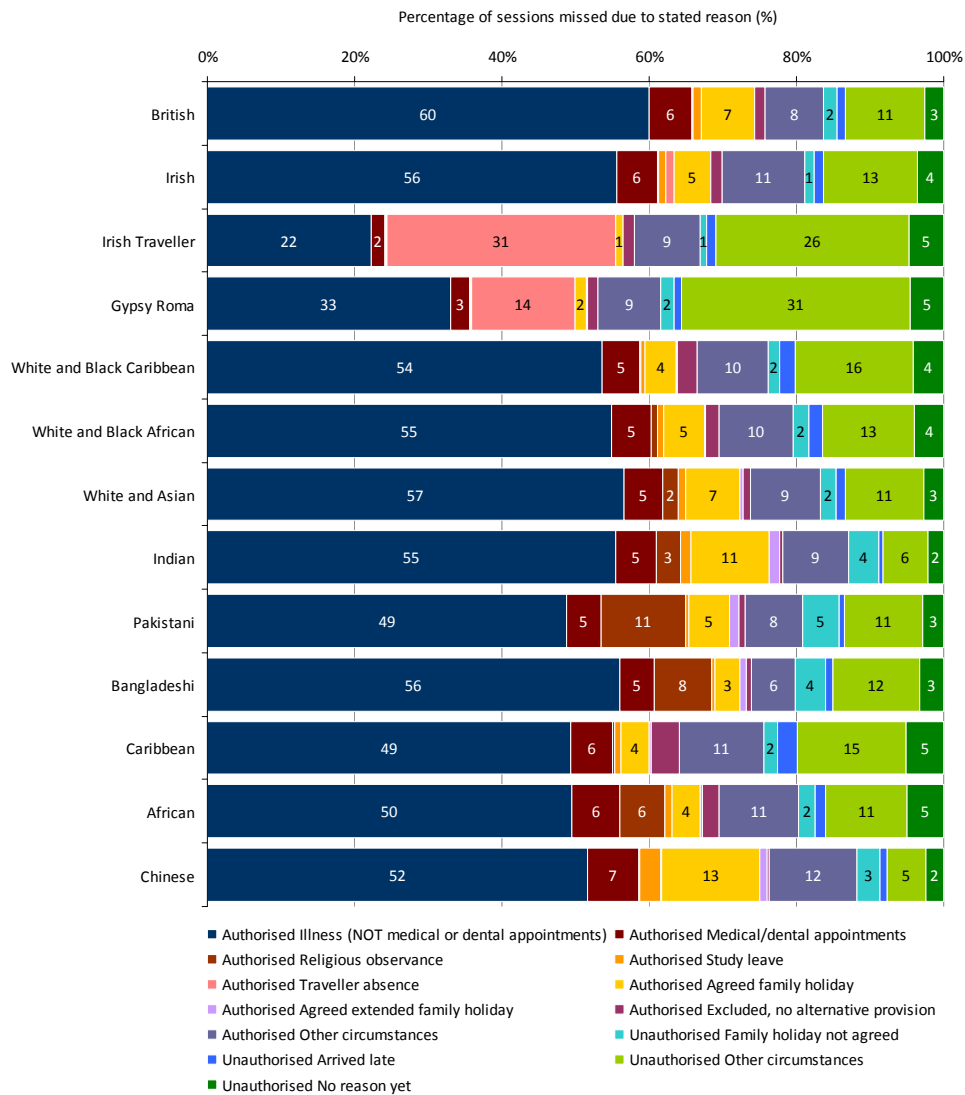
Source: National Pupil Database

2.3 Distribution of reasons for absence by ethnicity

As seen earlier in Section 1.2, authorised and unauthorised absence rates vary significantly between different ethnic groups. Chart 2.5 below examines this in more detail.

Absence rates by ethnicity are available in Tables D.3 – D.7 in Annex D.

Chart 2.5: Reasons for absence distribution by ethnicity, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

The ethnic groups with markedly higher absence rates, Irish Traveller and Gypsy Roma, also have the most distinct absence distribution patterns. The bulk of absences in both ethnic groups constitute of authorised traveller leave (around 31% and 14% respectively in 2009/10) and other unauthorised absences (around 26% and 31% respectively). As a result, pupils from these groups have much smaller proportions of absences due to illnesses, medical/dental appointments or authorised family holidays, than other ethnic groups.

Greater proportions of absences due to religious observance are reported by Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African, Indian and pupils of a Mixed White and Asian ethnic background compared to all other ethnic groups (11%, 8%, 6%, 3% and 2% respectively in 2009/10).

Chinese, Indian, Mixed White and Asian and British pupils have a notably greater proportion of their absences authorised due to family holidays compared to other ethnic groups (around 13% for Chinese pupils, 11% for Indian pupils and 7% for both Mixed White and Asian and British pupils in 2009/10). Unauthorised family holidays make up a greater proportion of absences for Pakistani (5%), Indian and Bangladeshi pupils (4% each in 2009/10) than for other ethnic groups.

2.4 Distribution of reasons for absence by SEN

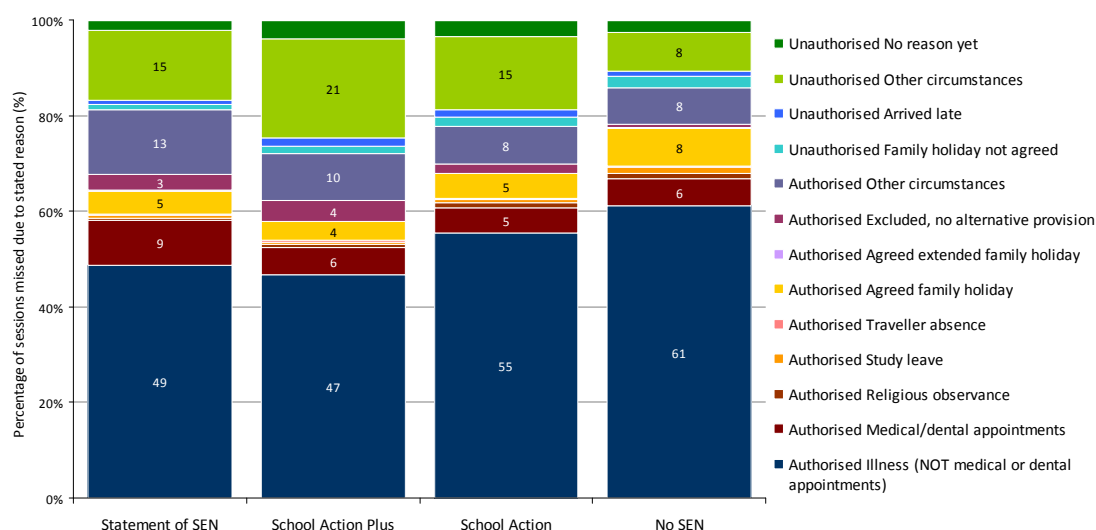
Reiterating absence patterns observed earlier in Section 1.3, it is unsurprising to see that pupils at School Action Plus have the highest proportion of absences unauthorised due to other circumstances (21% compared to 15% for statemented pupils and pupils at School Action). They also have a greater degree of absences due to exclusions than pupils with other SEN provisions.

Pupils with statements of SEN are more likely to be absent due to medical/dental appointments than pupils with other SEN provisions.

Pupils with statements of SEN, followed by those at School Action Plus tend to have higher proportions of absences authorised due to other circumstances (13% and 10% respectively in 2009/10).

Absence rates by SEN are available in Table D.8 in Annex D.

Chart 2.6: Reasons for absence distribution by SEN, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

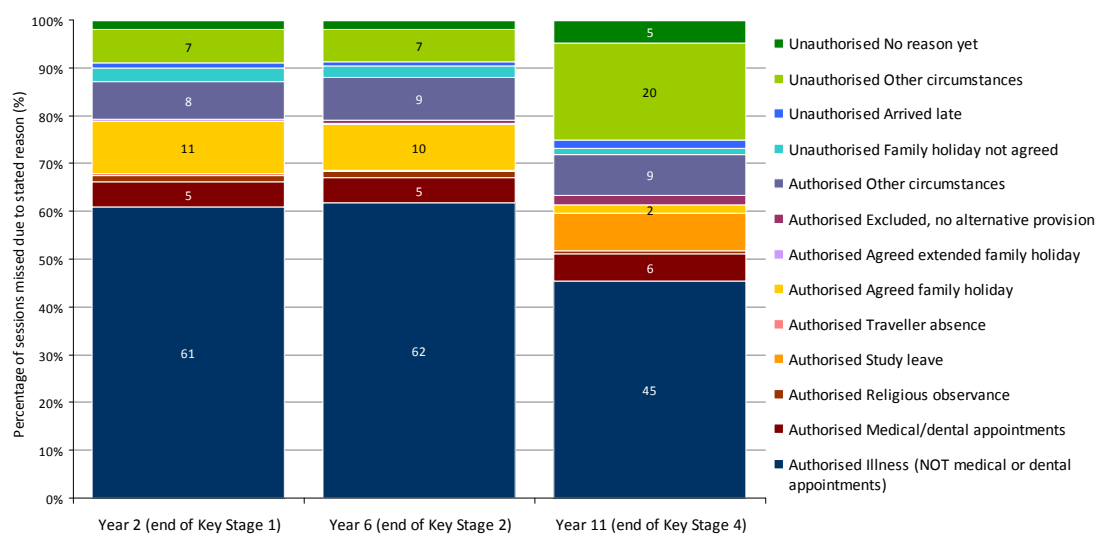
2.5 Distribution of reasons for absence by age (NCY Groups)

Reasons for absence vary starkly between pupils in primary (Years 2 and 6) and secondary (Year 11) schools.

Chart 2.7 shows the distribution for the reasons for absence for both year groups. From the chart it is immediately apparent that by the end of secondary schools, pupils in Year 11 have a greater proportion of absences due to *no reason yet* (5% vs. 2%), *unauthorised other* (20% vs. 7%), *late arrival* (2% vs. 1%), and *exclusions* (2% vs. 1%) than pupils in Year 6.

Absence rates by these year groups are available in Table D.9 in Annex D.

Chart 2.7: Reasons for absence distribution by NCY, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

2.6 Distribution of reasons for absence by EAL

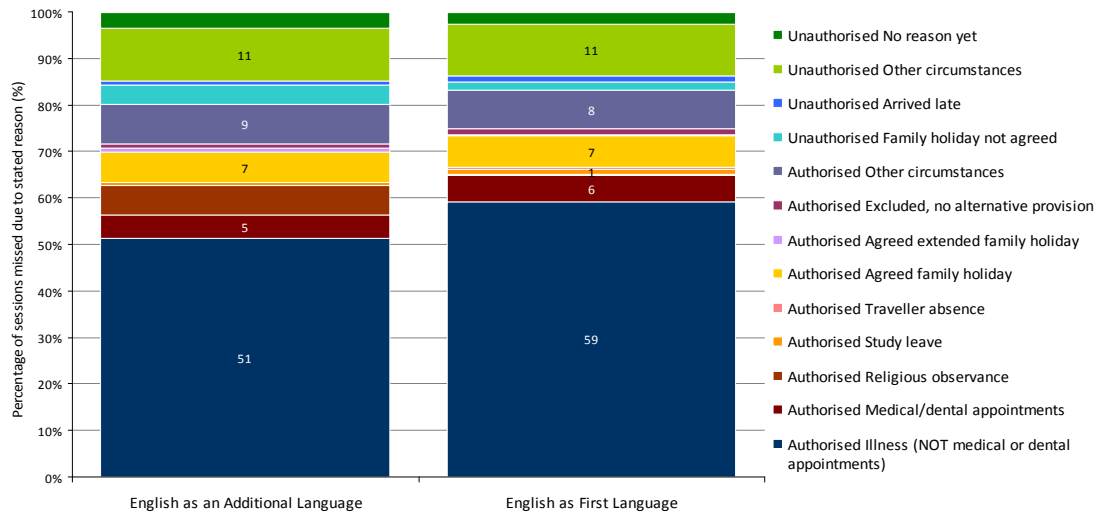
Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) have slightly different reasons for absence distribution (Chart 2.8) than pupils with English as a first language.

Some of the main differences lie in the proportion of absences classed as *religious observance*, *authorised extended family holiday* and *unauthorised family holiday* where EAL pupils have greater proportions of absences than non-EAL pupils (6.2% vs. 0.2%, 0.9% vs. 0.1% and 4.2% vs. 1.8% respectively).

Pupils with English as a first language on the other hand, tend to have a greater proportion of absence classed as illness (NOT medical/dental appointments) than EAL pupils in 2009/10 (59.1% vs. 51.2%).

Absence rates by EAL are available in Table D.10 in Annex D.

Chart 2.8: Reasons for absence distribution by EAL, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

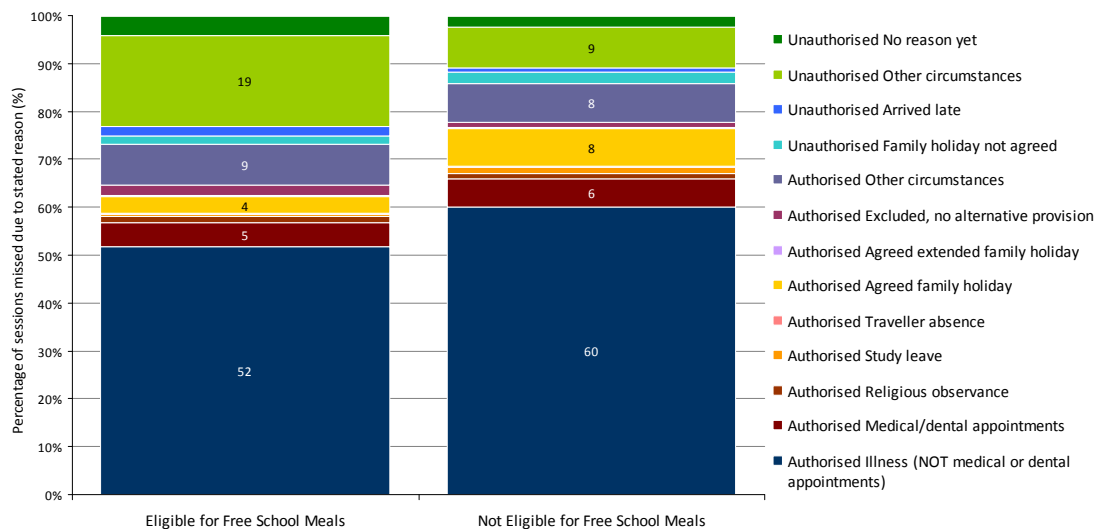
2.7 Distribution of reasons for absence by FSM eligibility

Chart 2.9 shows the reasons for absence distributions for pupils eligible/not eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) in 2009/10.

It is apparent from the chart that pupils eligible for FSM tend to have far greater absences due to unauthorised reasons compared to their non-FSM peers. Around 19% of all absences were classed as *unauthorised other* for FSM pupils compared to 9% for their peers. Pupils eligible for FSM are also more likely to have absences classed as *unauthorised no reason yet*, *late arrivals*, *exclusions* and *religious observances* compared to their non-FSM counterparts (around 4% vs. 2%, 2% vs. 1%, 2% vs. 1%, and 1.4% vs. 0.9% respectively). Non-FSM pupils have a greater proportion of their absences classed as *illnesses*, *agreed family holiday* and *study leave* compared to FSM pupils (60% vs. 52%, 8% vs. 4% and 1.3% vs. 0.3% respectively).

Absence rates by FSM are available in Table D.11 in Annex D.

Chart 2.9: Reasons for absence distribution by FSM, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

2.8 Distribution of reasons for absence by IDACI

Reasons for absence distribution differ significantly according to different IDACI classifications (Chart 2.10).

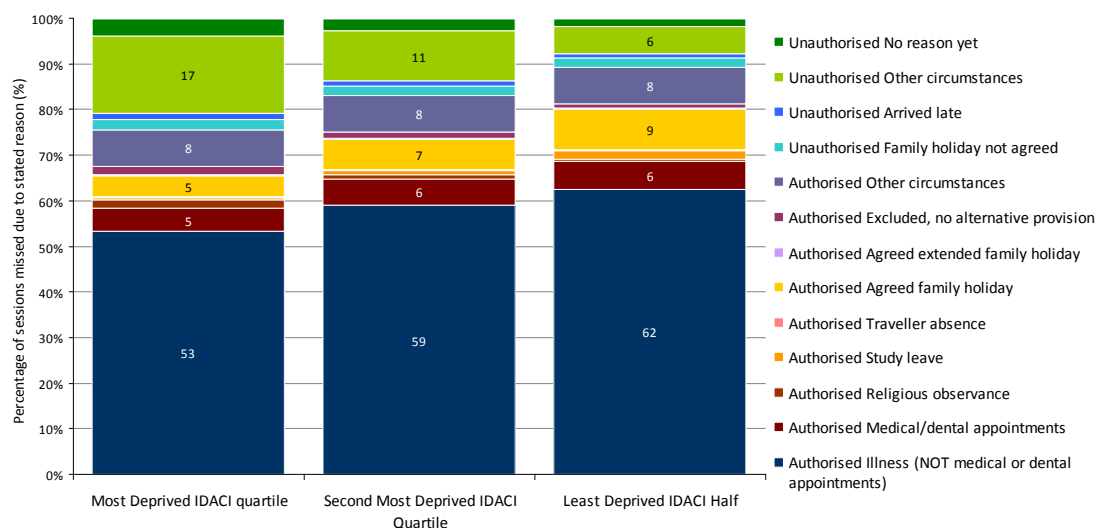
Reaffirming the findings earlier in Section 1.7, the chart below shows smaller proportions of unauthorised absences with each increasingly wealthy IDACI area group.

Pupils living in the most deprived IDACI quartile have the greatest proportion of absences classed as *unauthorised no reason yet* (almost 4%) and *unauthorised other circumstances* (around 17%) compared to pupils living the second most deprived IDACI quartile and the least deprived IDACI half (where absences due to *unauthorised no reason yet* was 3% and 2% respectively in 2009/10 and absences due to *unauthorised other circumstances* was 11% and 6% respectively). Absences due to *exclusions* and *religious observance* tend to decline with increasing IDACI prosperity (the proportion of absences due to exclusions was 1.8%, 1.4% and 0.9% respectively; the proportion of absences due to religious observance was 2.0%, 0.8% and 0.4% respectively in 2009/10).

In contrast, increasingly deprived IDACI areas have fewer absences due to *agreed family holidays*, *authorised study leave* and *illnesses*.

Absence rates by IDACI classifications are available in Table D.12, Annex D.

Chart 2.10: Reasons for absence distribution by IDACI, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

2.9 Pupil perceptions and attendance

In 2010 the Department ran the Tellus4 pupil perception survey (see Annex B for more details) designed to gather views of children and young people across England from years 6, 8 and 10. Almost a quarter of million individual responses were received from children and young people across the maintained primary and secondary school sector¹⁵.

The analysis below considers school level aggregate responses¹⁶ against the overall absences reported by these year groups in 2009/10, to the following statements:

<u>School Utility</u>	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
My school is giving me useful skills and knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Class Engagement</u>	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
Most of my teachers make my lessons fun and interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2.9.1 School utility

The majority of respondents to Tellus4 agreed with the statement that *school provides them with useful skills and knowledge*.

Chart 2.11 below shows the overall absence rates reported by the schools in the Tellus sample against the overall proportion of respondents (in the schools) who agreed with the *utility* statement.

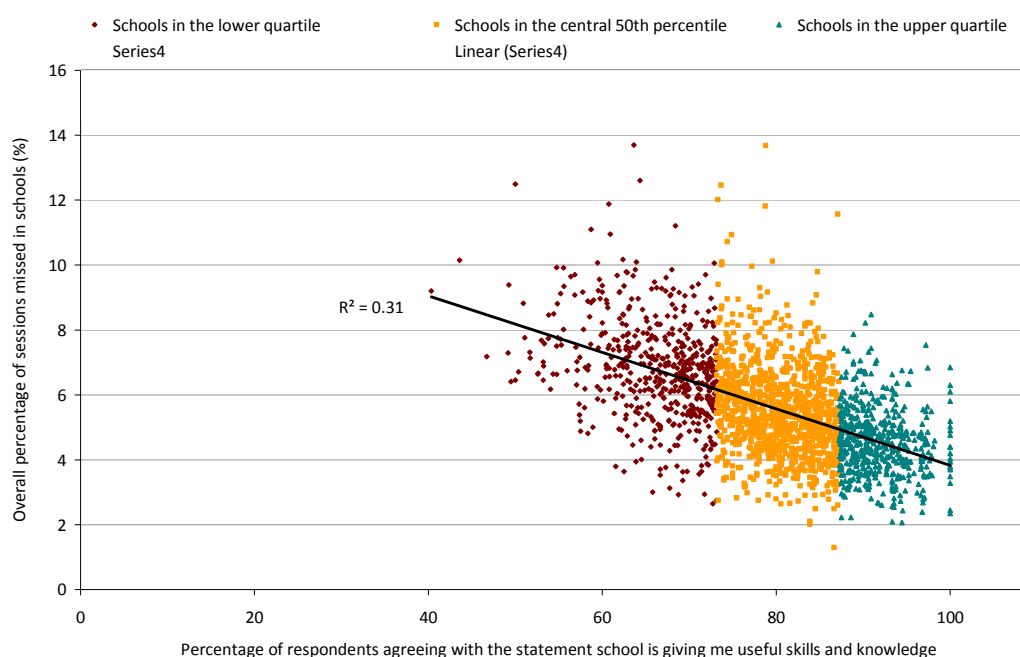
From the chart, it is clear that there is evidence of a relationship between the proportion of Tellus4 respondents agreeing with the statement above and the overall absence rate reported. Essentially, fewer overall absences are reported by respondents in schools where a greater proportion agree with the statement above – conversely, greater overall absences are reported by schools in which greater proportions of respondents *disagree* with the above statement.

Almost a third of the variation in absence is explained by how useful pupils perceive their schooling to be ($R^2 = 0.31$) - for the selection of schools that took part in the Tellus4 survey.

¹⁵ Note, Special schools and Pupil Referral Units were also surveyed as a part of Tellus, though the analysis in this chapter is restricted to maintained mainstream schools only.

¹⁶ School-level responses with 30 or more individual respondents were considered for the analysis in this section.

Chart 2.11: School-level Tellus4 response to the *school utility* statement against its overall absence rate



Source: National Pupil Database & Tellus4 survey

2.9.2 Class engagement

School responses on whether or not most teachers provide *fun and interesting classes* are more varied than the utility statement – with less than 40% of respondents in a quarter of schools agreeing with the statement.

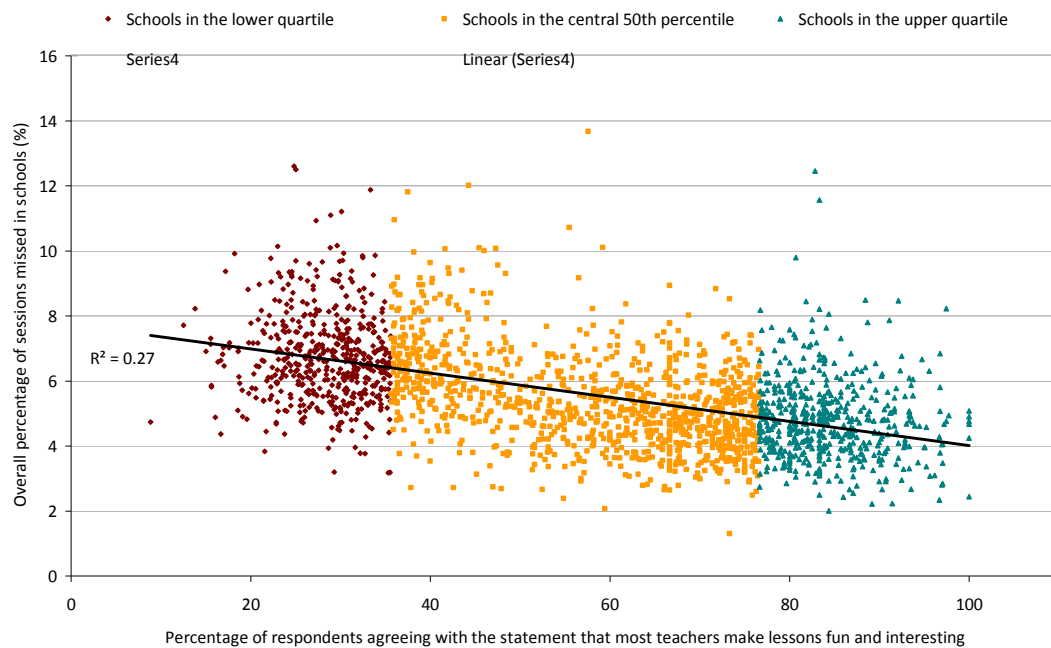
As in the earlier chart, Chart 2.12 shows the overall absence rates reported by the schools in the Tellus sample against the overall proportion of respondents who agreed with the *class engagement* statement.

Chart 2.12 shows that there is evidence of a relationship between the proportion of respondents agreeing with this statement and the overall absence levels reported by these respondents, but the slope of the trend line is flatter, indicating less difference in absence according to school engagement than according to school utility.

Fewer absences are reported in schools where large proportions of respondents agreed with the statements. On the contrary, schools with smaller proportions of respondents in agreement with this statement show higher levels of overall absences.

In this case, just over a quarter of the variation in absence is explained by how fun and interesting pupils find their lessons ($R^2 = 0.27$) - for the selection of schools that took part in the Tellus4 survey.

Chart 2.12: School-level Tellus4 response to the *class engagement* statement against its overall absence rate



Source: National Pupil Database & Tellus4 survey

So it is apparent that as well as legitimate reasons for absences (illnesses, holidays etc.), pupils perceptions on how interesting and fun their lessons are and how useful they find school, also have a relationship with their overall levels of absence. It is clear from this that absence is linked to a wider construct of disengagement from school.

The next chapter will contextualise pupils with high levels of absences (PAs) in terms of their attitudes, beliefs, experiences and family background.

Chapter 3: Contextual background of absentees

Key findings

- Persistent absentees are more likely to come from lone parent households or households with no parents, compared to their non-PA peers.
- Almost a third of persistent absentees come from households where the principal adult/s are not in any form of current employment – this compares to just over a tenth of non-PAs.
- The parental attitudes of persistent absentees and other non-PA pupils differ significantly. Parents of non-PA pupils tend to feel personally engaged with their child's school life and expect them to continue on with full-time education after leaving school. The parents of persistent absentees on the other hand, tend to feel less engaged with their child's school life, with many expecting their child to start some form of trade or apprenticeship scheme, or enter full-time paid employment after leaving school. Although the parents of both PA and non-PA pupils have aspirations for their children to continue in full-time higher education, albeit to different extents – their assessment of how realistic these hopes are, differ greatly.
- A sizeable proportion of persistent absentees are not happy at school and think of it as a waste of time. Persistent absentees do not want to go to school and are not inclined to work exceptionally hard while at school. In line with this, a greater proportion of persistent absentees find lessons boring and a waste of time compared to their non-PA peers.
- Evidence suggests that persistent absentees are more likely to be bullied, excluded from school and be involved in risky behaviours (experiment with drugs, alcohol etc.) than non-PAs.

The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) is a major innovative panel study of young people which brings together data from several sources, including annual interviews with young people and their parents, and administrative sources¹⁷. LSYPE respondents were first interviewed in the spring of 2004 (at age 13) and were interviewed annually until 2010, resulting in a total of seven 'waves'. For the first four waves of LSYPE, the parents or guardians of the respondents were also interviewed.

The analysis in this chapter is based on approximately 9,000 respondents who took part in wave 3 of LSYPE in 2006 – of which, around 1,500 were persistent absentees. At the time of the survey, the respondents were between the ages of 15 to 16 and in the final year of their compulsory school education (year 11).

¹⁷ Further information on LSYPE is available in Annex B.

This chapter predominantly focuses on the distinct differences between persistent absentees (PAs) and other (non-PA) pupils in terms of their family background, parental attitudes and their own outlook and attitudes to life, both at present and in terms of future aspirations.

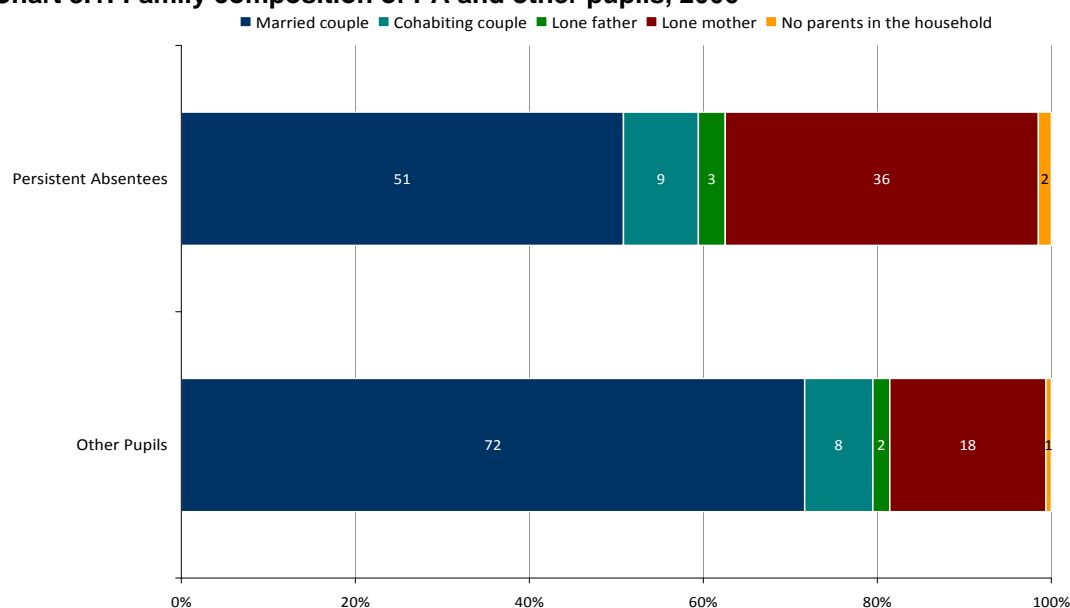
Note: the number of pupils and 95% confidence intervals for the figures quoted from LSYPE in this chapter can be found in Annex E.

3.1 Family background

Data from LSYPE shows that there is a significant difference in the family structures and background of pupils who are persistently absent and those that are not.

Chart 3.1 below shows that persistent absentees are more likely to come from lone parent households or households with no parents compared to their non-PA peers (39% of PAs come from lone parent households compared to 20% of other pupils; 2% of PAs live in households with no parents compared to just 1% of other pupils). 80% of non-PA pupils however, tend to come from households where their parents are either married or cohabiting – this compares to almost 60% of persistent absentees.

Chart 3.1: Family composition of PA and other pupils, 2006



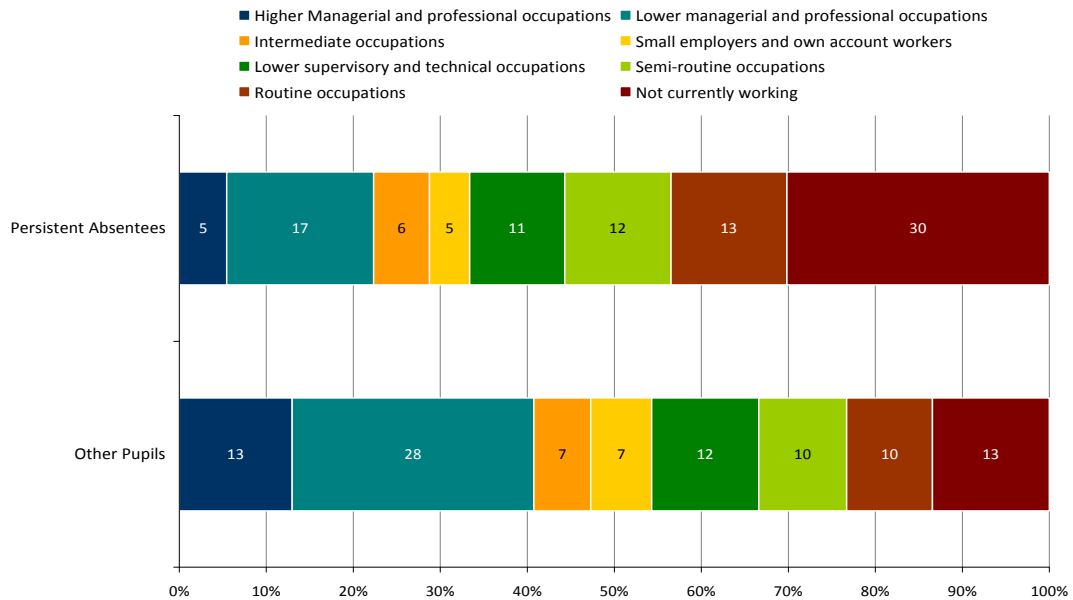
Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Chart 3.2 shows a breakdown of the household National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC)¹⁸ groups for PA and non-PA pupils. From the chart it is immediately apparent that almost a third of persistent absentees come from households where the principal adult/s are *not currently working*, this compares to just over a tenth of other non-PA pupils.

¹⁸ For the purposes of LSYPE, the NS-SEC of a pupil's family is the NS-SEC of the Household Reference Person, where the Household Reference Person is selected using the following criteria in order until a single person is chosen: (i) the person who owns/rents the home, then; (ii) the person with the highest income in the household, then; (iii) the oldest person in the household. For more on NS-SEC, see: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/about-statistics/classifications/current/ns-sec/index.html>

Generally, higher proportions of persistent absentees come from households where the principal adult/s are either in routine/semi-routine occupations or not currently employed. It is not surprising therefore to see that greater proportions of non-PA pupils come from households in which the principal adult/s are in some form of higher professional occupation.

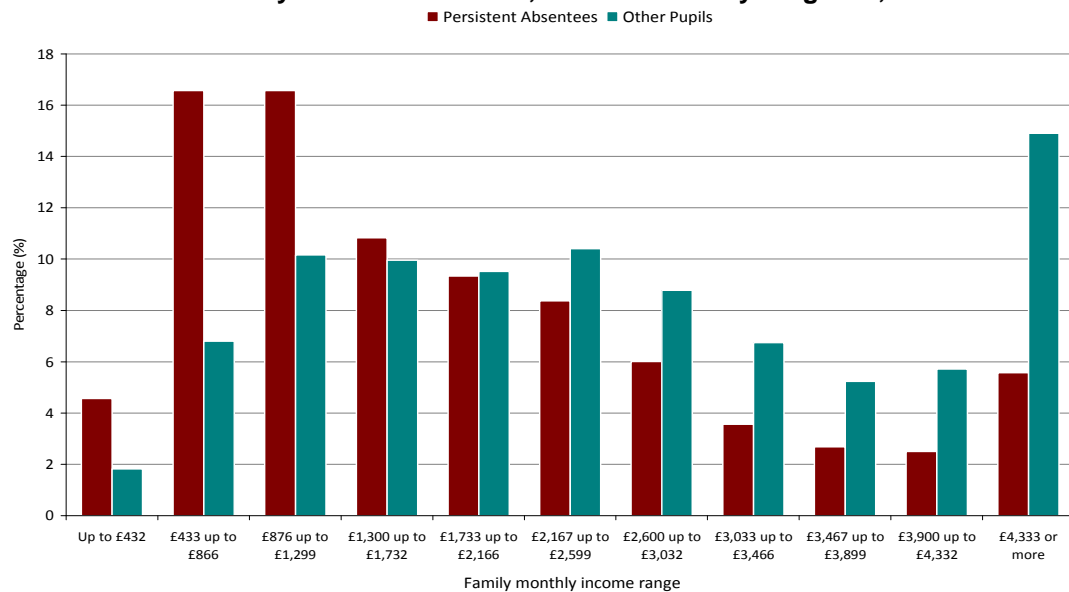
Chart 3.2: Family's current NS-SEC class, 2006



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

In line with the above finding, it is also evident that a great proportion of persistent absentees tend to come from the lower end of the household income distribution (Chart 3.3). Almost two-fifths of persistent absentees live in households with monthly incomes less than £1,300 - this compares to around a fifth of other pupils. The monthly income distribution for other non-PA pupils however is fairly evenly centred across the middle income ranges. Interestingly, over 5% of PAs come from the highest income band.

Chart 3.3: Total monthly income from work, benefits and anything else, 2006

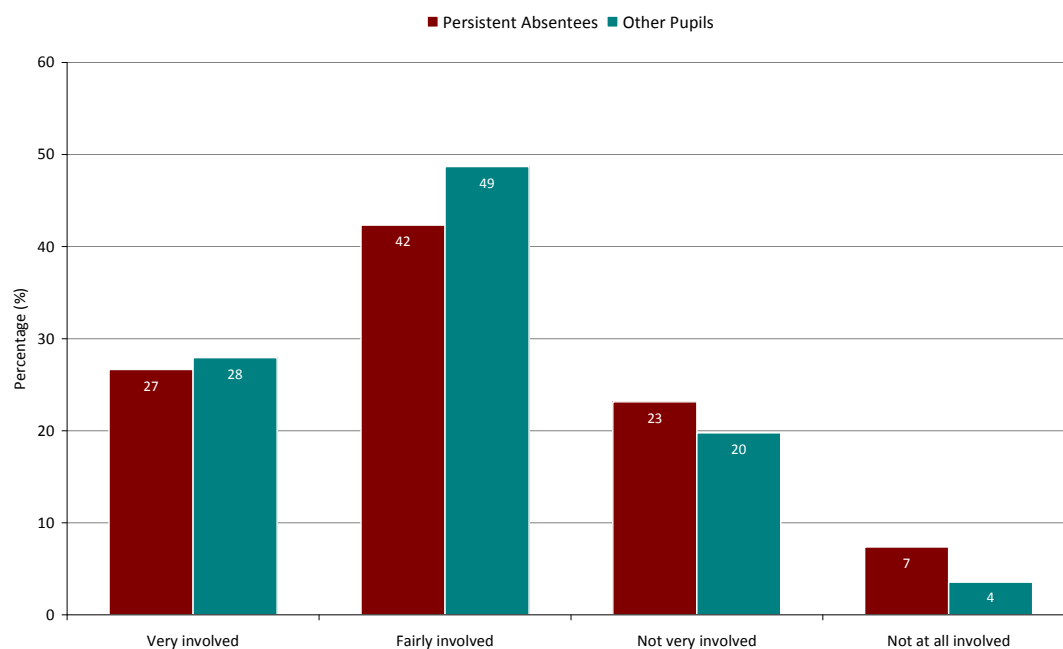


Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

3.2 Parental attitudes

When looking into the parental attitudes of PA and other non-PA pupils (Chart 3.4), it is apparent that a sizable proportion of the parents of PA pupils don't feel very involved in their child's school life. 7% of parents of PA pupils report that they personally do not feel *any* involvement in their child's school life (compared to 4% of parents of other non-PA pupils), and a further 23% report that they do not feel *very* involved in their child's school life (compared to 20% for other non-PA pupils).

Chart 3.4: How involved parent personally feels in young person's school life, 2006



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

It is interesting to explore the parental attitudes further to see what post school activity they wish for their child, and what they actually think their child will do after leaving school. Table 3.1 shows a range of activities against the proportion of parents wanting/expecting their child to become involved in that activity.

From the table, it is evident that the aspirations and expectations of the parents of non-PA pupils are far more closely aligned than that of the parents of PA pupils. What is more, a far greater proportion of parents of non-PA pupils want and expect their child to continue their studies in full-time education than do parents of PA pupils (83% of the parents of non-PA pupils want their child to continue with full-time education and 81% expect that they will; this compares to 64% of the parents of PA pupils who want their child to continue to stay in full-time education, with only 56% actually believing that they will).

Many more parents of PA pupils want their child to enter some form of apprenticeship or learn a trade/enter placement on a training course, than do the parents of other non-PA pupils.

A higher proportion of parents of PA pupils also want their child to enter full-time paid employment (5%) compared to the parents of non-PA pupils (2%) - with much a higher proportion actually expecting that their child will.

Table 3.1: Post school activity parent want/will like their child to be involved in, 2006

Post school activity	Persistent Absentees		Other Pupils	
	What their main parent will like them to do (%)	What their main parent thinks they'll do (%)	What their main parent will like them to do (%)	What their main parent thinks they'll do (%)
Continue in full time education	64	56	83	81
Start learning a trade / Get a place on a training course	14	12	6	6
Start an apprenticeship	13	10	7	7
Get a full-time paid job (employee/self-employed)	5	13	2	3
Something else	2	4	1	1
Don't know	2	5	1	2

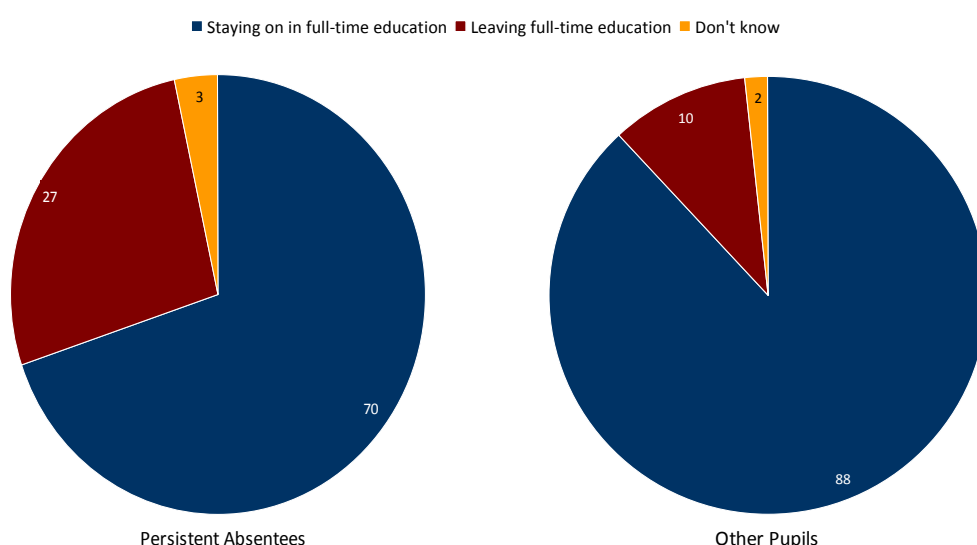
Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

3.3 Young people's attitudes

The future intentions of young people after leaving full-time education are very much aligned to that of their parents post-school expectations for them (Section 3.2 above).

Chart 3.5 shows that 70% of persistent absentees intend to stay on in full-time education compared to 88% of their non-PA peers. A further 27% of PAs intend to leave full-time education altogether, while 3% are unsure of their future plans – this contrasts against just 10% of other non-PA pupils with intentions to leave full-time education, and a further 2% who are unsure of their future intentions.

Chart 3.5: Young persons intentions after leaving compulsory education (year 11), 2006



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Some of the reasons behind these future choices can be unpicked further by examining the attitudes and feelings young people exhibit towards their schools, lessons and personal academic performance.

Chart 3.6 shows the responses young people gave to a series of questions asked in LSYPE about their feelings towards school.

When asked whether young people agree with the statement *'I am happy when I am at school'*, 87% of non-PA pupils agreed with the statement compared to only 58% of PA pupils. In contrast, 37% of PA pupils and 11% of other non-PA pupils disagreed with this statement.

Also, when asked whether or not young people agree with the statement *'School is a waste of time for me'*, 92% of non-PA pupils and 77% of PA pupils disagreed.

Probing further, 51% of PA pupils agreed with the statement *'Most of the time I don't want to go to school'*, while 73% of non-PA pupils disagreed with it. In line with these sentiments, only 63% of PA pupils agree to the statement *'I work as hard as I can at school'* compared to 79% of other non-PA pupils.

Therefore, overall it appears that a significant minority of persistent absentees are not happy at school and/or think of it as a waste of time. As a consequence it appears that they do not want to go to school and are not inclined to work exceptionally hard while actually there.

Following on from this, young people were also asked detailed questions on their feelings towards their lessons at school (Chart 3.7). Again, in keeping with the above findings, a greater proportion of PA pupils agreed with the statements *'In a lesson, I often count the minutes till it ends'* and *'I am bored in lessons'* than their non-PA peers (62% of persistent absentees agree with the first statement compared 50% of their non-PA peers while 63% of PAs agree with the latter statement compared to just 42% of their non-PA peers).

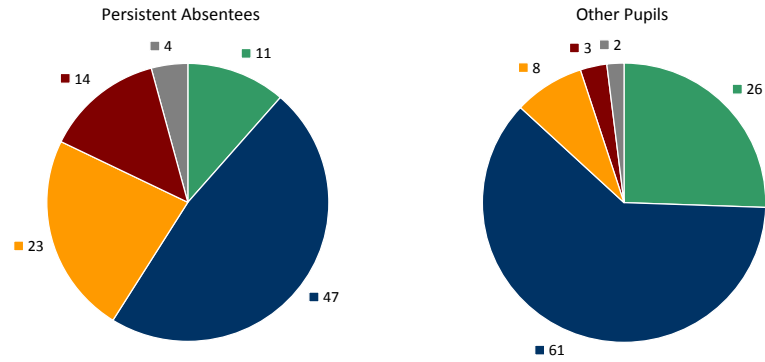
When asked whether young people agree with the statement *'The work I do in lessons is a waste of time'*, over double the proportion of PAs agreed compared to other non-PA pupils (19% of PAs agreed compared to 8% of non-PAs). Similarly, when asked whether young people agree with the statement *'The work I do in lessons is interesting to me'* 73% of non-PA pupils agreed compared to only 56% of PA pupils.

So it appears that the intrinsic interest in lessons is impaired in PAs more than their sense of the extrinsic value of those lessons.

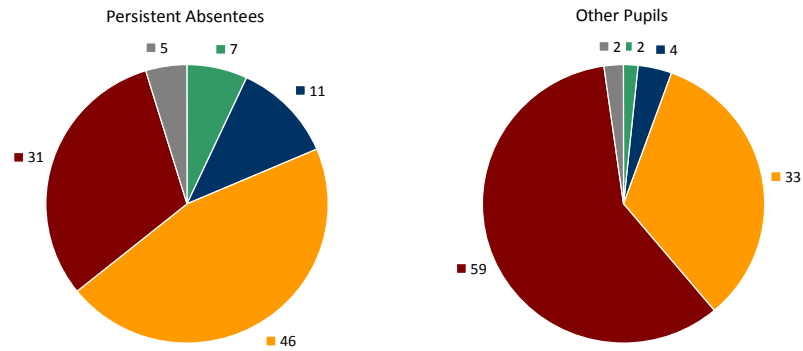
Chart 3.6: Feelings about schools, 2006

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Don't know

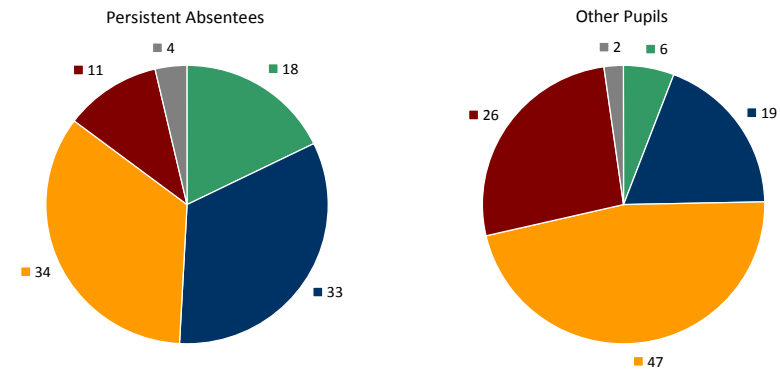
I am happy when I am at school



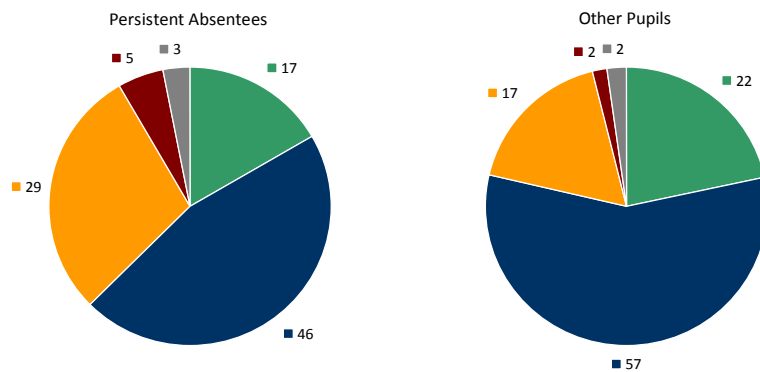
School is a waste of time for me



Most of the time I don't want to go to school



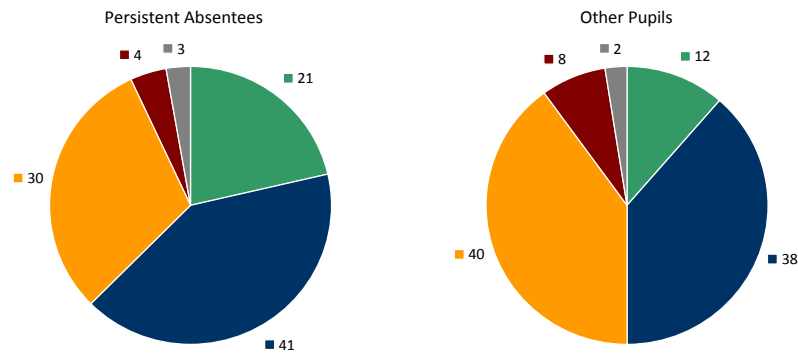
I work as hard as I can in school



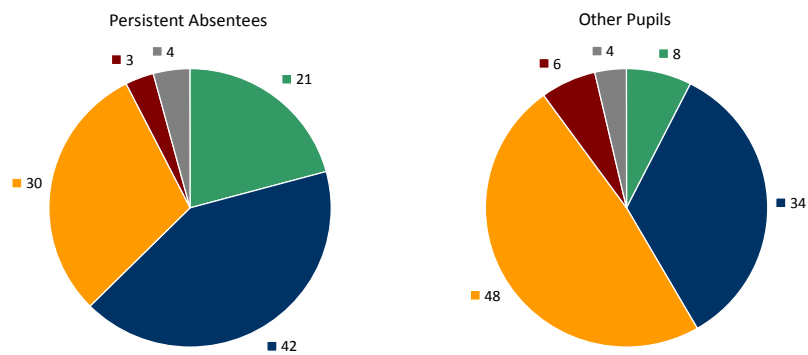
Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Chart 3.7: Feelings about lessons, 2006

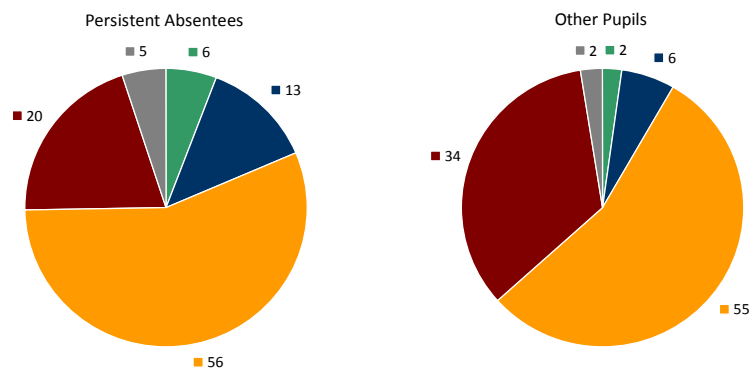
■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know
In a lesson, I often count the minutes till it ends



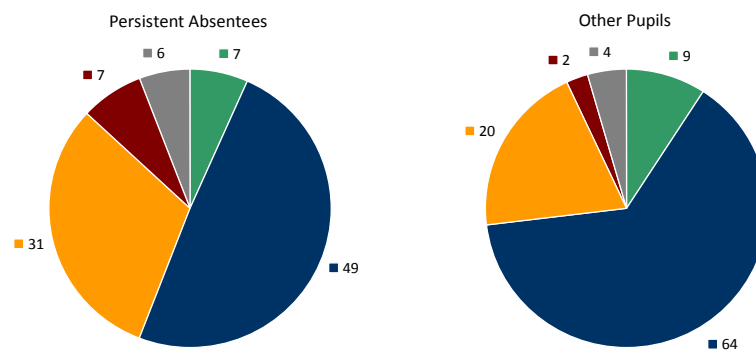
I am bored in lessons



The work I do in lessons is a waste of time



The work I do in lessons is interesting to me

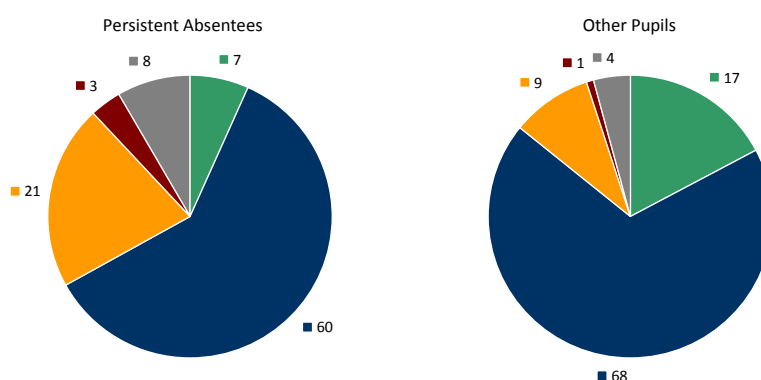


Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Drawing on the above conclusions (Chart 3.6 and 3.7) it is not at all surprising to find that a much *smaller* proportion of persistent absentees feel that they obtain good marks for their school work compared to their non-PA peers. Two out of three persistent absentees felt that they received good marks for their school work compared to over four in five of their non-PA peers.

Chart 3.8: Feelings about marks, 2006

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know
I get good marks for my work



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

3.4 Young people's experiences

As well as differences in attitudes towards the general outlook on school life and future plans, persistent absentees and their non-PA peers tend to also have significantly different intentional and unintentional experiences.

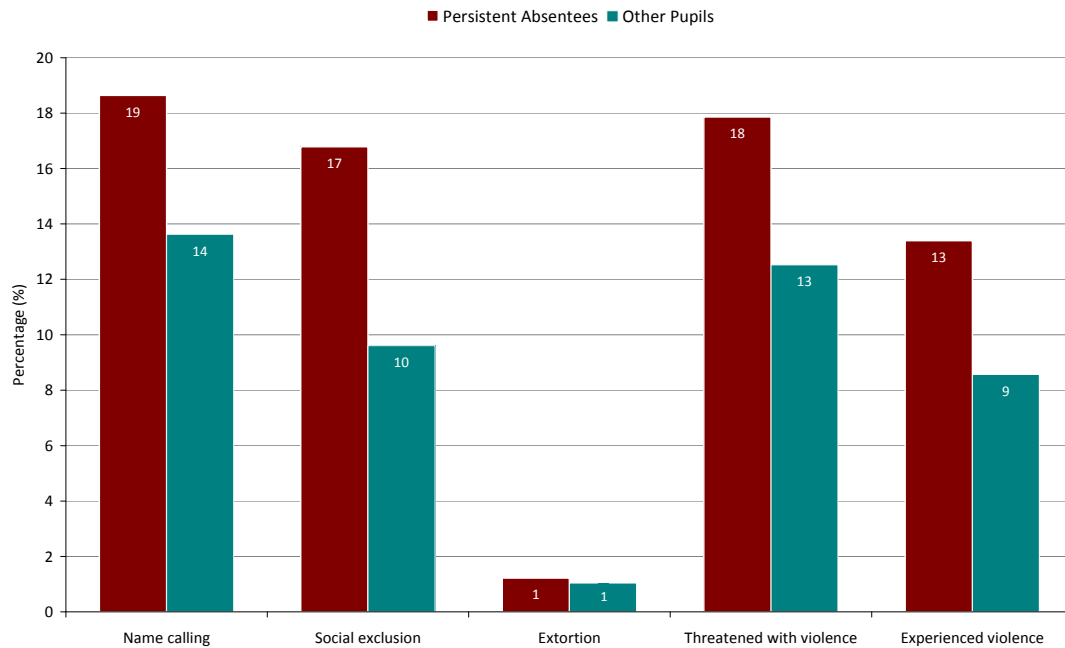
Chart 3.9 shows the proportions of PAs and non-PAs who reported being subjected to any of the following five types of bullying within the 12 month period in the academic year 2006¹⁹: being called names (including text and email bullying), being socially excluded, being forced to hand over money or possessions, being threatened with violence and being a victim of actual violence.

From the chart below it is evident that for all but extortion, a far greater proportion of persistent absentees are subjected to bullying than their non-PA peers. This discrepancy is particularly pronounced for bullying in the form of social exclusion, where almost a sixth of PAs are subjected to this type of bullying compared to only a tenth of non-PA pupils.

A greater proportion of persistent absentees also experience name calling (19% of PAs vs. 14% of non-PAs), threats of violence (18% of PAs vs. 13% of non-PAs) and actual violence (13% of PAs vs. 9% of non-PAs) compared with their non-PA peers.

¹⁹ Note, pupils may report more than one type of bullying.

Chart 3.9: Experiences of different types of bullying within the last 12 months, 2006

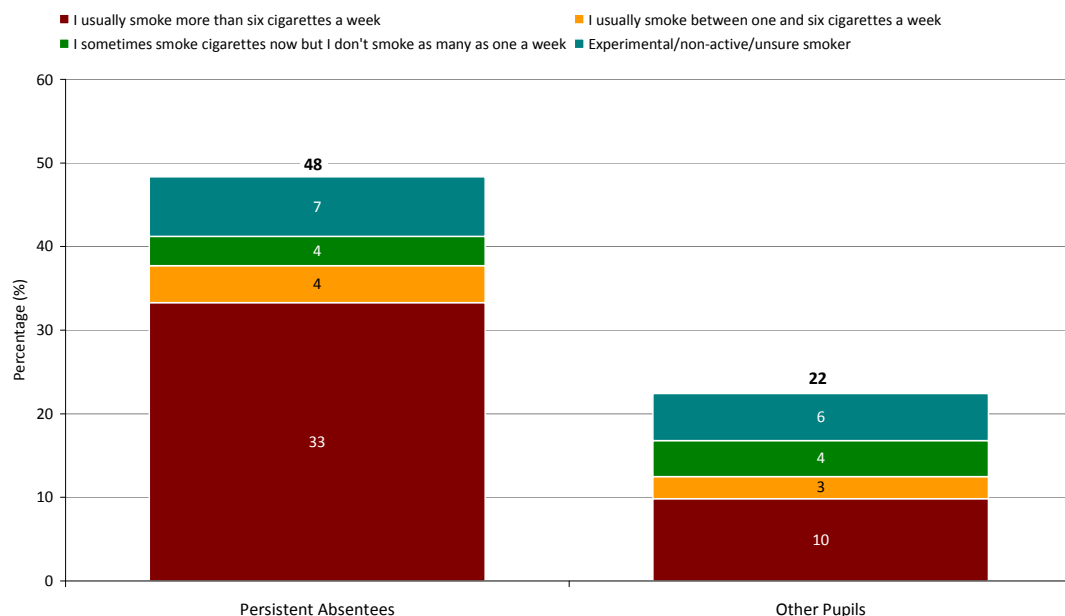


Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

The LSYPE survey also asked young people about their experiences with cigarettes, alcohol and drugs.

Chart 3.10 below shows that 48% of persistent absentees and 22% of non-PA pupils confirmed that they had some experience smoking cigarettes at some point in their lives. Of the young people who have experienced smoking, a third of persistent absentees and one in ten other non-PAs admitted to smoking more than six cigarettes a week.

Chart 3.10: Experiences of smoking cigarettes, 2006

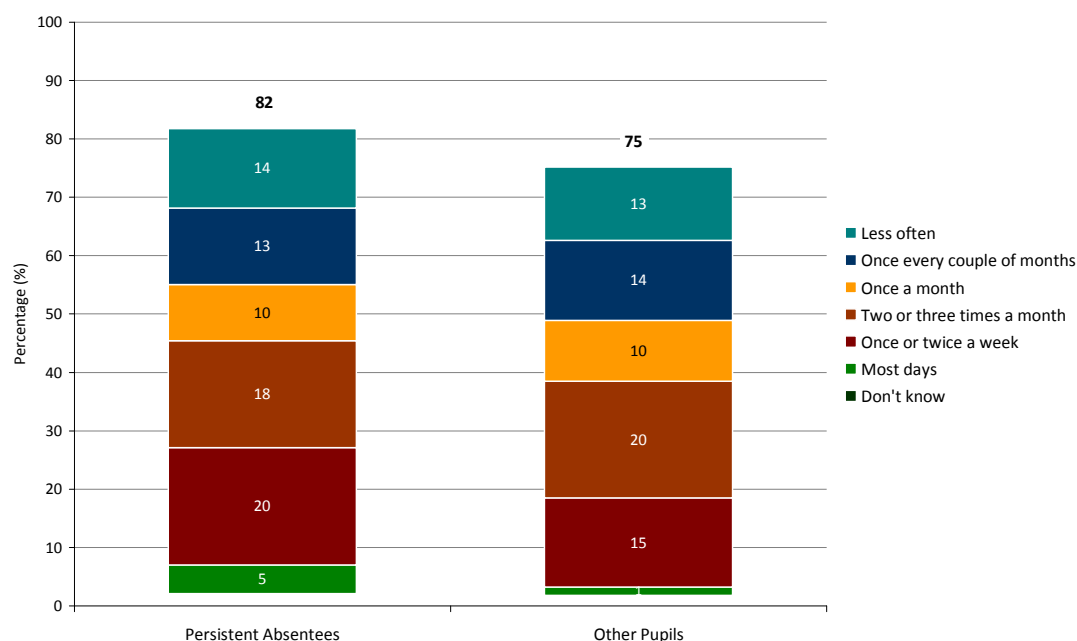


Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

82% of persistent absentees and 75% of non-PAs reported to have had some experience of drinking a proper alcoholic drink.

Chart 3.11 below shows the frequency with which these young people drink. From the chart it is clear that a greater proportion of persistent absentees drink more often than their non-PA peers. 6% of PAs admitted to drinking on *most days* compared to just 2% of their non-PA peers.

Chart 3.11: Experiences of drinking alcohol, 2006



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

LSYPE also questioned young people on their experiences of various *risky behaviours*. Table 3.2 shows the proportions of persistent absentees and other pupils who report having experienced some form of risky behaviour within the 12 month period in the academic year 2006.

From the table it is clear that persistent absentees are far more likely to be involved in such behaviour compared to other non-PA pupils. Involvement in some form of fighting or public disturbance was most commonly cited by both PAs and non-PAs in 2006 – with 26% of PAs and 13% of non-PAs reporting that they had some experience of this within the 12 month period.

Table 3.2: Experiences of risky behaviour, 2006

Experiences of risky behaviour	Persistent Absentees (%)	Other Pupils (%)
Whether young person has graffitied on walls in the last year?	9	4
Whether young person has vandalised public property in the last year?	13	6
Whether young person has shoplifted in the last year?	11	6
Whether young person has taken part in fighting or public disturbance in the last year?	26	13

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

3.5 Absence and exclusions

As well as information on absences, the School Census (SC) collects information on the type, number and reasons for pupil exclusions. There are namely two types of exclusions:

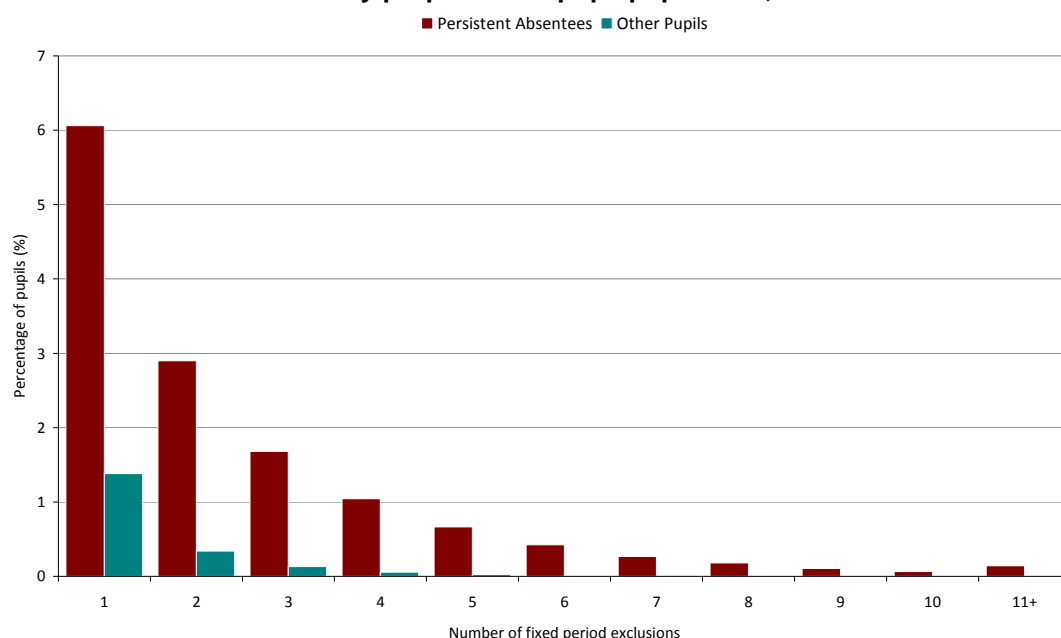
- Fixed Period Exclusion (FPE) –refers to a pupil who is excluded from school but the pupil remains on the school register as they are expected to return when the exclusion period is completed.
- Permanent Exclusion (PE) – refers to a pupil who is excluded from school and their name is removed from its register. Such a pupil would then be educated at another school or via some other form of provision.

It is worth noting that as the duration of absences due to FPEs *count* towards the overall absence for a pupil; a persistent absentee may well become one due to the duration of the FPE absences they have incurred. In 2009/10, 4% of persistent absentees were classed this way as a result of FPE absences. Absences due to permanent exclusions *do not* count towards overall absences as they are permanently removed from the school roll.

In 2009/10, 3% of all persistent absentee absences were due to fixed period exclusions compared to 1% for other non-PA pupils.

86% of persistent absentees and 98% of non-PAs had no FPEs in 2009/10. Chart 3.12 below shows the distribution of the remaining population over the number of fixed period exclusions accrued during that academic year.

Chart 3.12: Number of FPEs by proportion of pupil population, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

From the chart, it is apparent that PAs are far more likely to receive fixed period exclusions than non-PAs – with four times as many persistent absentees receiving one FPE as their non-PA peers.

Persistent absentees are also far more likely to be *permanently excluded* from school than other non-PA pupils. In 2009/10, 0.79% of PAs were permanently excluded from school compared to just 0.03% of their non-PA peers (Table 3.3).

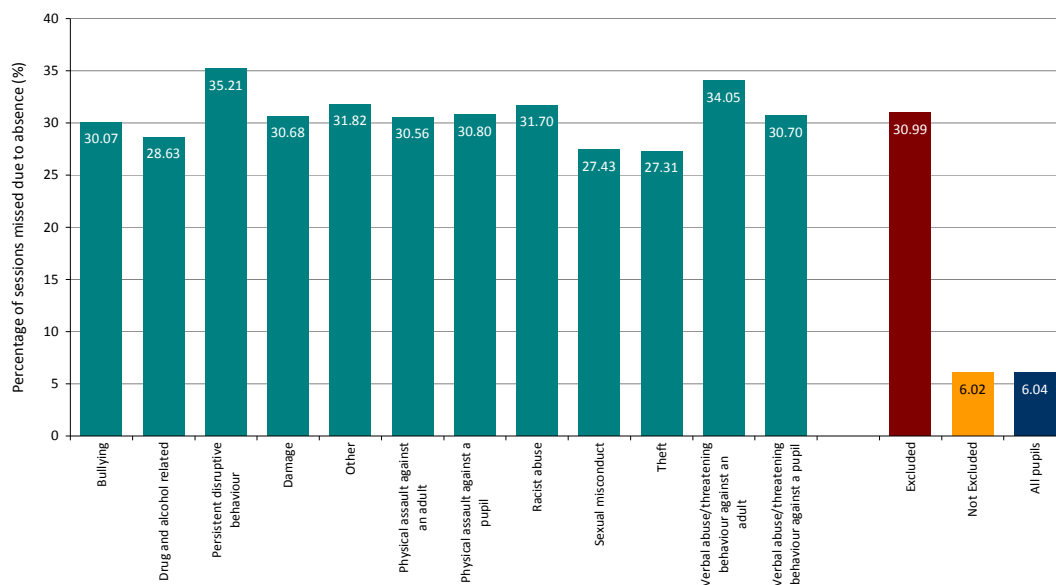
Table 3.3: Permanent exclusions, 2009/10

	Number	(%)
Persistent Absentees		
Excluded	3416	0.79
Not Excluded	429664	99.21
Other Pupils		
Excluded	2019	0.03
Not Excluded	5951388	99.97

Source: National Pupil Database

It is not surprising therefore to find that permanently excluded pupils tend to have far greater levels of absences than pupils who are not excluded. Chart 3.13 shows the levels of absences for pupils who were permanently excluded in 2009/10 by the reason behind the exclusion.

Chart 3.13: Overall absence levels for permanently excluded pupils, by the reason for exclusion, 2009/10

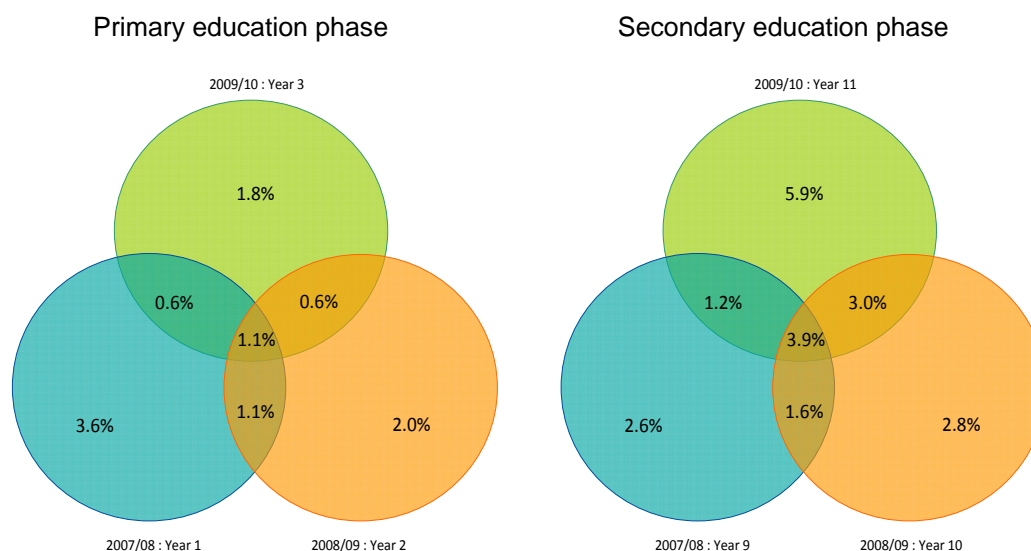


Source: National Pupil Database

3.6 Historic prevalence of persistent absenteeism

There is evidence to suggest that patterns of persistent absenteeism become entrenched over time for a significant minority of pupils. The analysis below tracks the historic PA levels for the two individual cohort of pupils who were in years 3 and 11 in 2009/10²⁰.

Chart 3.14: Historic PA rates of 2009/10 year 3 and year 11 pupils



Source: National Pupil Database

For the primary education phase it is apparent that although the levels of persistent absentees *exclusive* to years 1, 2 and 3, reduce from 3.6% down to 2% and ultimately 1.8% (respectively), a core 1.1% of this cohort continue to be persistently absent throughout this 3 year period.

In contrast to the primary phase, persistent absentee levels in secondary schools increase year on year. This increase is seen both in terms of new *exclusive* PAs in each subsequent year (from 2.6% of the cohort in year 9 to 2.8% in year 10 and 5.9% in year 11) and in terms of the proportion of pupils who continue to be PAs from one year to the next (1.6% of the cohort were PAs across years 9 and 10 and 3.0% across years 10 to 11). 3.9% of this year 11 cohort were PAs across years 9 and 10 as well.

The next chapter details the consequences high of levels of absences have on pupils, particularly in relation to academic attainment.

²⁰ Note, the overall PA rates for each Year group shown in Chart 3.14 will differ slightly to the figures presented earlier in section 1.4 as the above analysis looks at a cohort of pupils (for both Year 3 and Year 11 in 2009/10) who were present in the maintained education sector in England *throughout* the entire period from 2007/08 to 2009/10.

Chapter 4: Absence and its impact

Key findings

- There is a clear link between absence and attainment. As levels of pupil absences increase, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4, decrease.
- In 2009/10, pupils who have never been classified as persistent absentees over the Key Stage 2 period, were twice as likely to achieve level 4 or above (including English and maths) as pupils who were PAs for each the four Key Stage 2 years (78.3% of non-PAs achieve this level compared to only 38.6% of PAs).
- Pupils who were persistently absent over both their Key Stage 4 years in 2009/10, were just under four times less likely to achieve 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and maths GCSEs, as other non-PA pupils.
- Pupils missing more than 10% of school due to unauthorised absences, have significantly lower odds of meeting the expected level at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 than pupils with no unauthorised absences.
- Pupils who are persistently absent over both Key Stage 4 years are more likely to achieve lower (E, F and G) grades at Key Stage 4 and less likely to achieve the higher grades (A*, A and B), than other non-PA pupils.
- Once a range of pupil characteristics have been controlled for, persistent absenteeism over the final Key Stage 4 year is found to have a strong relationship with GCSE attainment. This translates to PAs dropping one grade in each of their GCSEs, when compared to non-PA pupils.
- Most schools with *outstanding* Ofsted attendance judgments have lower than expected absence rates. Conversely, many schools with *inadequate* Ofsted attendance judgments tend to have higher than expected absence rates.

Poor attendance can disrupt a pupil's learning and mean that they fall behind their peers in class. Persistent absence from school can put particular emphasis on this knowledge gap and place the pupil at a significant disadvantage academically.

This chapter investigates how attainment at Key Stage 2 (KS2) and Key Stage 4 (KS4) are affected by different levels of pupil absences, particularly persistent absence. It also looks into the potential impact pupil absences have on schools. The analysis in this chapter relate to maintained primary and secondary schools, academies and city technology colleges only.

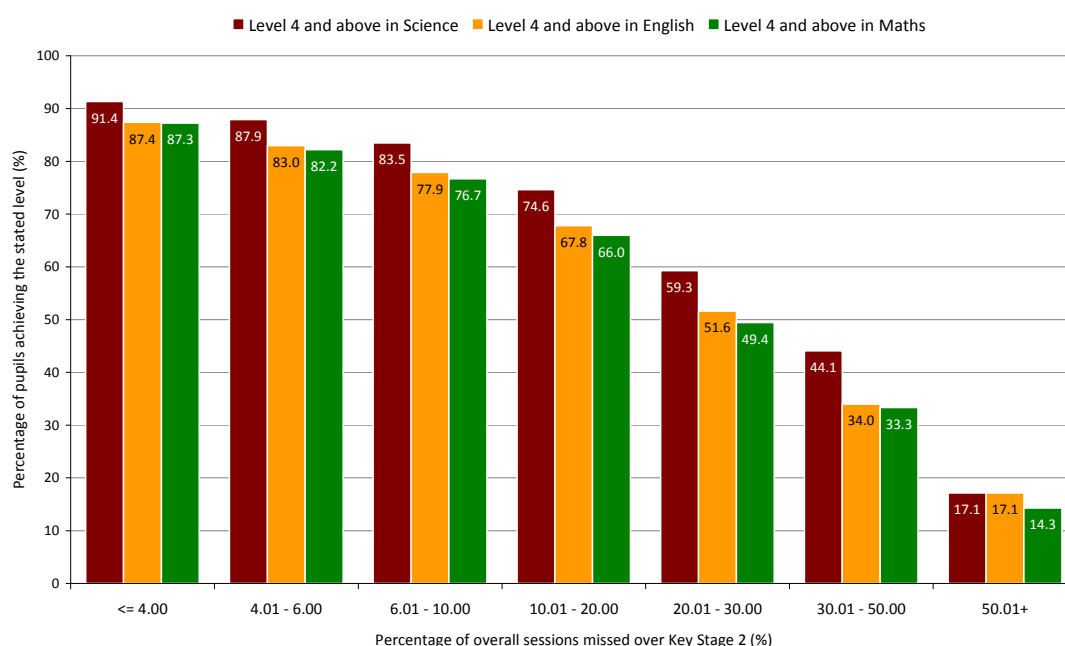
4.1 Absence and Key Stage 2 attainment

The National Curriculum Key Stage 2 exams are taken by pupils at the end of their primary school education in year 6. This Key Stage is taught over the course of four years – from year 3 to 6 - and pupils are graded according to levels within the National Curriculum²¹. By the end of the Key Stage, pupils are expected reach level 4 of the National Curriculum in each taught subject, with a minimum expectation to achieve at least level 4 in both English and maths²². The analysis in this section will mostly consider pupil achievement levels against this measure.

Chart 4.1 below shows a clear link between absence and attainment. As levels of pupil absences increase, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in English, maths and science, decrease.

In 2009/10, of pupils who miss less than 4% of school throughout the four KS2 years, 91.4% achieved level 4 or above in science, 87.4% and 87.3% achieved level 4 or above in English and maths respectively. These proportions gradually decrease for increasing levels of overall absence. In contrast to pupils with low levels of absence, 17.1% of pupils who missed more than half of KS2 schooling achieved level 4 or above in science and English, while only 14.3% achieved level 4 or above in maths.

Chart 4.1: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in KS2 subjects by overall absence, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

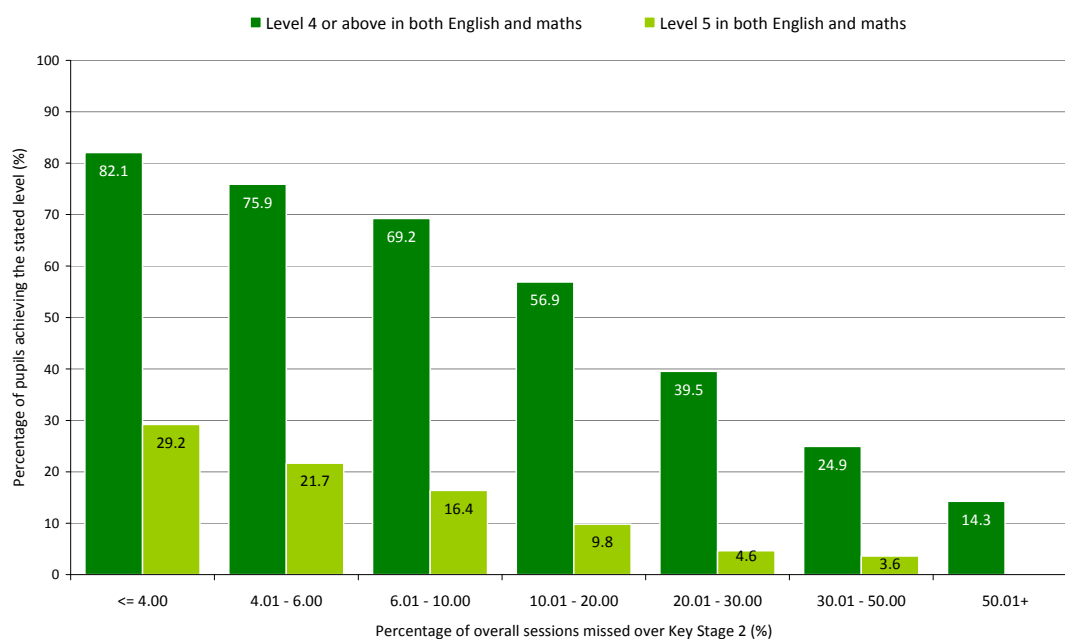
Chart 4.2 repeats the above pattern: fewer pupils achieve level 4 and level 5 in both English and maths at Key Stage 2 as overall absences increases.

²¹ Further information on how pupils are expected to perform at each National Curriculum level in each subject for Key Stage 2 can be found at: <http://curriculum.gcda.gov.uk/key-stages-1-and-2/assessment/assessmentofsubjects/index.aspx>

²² Achievement of level 4 in both English in maths will interchangeably be referred to as the *expected level* in this section.

Of pupils with less than 4% overall absence over KS2, four in five achieved the minimum expected level in both English and maths, while just under a third of pupils achieved the higher level (level 5) in both English and maths, in 2009/10. As overall absences increase, the likelihood of pupils achieving the expected level decreases. Of pupils with overall absences between 20 - 30%, less than two in five achieved level 4 or above in both English and maths and less than one twentieth achieved level 5.

Chart 4.2: Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 and 5 in both English and maths at KS2 by overall absence 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

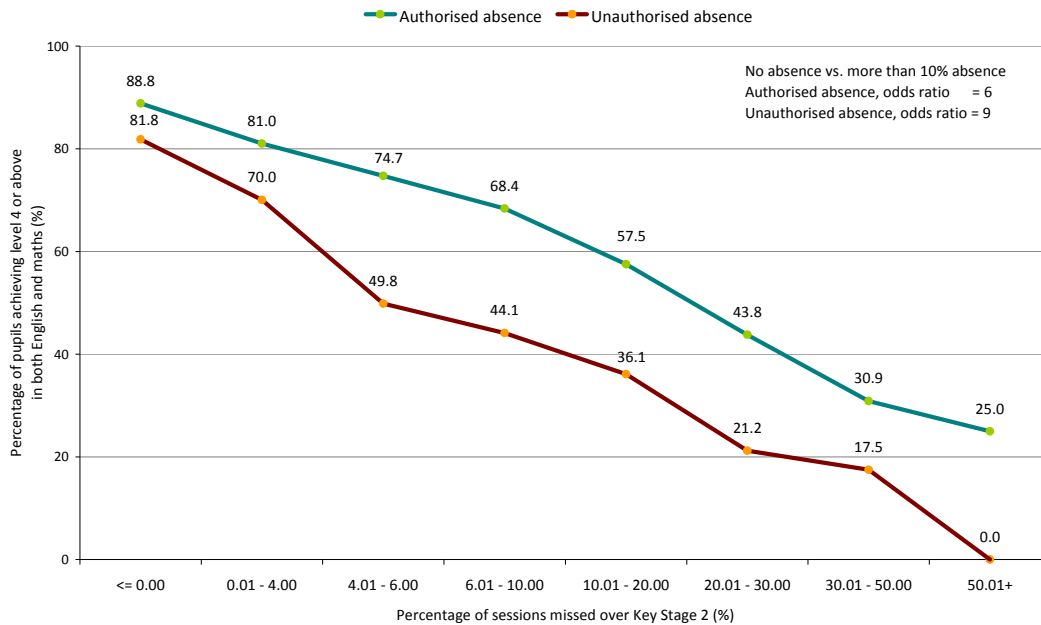
Looking at the breakdown of absence by authorised and unauthorised absences, it is apparent that both are significantly associated to attainment (Chart 4.3). 88.8% of pupils with no authorised absences during KS2 achieve the expected level in both English and maths – this compares to 81.8% of pupils with no unauthorised absences achieving the expected level.

The proportion of pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths steadily reduce for authorised absences up to 10%. Subsequent higher levels of authorised absence are associated with markedly smaller proportions of pupils reaching this level. Of the pupils who missed more than half of KS2 schooling, only one in four pupils managed to reach the minimum expected level at KS2. In 2009/10, the odds of pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths were 6 times higher for pupils with no authorised absences compared to pupils who missed more than 10% of KS2 schooling due to it.

The proportions of pupils achieving the minimum expected KS2 level at increasing levels of unauthorised absence is significantly lower than that for similar levels of authorised absence; even at low levels of absences.

The odds of pupils with no unauthorised absences achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths is 9 times that of pupils with at least 10% of unauthorised absences.

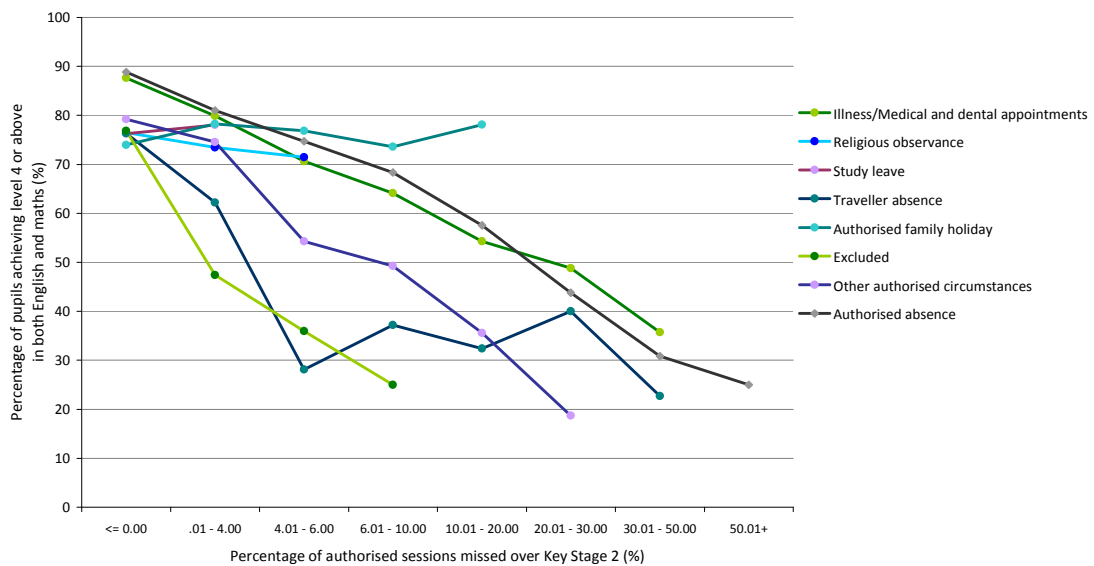
Chart 4.3: Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 in both English and maths at KS2 by levels of authorised and unauthorised absence, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

The likelihood of pupils achieving the expected KS2 level, not only differ greatly by the amount of absences accrued, but also by the different reasons behind these absences (Chart 4.4). The proportions of pupils achieving the expected level stay relatively similar for increasing levels of absence due to authorised family holidays, religious observance and study leave. However, long term absences due to exclusions or illnesses tend to be associated with significantly lower proportions of pupils achieving this expected level.

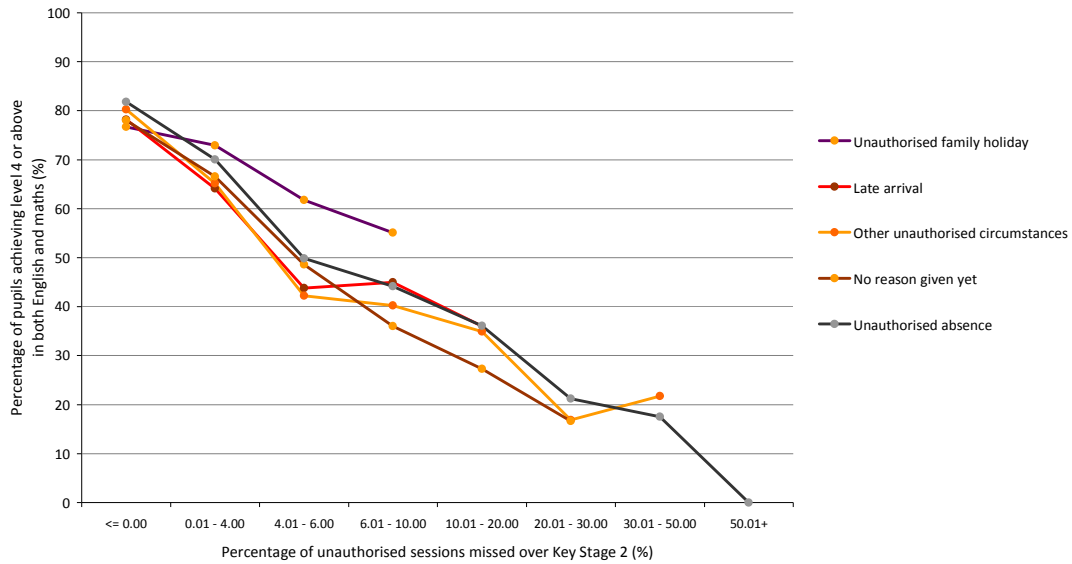
Chart 4.4: Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 in both English and maths at KS2 by levels of authorised absences, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

Unlike the disparity seen above in levels of attainment for different authorised absence reasons, the attainment levels between different *unauthorised* reasons for absence are far more aligned (Chart 4.5). For all but unauthorised family holidays, the likelihood of pupils reaching the expected KS2 level are similarly low for increased levels of unauthorised absence.

Chart 4.5: Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 in both English and maths at KS2 by levels of unauthorised absences, 2009/10

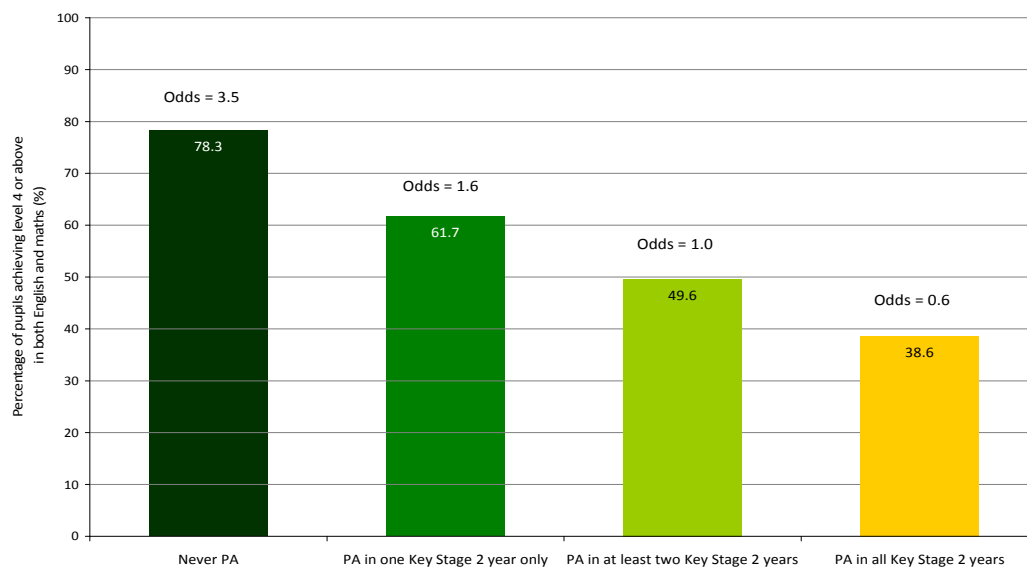


Source: National Pupil Database

Pupils who have never been classified as persistent absentees over the KS2 period, are twice as likely to achieve the expected level as pupils who were PAs for each of the four KS2 years (78.3% of non-PAs achieve this level compared to only 38.6% of PAs). This likelihood falls for each increasing year a pupil is classed as a persistent absentee (Chart 4.6).

In line with this, the odds of pupil achieving the expected level, also decrease as the incidence of pupils being classed as PA, increase.

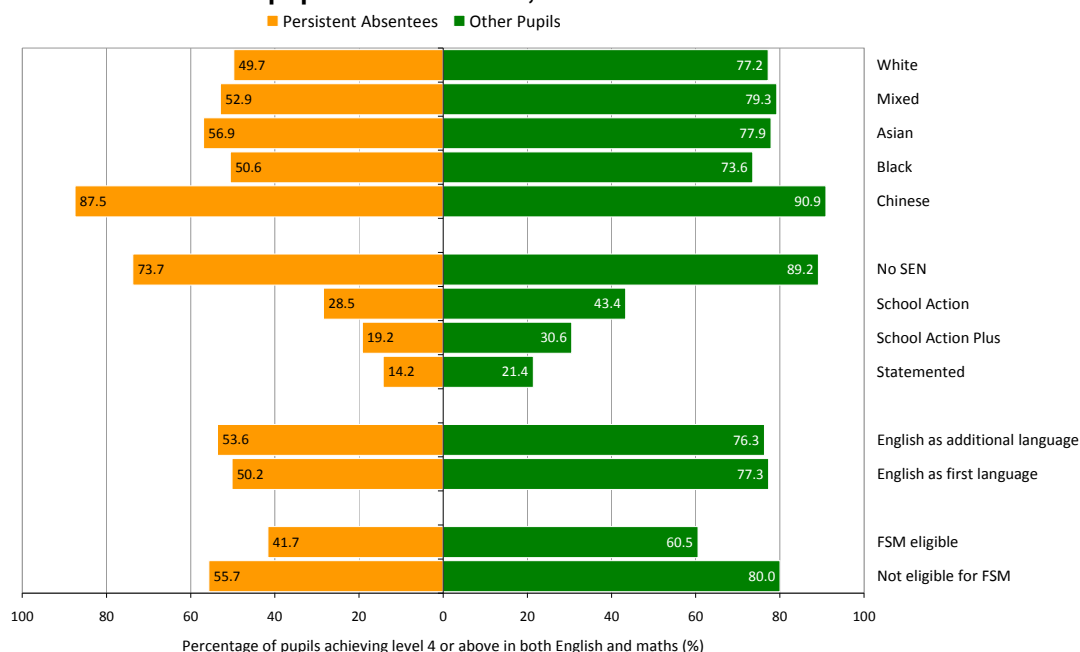
Chart 4.6: The proportion of PAs and non-PAs achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

The proportion of persistent absentees (in the final KS2 year) achieving the minimum expected level is universally lower than other non-PA pupils across different pupil characteristics (Chart 4.7).

Chart 4.7: Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 in both English and maths at KS2 by PA classification and pupil characteristics, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

4.2 Absence and Key Stage 4 attainment

Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum is taught over the final two years of secondary school education and all assessments for this Key Stage are completed by the end of year 11.

Chart 4.8 shows that at increasing levels of overall absence, the likelihood of pupils achieving the following KS4 levels, reduce:

- any GCSE and equivalent passes;
- 5 or more GCSE and equivalents at grades 5A*-C; and
- 5 or more GCSE and equivalents at grades 5A*-C including English and maths²³.

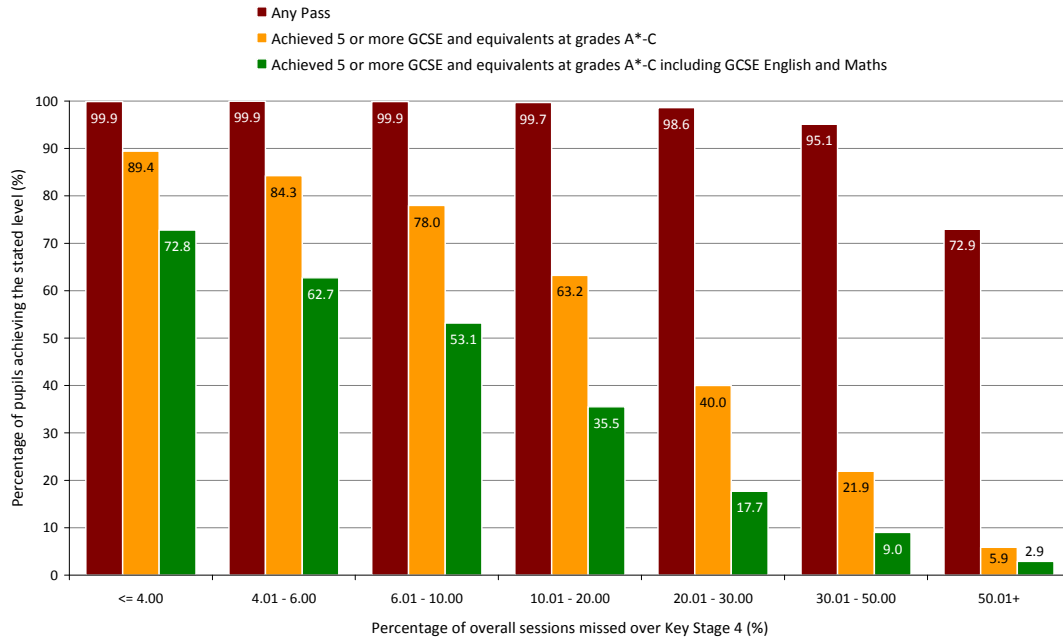
The vast majority of pupils tend to achieve *any pass* at KS4 for overall absence levels up to 20%, after which the proportions of pupils reaching this level are progressively lower. For pupils who were absent for more than 50% of the academic year 2009/10, only 72.9% managed to achieve any passes at KS4.

The proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents (including English and maths GCSEs) show a much starker picture. Of pupils with less than 4% of overall absence in 2009/10, 89.4% achieved 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent – 72.8% achieved this

²³ Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents including English and math GCSEs will interchangeably be referred to as the *expected level* in this section.

including English and maths GCSEs. Of pupils missing more than half of the final KS4 year, only 5.9% managed to achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents – 2.9% achieved this including English and maths GCSEs.

Chart 4.8: Percentage of pupils achieving the stated level at KS4 by overall absence, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

Pupils who have *not* been classed as persistent absentees in both KS4 years are 3.7 times more likely to achieve the expected level than pupils who have been persistently absent in each of these years. Persistent absentees over this period are 80% less likely to achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and math GCSEs (Chart 4.9).

Chart 4.9: The likelihood of PAs and non-PAs achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents including English and maths GCSEs, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

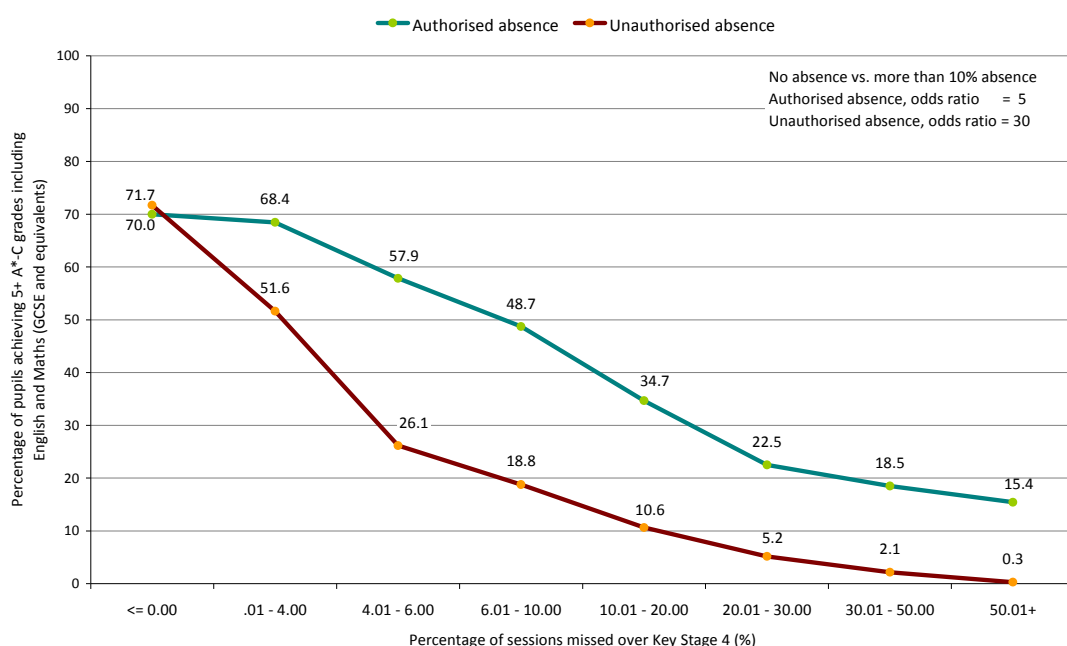
As in the case of KS2 attainment (Chart 4.3), increasing levels of authorised and unauthorised absences are associated with progressively lower proportions of pupils achieving the expected KS4 level.

Over two thirds of pupils with low levels of authorised absences (below 4%) achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents including English and maths GCSEs. This reduces to around a third of pupils with authorised absences between 10 – 20% and fewer than one in five with authorised absences above 30%.

The proportion of pupils achieving the expected KS4 level at similar levels of *unauthorised* absences is notably lower. Just over half of all pupils with unauthorised absence levels below 4% achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and maths GCSEs. This reduces to just over one in twenty pupils with unauthorised absence levels between 20-30%.

Pupils with no authorised absence have 5 times higher odds of achieving the expected KS4 level, compared to pupils with at least 10% authorised absence. Similarly, the odds of achieving the expected level are 30 times higher for pupils with no unauthorised absence compared to pupils with more than 10% unauthorised absence

Chart 4.10: Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents including English and maths GCSEs, by levels of authorised and unauthorised absence, 2009/10

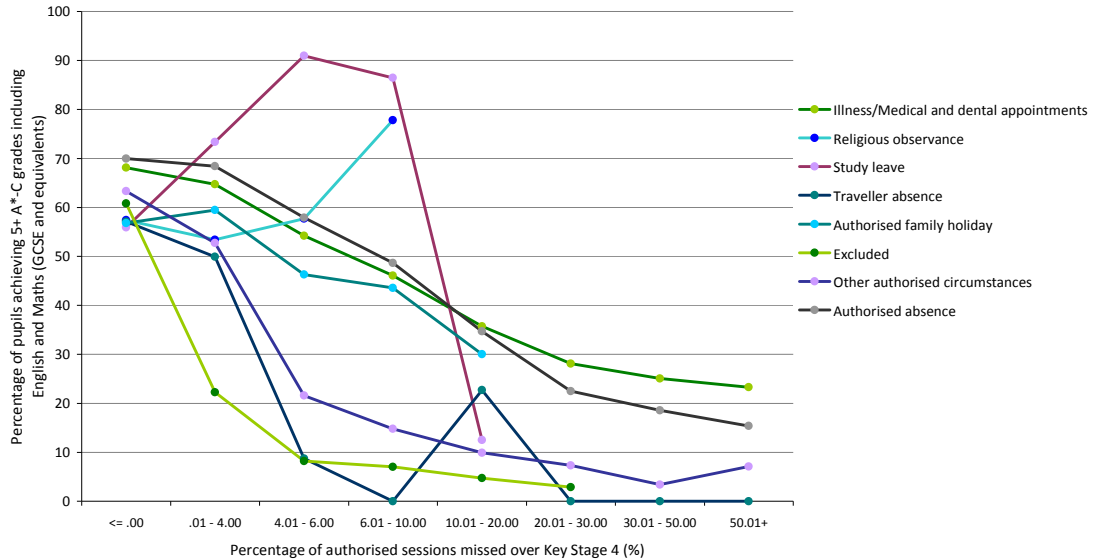


Source: National Pupil Database

Patterns in KS4 attainment by different authorised reasons for absence show a general decrease in attainment as sessions of absence increase (Chart 4.11), with the exception of study leave and absence due to religious observance. Religious observance and study leave both show increases in attainment for fairly low levels of absence (under 10%).

Of the various authorised absence types, pupils with increasing levels of absence due to exclusions consistently have the lowest attainment rates.

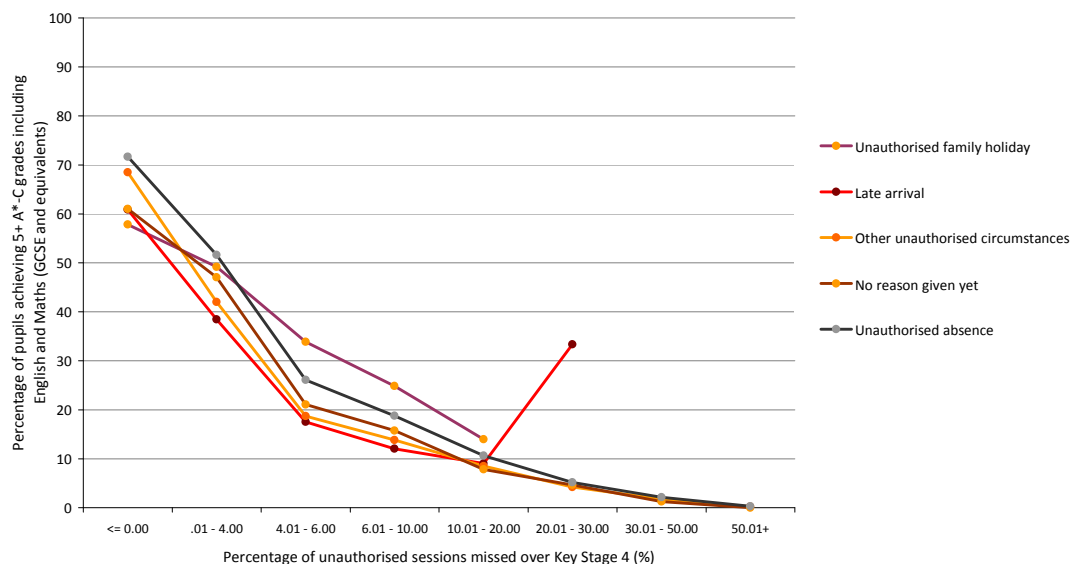
Chart 4.11: Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents including English and maths GCSEs, by levels of authorised absences, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

Patterns in KS4 attainment across different unauthorised absence reasons are broadly similar, with parallel levels of attainment observed for increasing levels of absences (Chart 4.12).

Chart 4.12: Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents including English and maths GCSEs, by levels of unauthorised absences, 2009/10

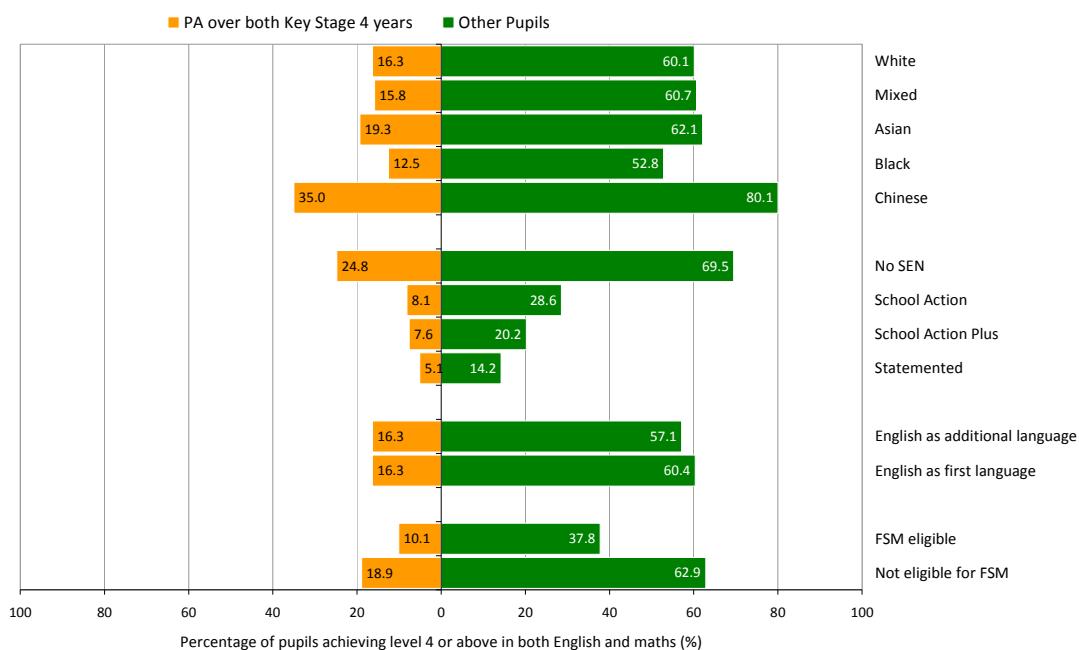


Source: National Pupil Database

Chart 4.13 shows that pupils who were persistently absent over both KS4 years are less likely to achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and maths GCSEs, across different pupil characteristics than other non-PA pupils.

The relative impact of being a persistent absentee in the *final* KS4 year is explored further in Section 4.3.

Chart 4.13: Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalents including English and maths GCSEs, by PA classification and pupil characteristics, 2009/10



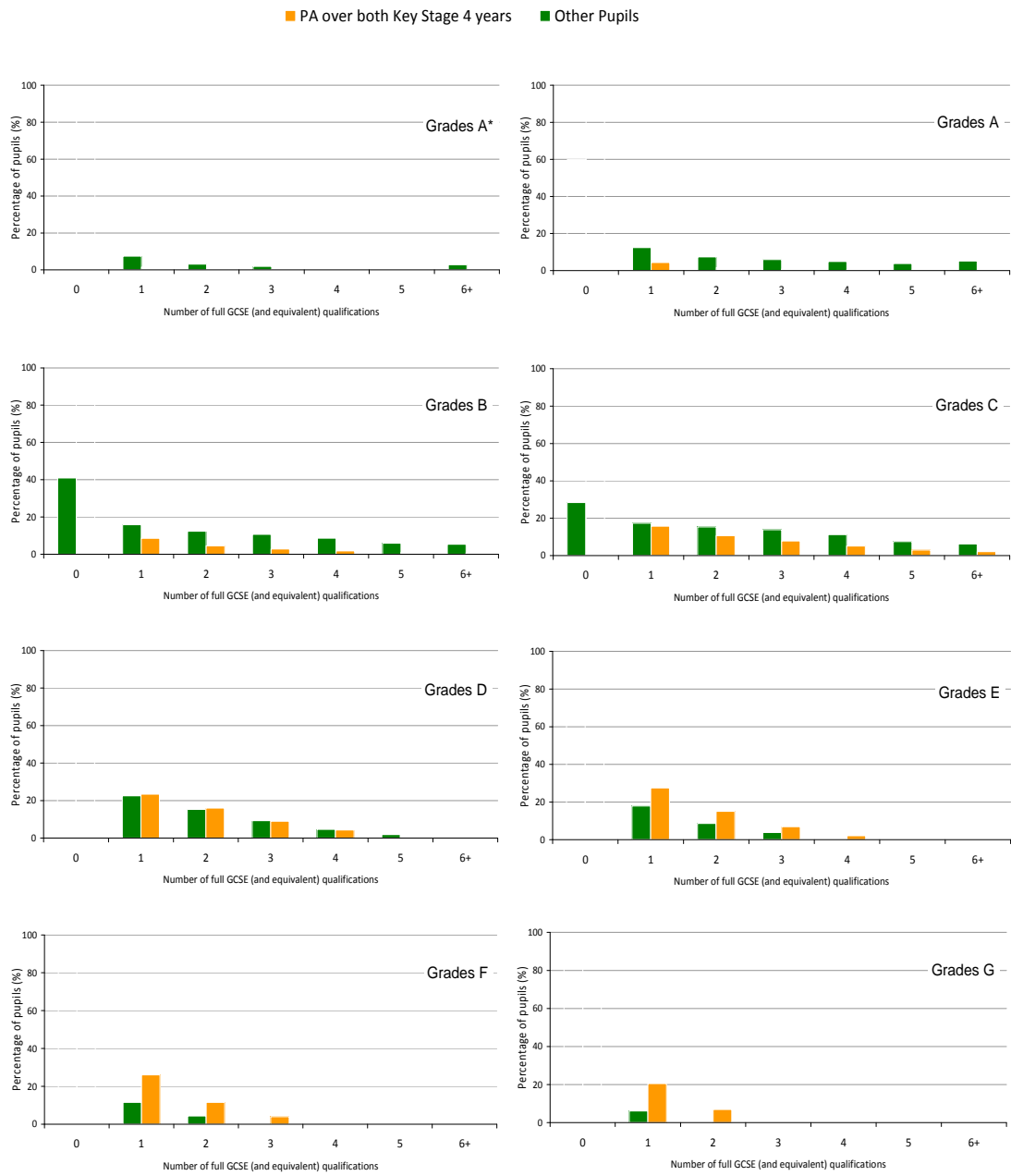
Source: National Pupil Database

Chart 4.14 shows the distribution of pupils who were persistently absent over both KS4 years and other non-PA pupils, over the range (and number) of grades awarded for GCSE and equivalent qualifications in 2009/10.

From the chart it is immediately apparent that not only are other non-PA pupils more likely to be awarded the higher A*, A and B grades, but they are also more likely to be awarded more of them than pupils who were persistently absent over both KS4 years. Slightly higher proportions of other non-PA pupils are also awarded more C grades and almost an even proportion awarded D grades, as persistently absent pupils.

The reverse however is true of the pupil distribution at the lower grades of E, F and G. In this instance, pupils who were persistently absence over both KS4 years are more likely to receive more of these grades than other non-PA pupils.

Chart 4.14: Pupil population distribution over grades awarded at KS4, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

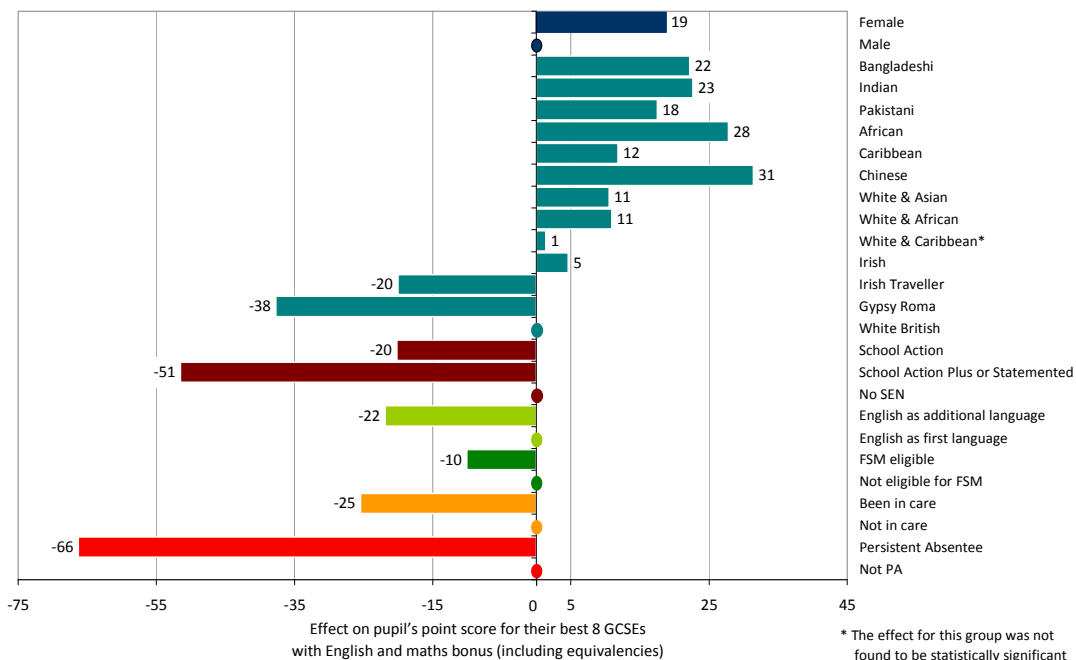
4.3 The relationship between absence and Key Stage 4 pupil attainment

So far, this chapter has highlighted the differences in pupil attainment patterns for persistent absentees and their non-PA peers. Although these patterns give a general impression of the importance of absenteeism on attainment in relation to other pupil characteristics, we are not able to gauge just how much of an effect each characteristic has on attainment. For example, is the low attainment of a pupil with SEN, who is also a persistent absentee, down to them simply being absent from school, or is it more down to the fact that they have a Special Educational Need?

This section attempts to unpick the relative impact of persistent absenteeism (during the final year of KS4), in relation to other pupil characteristics, on KS4 attainment. The multi-level multiple regression modelling technique is used to model this impact on the total point score for the *best 8 GCSE (and equivalent) subjects including bonus scores for English and maths*²⁴ (roughly corresponding to ten subjects overall).

Chart 4.15 shows the impact of being a persistent absentee in the final KS4 year, in relation to other pupil characteristics for the KS4 attainment of the *best 8 GCSE (and equivalent) subjects including bonus scores for English and maths*. The individual effect is shown for each characteristic in this chart relative to the baseline characteristic for that group, while holding all other characteristics constant and equal.

Chart 4.15: Effects of persistent absenteeism and pupil characteristics on KS4 attainment point scores, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database

²⁴ This provides a measure of how well pupils did across a broad range of subjects with a particular emphasis on English and maths.

Using this approach we see that, once a range of other pupil characteristics have been taken into account, persistently absent pupils have a total point score 66 points lower than other non-PA pupils. To interpret these figures, consider that one grade in one GCSE subject is worth six points. Therefore, a reduction of 66 points, approximately translates to a persistently absent pupil dropping one grade in each of their 8 GCSEs²⁵.

To put this into context, pupils who are in receipt of Free School Meals (a proxy for deprivation) on average score 10 points lower than a non-FSM pupil with otherwise the same characteristics – this roughly translates to an FSM pupil dropping one grade in two of their GCSEs²⁶ when compared to non-FSM pupils, for example. Similarly, the change in attainment observed for other pupil characteristics are also smaller than that observed for persistent absentees; pupils with SEN at School Action Plus or with Statements of SEN (-51 points); pupils in care (-25 points) and pupils whose first language is not English (-22 points).

However, the modelling cannot isolate whether the absence from school is the cause of the poorer attainment, or whether both persistent absenteeism and poor attainment are caused by other factors – for example, since persistent absentees are more likely to report being bullied or have negative aspirations and perceptions of school, improving attendance rates might not improve attainment to this extent.

4.4 The impact of pupil absences on schools

As part of the Ofsted inspection regime in schools, Ofsted inspectors are expected to pass judgments on the pupil attendance levels in schools²⁷. These judgments are graded as *outstanding*, *good*, *satisfactory* and *inadequate*.

This section considers the overall absence levels in the maintained schools (4,600 primary and 845 secondary) which were judged for the latest inspection period 2009/10.

The expected overall absence rates for these schools were modelled on the following four characteristics²⁸:

- The proportion of pupils in the school who are eligible for FSM;
- The proportion of pupils in the school with statements of SEN;
- The proportion of pupils in the school who are Gypsy Roma; and
- The proportion of pupils in the school who are Irish Traveller.

The spread of the deviances of the actual overall absence from the modelled overall absence for the schools are plotted in Chart 4.16 below.

²⁵ GCSE or equivalents subjects - assuming that the pupil has entered 8 or more qualifications, including English and maths.

²⁶ In non English and Maths GCSEs

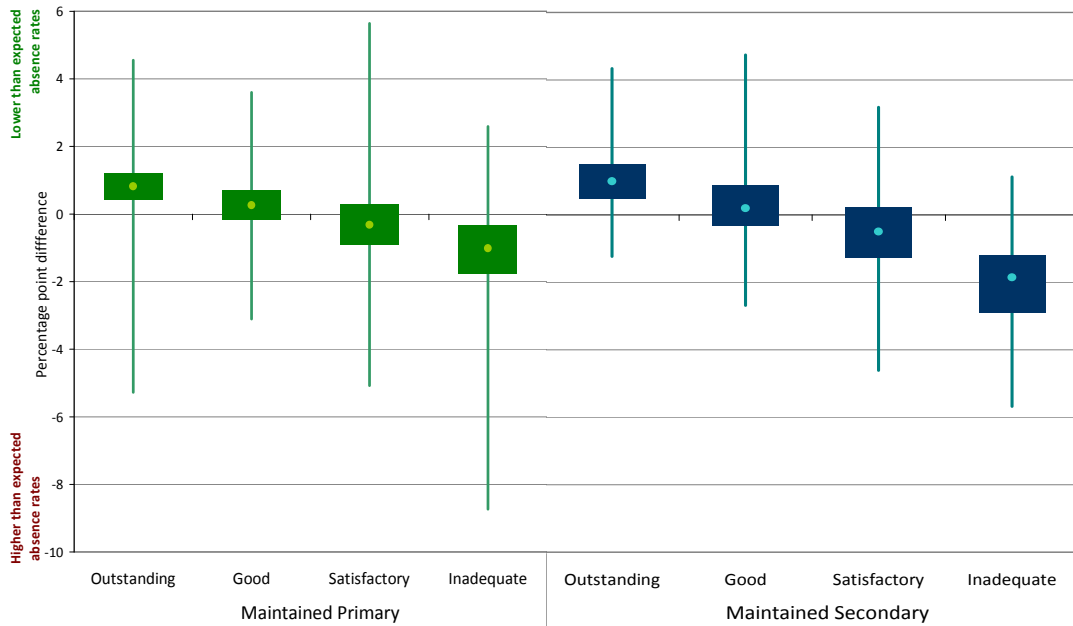
²⁷ Further information on the full Ofsted judgment criteria can be found at:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspection-of-maintained-schools-england-september-2009>

²⁸ These characteristics were chosen due to the high propensity of absence among pupils with these characteristics.

From the chart, it is apparent that there is a relationship between the expected levels of school absence, and the Ofsted attendance judgments passed for schools. Maintained primary and secondary schools with *outstanding* or *good* Ofsted attendance grades tend to have lower than expected overall absence rates. Conversely, schools with *inadequate* Ofsted attendance grades, tend to have higher than expected absence rates.

Chart 4.16: Deviance from the expected overall absence rates by latest Ofsted attendance judgment, 2009/10



Source: National Pupil Database & Ofsted inspection judgments

The next chapter looks into the life outcomes pupils who have been persistently absent in the final year of compulsory schooling versus those who have not.

Chapter 5: Post 16 outcomes for young people

Key findings

- Young people who were not persistently absent during the final year of compulsory school education are far more likely to be studying for a degree by the age of 18, than their peers who were persistently absent (30% vs. 7%).
- Young people who were non-PAs at age 15, are almost three times more likely to attend a Russell group university than young people who were persistently absent.
- Just under a third of young people who were persistently absent during the final year of their compulsory school education, are not in education, employment or training (NEET) at the age of 18. This compares against just over a tenth of their non-PA peers.
- Young people who were persistently absent at age 15, are more likely to be employed on temporary fixed term contracts, or temp through an agency at age 18, compared to pupils who were not persistently absent.
- Young people who were persistent absentees at age 15 a far more likely to claim state-benefits at the age of 18 compared to their non-PA peers.

This chapter returns to the young people examined earlier in Chapter 3, who had taken part in the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE)²⁹, with the aim of discovering the economic and educational outcomes for these young people by age 18 (wave 6). The focus of this chapter is to compare these outcomes for young people who were persistently absent at the age of 15 (during the final year of compulsory school education) against that of their non-PA peers³⁰.

The analysis in this chapter is based on the same 9,000 respondents considered earlier (in Chapter 3) – of which, around 1,500 were persistent absentees.

Note: the numbers of young people and 95% confidence intervals for the figures quoted from LSYPE in this chapter can be found in Annex F.

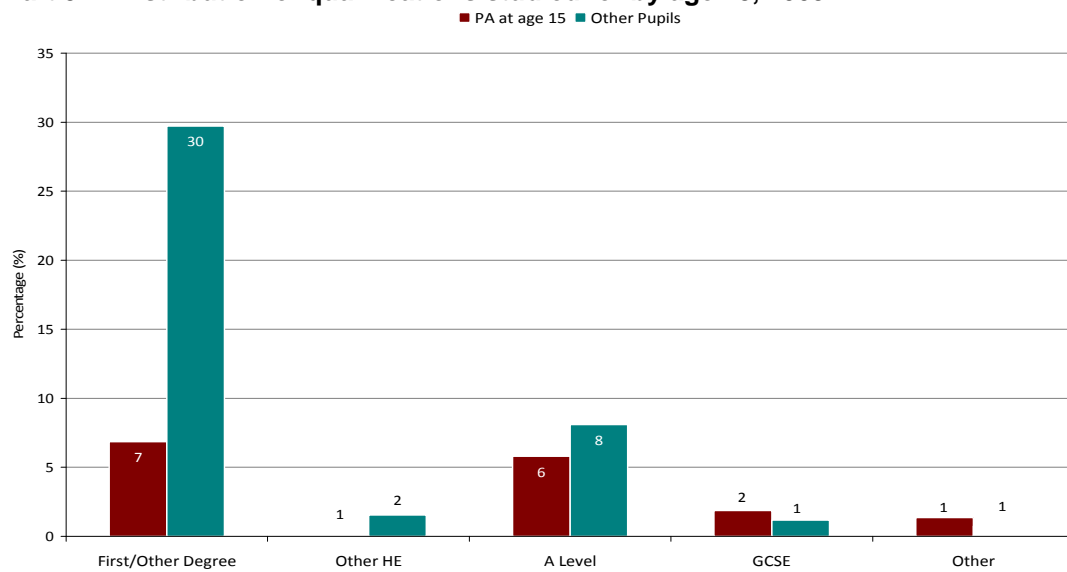
²⁹ Further information on LSYPE is available in Annex B.

³⁰ For ease of reference, young people who were PAs at the age of 15 will occasionally be referred to as historic PAs – and similarly young peoples who were not PAs at the age of 15, will be referred to as historic non-PAs.

5.1 Educational outcomes for young people

By the age of 18, just over a third of LSYPE respondents (approximately 3,000) were studying towards some form of academic qualification. Chart 5.1 shows the breakdown of the historic PA and non-PA population across the different qualifications studied. From the chart, it is immediately clear that far higher proportions of young people who were not persistently absent at age 15 are engaged in higher education, particularly at degree level, compared to young people who were persistently absent at age 15 (30% of historic non-PAs study for a degree by age 18 compared to just 7% of historic PAs). Conversely, historic PAs are twice as likely to be studying for their GCSE qualifications at age 18, than their non-PA peers.

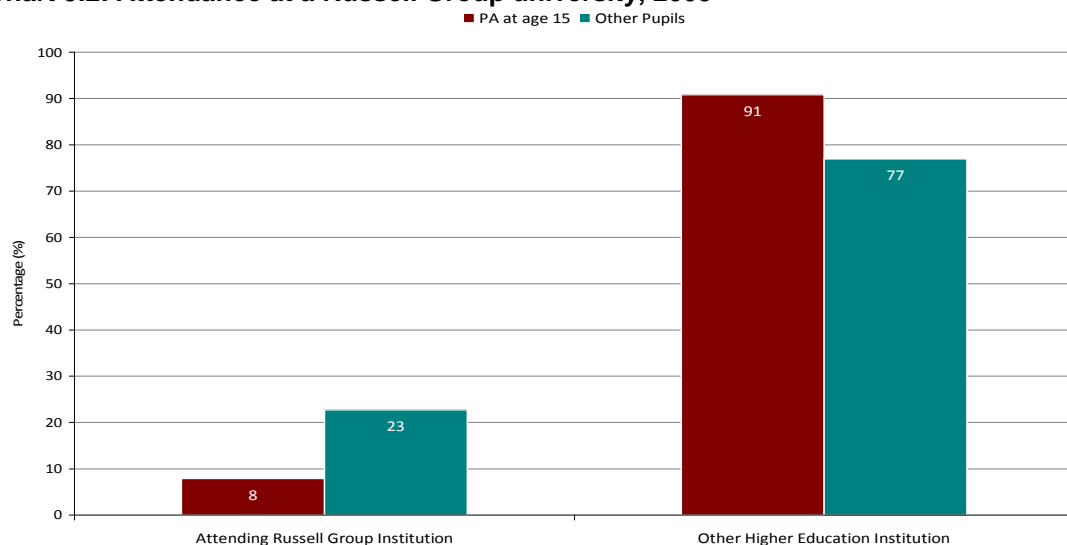
Chart 5.1: Distribution of qualifications studied for by age 18, 2009



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Young people who were not persistently absent at age 15, were three times more likely to be studying at a Russell Group university than young people who were persistently absent (Chart 5.2).

Chart 5.2: Attendance at a Russell Group university, 2009



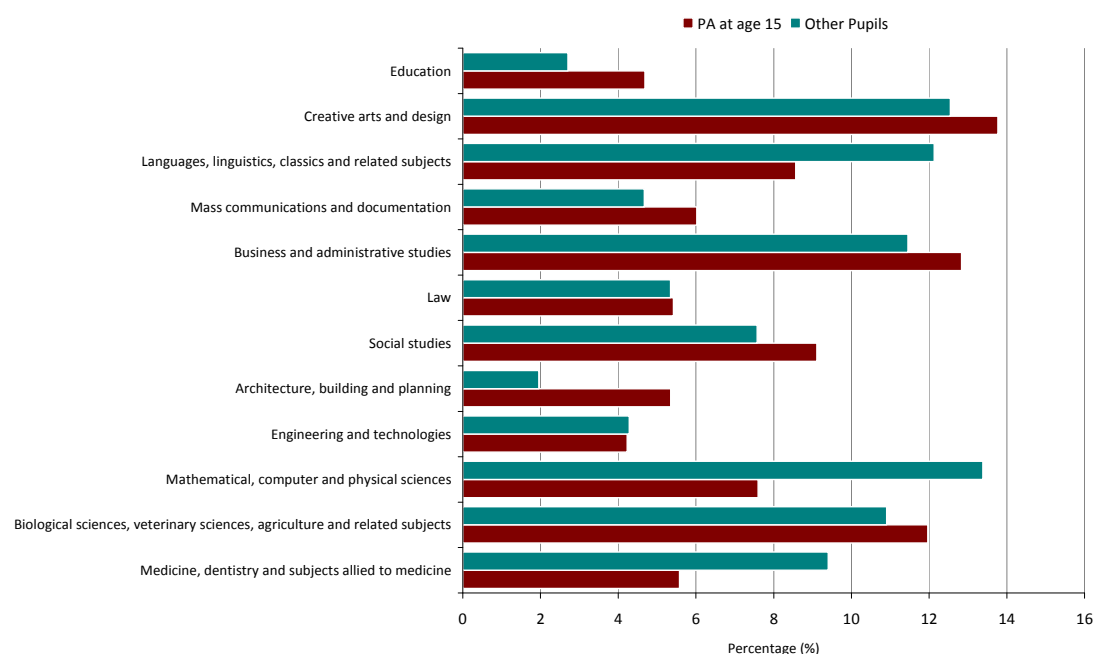
Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

It is also interesting to look at the subjects both groups of young people chose to study at higher education (Chart 5.3).

It appears young people who were persistent absentees at age 15 are more likely to study subjects such as *education, creative arts and design, mass communication, business administration, social studies, architecture, building and planning, biological, veterinary sciences and subjects aligned to agriculture* at higher education compared to historic non-PAs.

On the other hand, young people who were not persistent absentees at age 15 are more likely to study *languages, linguistics, classics and literature related subjects, as well as mathematical, computer and physical sciences and subjects allied to medicine and dentistry* compared to historic PAs.

Chart 5.3: Higher education subjects studied by young people, 2009



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

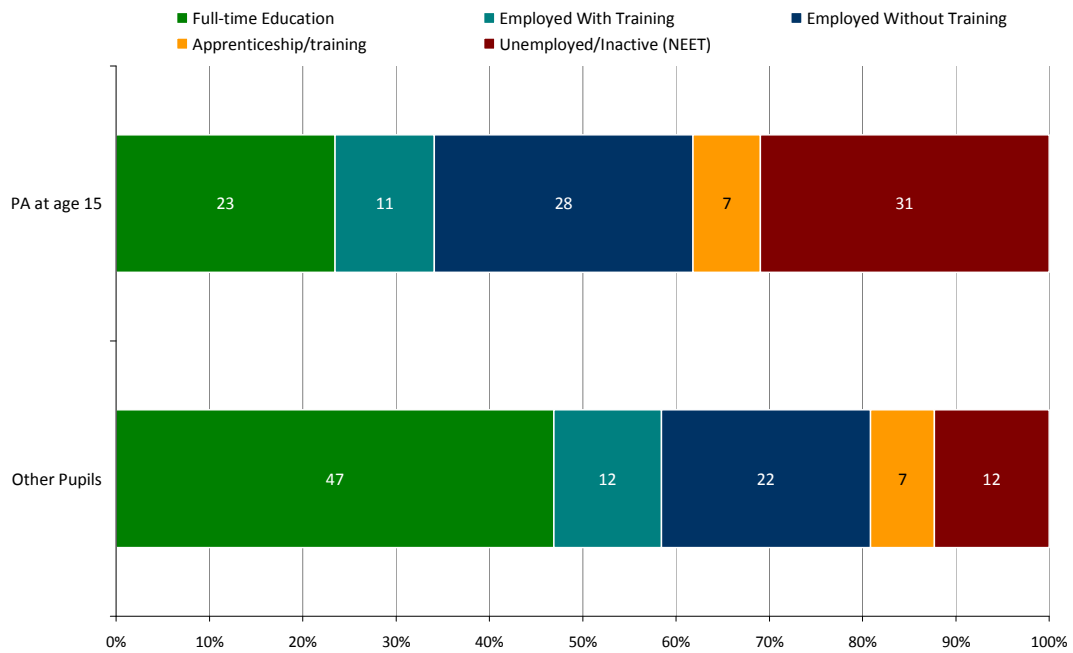
5.2 Economic outcomes for young people

Chart 5.4 shows that almost one half of young people who were not persistently absent at age 15, are involved in full-time education by age 18 – this compares to just under a quarter of young people who were persistently absent at age 15. Similar proportions of young people from both the historic PA and non-PA populations take part in apprenticeships or are employed with training by the age of 18.

However, 28% of young people who were PA at age 15, are in employment without training compared to 22% of historic non-PAs.

Just under a third of young people who were historic PAs, are not in education, employment or training (NEET) at the age of 18. This compares against just over a tenth of their non-PA peers.

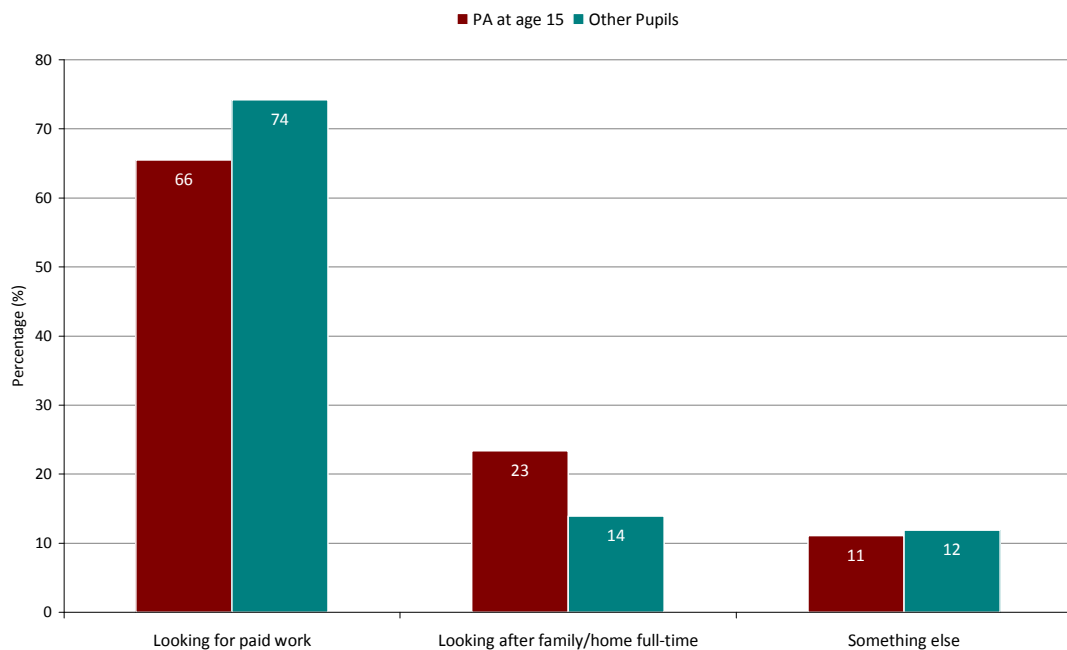
Chart 5.4: Main activity of young people at the age of 18, 2009



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Of the young people not in any kind of education, employment or training (NEET), 74% from the historic non-PA population are actively looking for paid work, while 14% are either looking after family or are at home full-time (Chart 5.5). Comparatively, 66% of young people from the historic PA population are actively looking for paid work and a further 23% are either looking after family or are at home full-time.

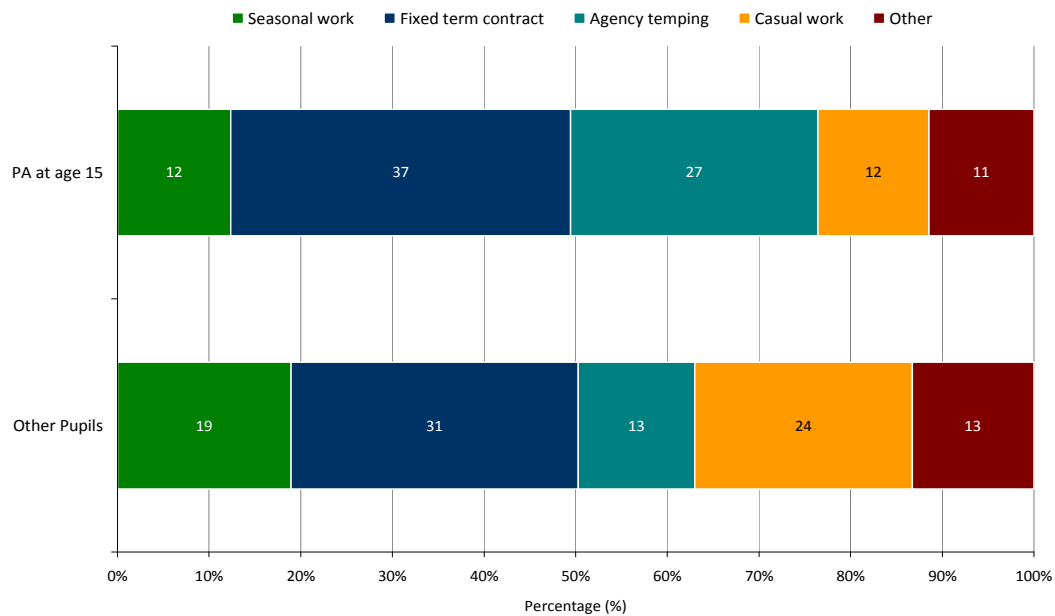
Chart 5.5: Activities of NEETs, 2009



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Around 80% of young people who are employed from both the historic PA and non-PA populations, have a permanent contract with their employer. Of the young people who do hold a temporary contract, greater proportions of young people from the historic PA population, are employed on a temporary fixed term contract or are temping through an agency, compared to the historic non-PA population (Chart 5.6).

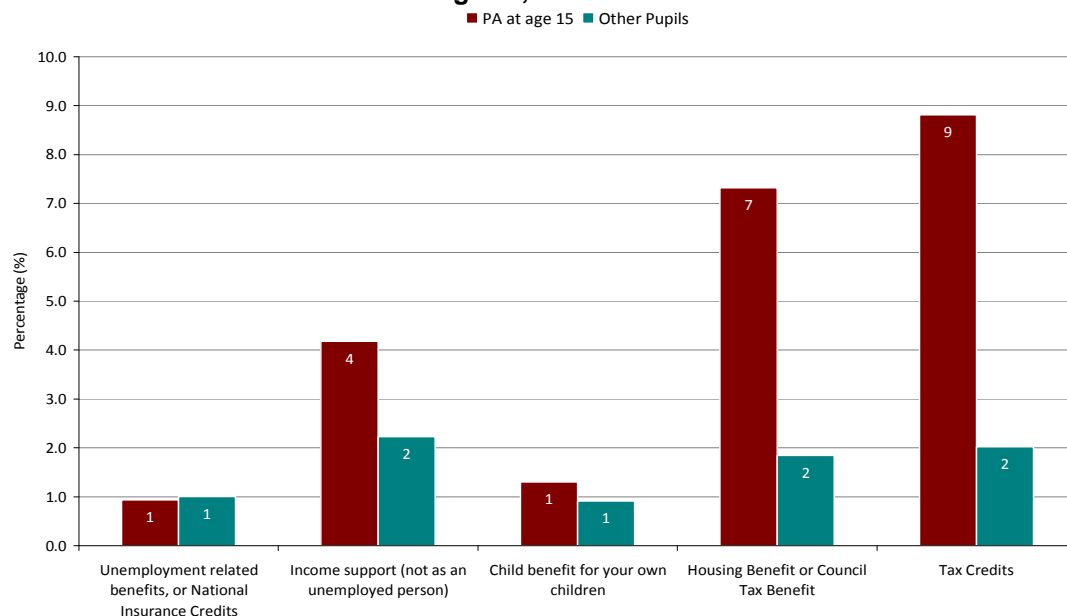
Chart 5.6: Types of temporary employment contracts, 2009



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Young people who were persistent absentees at age 15 are far more likely to claim state-benefits³¹ at the age of 18 compared to their non-PA peers. Twice as many historic PAs claim Income Support compared to historic non-PAs.

Chart 5.7: State-benefits claimed at age 18, 2009



Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

³¹ Note, young people may claim more than one benefit.

Annex A: Absence definitions

Authorised absence is absence with permission from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes instances of absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided. The following absence reasons are classified as authorised:

- Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)
- Medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance
- Study leave
- Traveller absence
- Agreed family holiday
- Agreed extended family holiday
- Excluded, no alternative provision
- Other authorised circumstances

Authorised absence is defined as the total number of authorised absences, expressed as the percentage of the total number of possible sessions for the academic year, and is calculated as:

$$\left(\frac{X}{Y}\right) * 100$$

Where

X = the total number of authorised absence sessions

Y = the total number of possible sessions

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from a teacher or other authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified reasons for absence. The following absence reasons are classified as unauthorised:

- Family holiday not agreed
- Arrived late
- Other unauthorised circumstances
- No reason yet

Unauthorised absence is defined as the total number of unauthorised absences, expressed as the percentage of the total number of possible sessions for the academic year, and is calculated as:

$$\left(\frac{X}{Y}\right) * 100$$

Where

X = the total number of unauthorised absence sessions

Y = the total number of possible sessions

Overall absence is defined as the total number of absences (authorised and unauthorised), as the percentage of the total number of possible sessions, for the academic year, and is calculated as:

$$\left(\frac{X}{Y}\right) * 100$$

Where

X = the total number of absent sessions (authorised and unauthorised)

Y = the total number of possible sessions

Persistent absentees³² are defined as having 46 or more sessions of absence (authorised or unauthorised) during the academic year, around 15 per cent of overall absence.

The **percentage persistently absent** (% PA) is the number of pupil enrolments with 46 or more sessions of absence over the academic year, expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupil enrolments:

$$\left(\frac{X}{Y}\right) * 100$$

Where

X = the number of pupil enrolments with 46 or more sessions of absence

Y = the number of pupil enrolments with valid absence data

³² Prior to October 2011, a persistent absentee was defined as a pupil having 64 or more sessions of absence (authorised or unauthorised) during the academic year, around 20 per cent of overall absence.

Annex B: Data sources

Below is a brief description of the data sources used in this paper:

National Pupil Database (NPD)

The National Pupil Database (NPD) is a longitudinal database which matches the attainment and characteristics of pupils in maintained schools across England.

The NPD holds pupil and school characteristics e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, attendance and exclusions (sourced from the **School Census** for maintained primary, state-funded secondary and all special schools only), matched to pupil level attainment data (Foundation Stage Profile (FSP), Key Stage (KS) assessments and external examinations), collected from schools and Local Authorities (LAs) by the Department for Education, and the Standards and Testing Agency (formerly, the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA)) and awarding bodies.

The **School Census (SC)** collects pupil level absence data on a termly basis (spring, summer and autumn collections) for maintained primary and state-funded secondary schools as well as City Technology Colleges and Academies, and annually for special schools. The following four Statistical First Releases of the absence data are published annually:

- Pupil Absence in schools in England: Autumn Term (<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001003/index.shtml>)
- Pupil Absence in schools in England: Spring Term (<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001020/index.shtml>)
- Pupil Absence in schools in England: Autumn and Spring Term (<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001030/index.shtml>)
- Pupil Absence in schools in England: Including Pupil Characteristics (Annual) (<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000994/index.shtml>)

More information on the School Census is available at

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmin/ims/datacollections/schoolcensus>

Tellus4 Survey

The Tellus Survey was a self-completion survey designed to gather information from children and young people about their behaviour and to seek their views on aspects of their lives, schools and local areas. Children and young people in years 6, 8 and 10 complete the survey online at school.

Tellus4 was the final in a series of Tellus pupil perception surveys.

This paper will only examine the views held by children and young people in relation to their schools, and assess how absence levels vary accordingly.

For more information on the Tellus survey, and latest results, see <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000908/index.shtml>

Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE)

The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) is a major innovative panel study of young people which brings together data from several sources, including annual interviews with young people and their parents, and administrative sources.

LSYPE respondents were first interviewed in the spring of 2004 (at age 13) and were interviewed annually until 2010, resulting in a total of seven 'waves'. For the first four waves of LSYPE, the parents or guardians of the respondents were also interviewed.

In the first wave, around 15,500 young people were interviewed as part of the survey and we returned to the existing survey respondents every year for interviews. The study has achieved response rates of 74%, 86%, 92%, 92%, 89%, 87% and 90% through Waves 1 to 7 respectively. The final sample size at Wave 7 was around 8,700.

The analyses in this paper primarily focus on wave 3 of the survey, which collected a wide range of information on the attitudes, behaviour and background of the young person taking part in the survey as well as their parent(s). The scope of the analysis is later extended to wave 6 of the survey, when outcomes on further education and employment are made available for the cohort.

A little over 9,000 respondents continued to provide information for LSYPE over waves 3 and 6. The analysis in this paper applies to these 9,000 respondents.

The table below shows the LSYPE wave schedule and characteristics to wave 6:

LSYPE Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6
Respondents interviewed	Young Person Main Parent Second Parent	Young Person Main Parent Second Parent	Young Person Main Parent	Young Person Main Parent	Young Person	Young Person
Interview method	Face to face	Face to face	Face to face	Face to face	Online Telephone Face to Face	Online Telephone Face to Face
Age of Young Person respondent	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Academic Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
School Year - as reflected in questionnaires	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	First year in Higher Education
Interviewed in Spring/Summer of	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Key Stage/Exams	Key Stage 3 - SATS		Key Stage 4 - GCSE's taken in summer 2006	First year of GCE/VE Applied A Levels, etc	Key Stage 5 - final year of GCE/VCE Applied A Levels etc. exams taken in summer 2008	
Number of respondent (rounded to nearest 50)	15,800	13,550	12,450	11,800	10,400	9,800

For more information on LSYPE, see <http://www.esds.ac.uk/longitudinal/access/lstype/L5545.asp> or <https://ilsype.education.gov.uk/workspaces/public/wiki/Welcome>.

Annex C: School governance types

Community school

- The local education authority owns the land and buildings, but the governing body is responsible for running the school.
- The local education authority funds the school.
- The local education authority employs the staff.
- The local education authority provides support services, for example, psychological services and special educational needs services.
- The pupils have to follow the National Curriculum.
- The admissions policy is usually determined and administered by the local education authority.

Voluntary Controlled schools

- The land and buildings are owned by a charity, often a religious organisation such as a church.
- The charity appoints some of the members of the governing body, but the local education authority is responsible for running the school.
- The school is funded by the local education authority.
- The local education authority employs the staff.
- The local education authority provides support services.
- The pupils have to follow the National Curriculum.
- The admissions policy is usually determined and administered by the local education authority.

Voluntary Aided schools

- The land and buildings are normally owned by a charity, often a religious organisation such as a church, but the governing body is responsible for running the school.
- The school is funded partly by the local education authority, partly by the governing body and partly by the charity.
- The governing body employs the staff.
- The local education authority provides support services.
- The pupils have to follow the National Curriculum.
- The admissions policy is determined and administered by the governors in consultation with the local education authority and other relevant schools in the area.

Foundation schools

- The land and buildings are owned by a governing body, who are also responsible for running the school.
- The local education authority funds the school.
- The governing body employs the staff.
- The governing body buys in and administers most of the support services.
- The pupils have to follow the National Curriculum.
- The admissions policy is determined and administered by the governing body, in consultation with the local education authority and other relevant schools in the area.

Academies

- Academies are publicly funded independent schools that give heads and teachers greater freedoms and flexibilities including;
 - the ability to set their own pay and conditions for staff
 - freedom in delivering the curriculum
 - greater control of their budget
 - freedom to change the length of terms and school days
 - freedom to spend the money the local authority currently spends on their behalf.

Academies receive the same level of per-pupil funding as they would receive from the local authority as a maintained school, plus additions to cover the services that are no longer provided for them by the local authority.

Academies receive their funding directly from the Young People's Learning Agency (an agency of the Department for Education) rather than from local authorities.

Each academy is set up as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and has a board of governors responsible for the governance and strategic leadership of the school.

Traditionally academies have replaced underperforming schools, or, in some cases, provided extra places (either as entirely new schools or as successful independent schools wishing to better serve their local community and broaden their intake). Academies replacing an underperforming school will usually have a sponsor. Sponsors come from a wide range of backgrounds including successful schools, businesses, universities, charities and faith.

More recently well performing schools have been able to convert to Academy status.

The schools classified as Academies in this report were Academies at the time of the 2010 School Census and are therefore all traditional sponsor led Academies.

Annex D: Time series of reasons for absence

This annex contains the following detailed time series on each pupil characteristic by reasons for absence and the distribution of the reasons for absence:

- Table D.1 – Reasons for absence by School Type
- Table D.2 – Reasons for absence by Gender
- Table D.3 – Reasons for absence by White Ethnic Group
- Table D.4 – Reasons for absence by Mixed Ethnic Group
- Table D.5 – Reasons for absence by Asian Ethnic Group
- Table D.6 – Reasons for absence by Black Ethnic Group
- Table D.7 – Reasons for absence by Chinese Ethnic Group
- Table D.8 – Reasons for absence by Special Education Need Type
- Table D.9 – Reasons for absence by National Curriculum Year Groups 2,6 & 11
- Table D.10– Reasons for absence by English as Additional Language status
- Table D.11– Reasons for absence by Free School Meal Eligibility
- Table D.12– Reasons for absence by IDACI placement

Reason for absence was collected for the first time for the autumn term 2006. Schools were able to provide absence data using a reason code or by using total figures for the number of sessions missed due to authorised or unauthorised absence. It was not expected that schools would use both. However, in some instances both absence by reason and total authorised and unauthorised absence have been returned. In addition, some schools do not have the required software to provide absence data by reason, and therefore are only able to provide overall totals. To derive absence rates, the sum of absence by reason has been used unless this is missing or is less than the total provided, in which case overall totals have been used

To note in the following tables:

- (1): Percentages are based on absence totals as reported by reason (not overall totals).
- (2): Includes absence returned as either authorised or unauthorised totals but not broken down by reason.

Table D.1: Reasons for absence by School Type

Reasons for absence by School Type	Maintained Primary		State-funded Secondary		Special		All Schools	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>								
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):								
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	61.0	60.9	55.3	56.0	43.1	44.69	57.6	58.0
Medical/dental appointments	5.0	5.0	6.0	6.1	9.5	9.69	5.6	5.7
Religious observance	2.3	1.4	1.2	0.7	0.9	0.58	1.7	1.0
Study leave	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	0.3	0.35	1.1	1.1
Traveller absence	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.20	0.2	0.2
Agreed family holiday	12.1	10.6	4.7	3.7	5.7	5.40	8.0	6.9
Agreed extended family holiday	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.40	0.2	0.2
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.3	0.3	2.4	2.2	2.7	2.65	1.5	1.4
Other authorised circumstances	6.3	8.2	7.7	8.0	17.1	16.54	7.3	8.2
Total Authorised Absence	87.8	87.1	79.4	79.0	79.8	80.50	83.2	82.7
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):								
Family holiday not agreed	2.2	2.6	1.7	1.8	0.5	0.48	1.9	2.2
Arrived late	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.6	0.62	1.1	1.1
Other unauthorised circumstances	6.4	7.0	13.6	14.5	17.8	17.09	10.5	11.1
No reason yet	2.4	2.1	4.1	3.6	1.3	1.30	3.3	2.9
Total Unauthorised Absence	12.2	12.9	20.6	21.0	20.2	19.50	16.8	17.3
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.00	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>								
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):								
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	3.23	3.17	3.98	3.84	4.51	4.49	3.59	3.49
Medical/dental appointments	0.26	0.26	0.43	0.42	0.99	0.97	0.35	0.34
Religious observance	0.12	0.07	0.09	0.05	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.06
Study leave	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.14	0.03	0.04	0.07	0.06
Traveller absence	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01
Agreed family holiday	0.64	0.55	0.33	0.25	0.60	0.54	0.50	0.41
Agreed extended family holiday	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.04	0.01	0.01
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.02	0.02	0.17	0.15	0.29	0.27	0.09	0.08
Other authorised circumstances	0.33	0.42	0.56	0.55	1.79	1.66	0.45	0.50
Unclassified (2)	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.23	0.20	0.03	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	4.66	4.54	5.76	5.43	8.58	8.30	5.21	5.00
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):								
Family holiday not agreed	0.12	0.14	0.12	0.13	0.05	0.05	0.12	0.13
Arrived late	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.07	0.07
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.34	0.36	0.98	0.99	1.86	1.72	0.65	0.67
No reason yet	0.12	0.11	0.30	0.24	0.14	0.13	0.20	0.17
Unclassified (2)	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.00
Total Unauthorised Absence	0.64	0.67	1.49	1.45	2.14	1.98	1.05	1.04
Total Overall Absence	5.30	5.21	7.25	6.88	10.72	10.27	6.27	6.04

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.2: Reasons for absence by Gender

Reasons for absence by Gender	Boys		Girls	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>				
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):				
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	56.6	57.2	58.7	58.9
Medical/dental appointments	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8
Religious observance	1.7	1.1	1.6	1.0
Study leave	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Traveller absence	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Agreed family holiday	8.0	6.8	8.0	6.9
Agreed extended family holiday	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Excluded, no alternative provision	2.2	2.1	0.7	0.7
Other authorised circumstances	7.6	8.5	6.9	8.0
Total Authorised Absence	83.1	82.6	83.3	82.8
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):				
Family holiday not agreed	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.2
Arrived late	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Other unauthorised circumstances	10.6	11.2	10.4	11.0
No reason yet	3.3	2.9	3.2	2.8
Total Unauthorised Absence	16.9	17.4	16.7	17.2
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>				
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):				
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	3.48	3.41	3.70	3.58
Medical/dental appointments	0.34	0.33	0.36	0.35
Religious observance	0.11	0.06	0.10	0.06
Study leave	0.07	0.06	0.07	0.06
Traveller absence	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Agreed family holiday	0.49	0.41	0.51	0.42
Agreed extended family holiday	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.14	0.12	0.05	0.04
Other authorised circumstances	0.47	0.50	0.44	0.49
Unclassified (2)	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	5.15	4.95	5.28	5.05
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):				
Family holiday not agreed	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.13
Arrived late	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.66	0.67	0.65	0.67
No reason yet	0.20	0.17	0.20	0.17
Unclassified (2)	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Total Unauthorised Absence	1.05	1.04	1.06	1.05
Total Overall Absence	6.20	5.99	6.33	6.10

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.3: Reasons for absence by White Ethnic Group

Reasons for absence by White Ethnic Group	White British		White Irish		White Irish Traveller		White Gypsy Roma	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>								
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):								
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	59.8	60.0	55.5	55.6	22.6	22.3	33.8	33.1
Medical/dental appointments	5.8	5.8	5.4	5.6	1.7	1.9	2.5	2.6
Religious observance	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Study leave	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.9	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2
Traveller absence	0.1	0.1	1.9	1.2	32.7	31.0	15.6	14.1
Agreed family holiday	8.3	7.1	5.4	4.9	1.3	1.0	2.1	1.6
Agreed extended family holiday	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Excluded, no alternative provision	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.4
Other authorised circumstances	7.3	8.0	9.3	11.2	8.5	9.0	9.0	8.6
Total Authorised Absence	84.1	83.7	80.2	81.1	68.3	66.9	64.7	61.6
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):								
Family holiday not agreed	1.6	1.8	1.3	1.3	0.9	0.8	1.5	1.7
Arrived late	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.1
Other unauthorised circumstances	10.2	10.8	12.5	12.7	24.4	26.3	26.5	31.0
No reason yet	3.0	2.6	4.6	3.6	5.1	4.7	6.2	4.5
Total Unauthorised Absence	15.9	16.3	19.8	18.9	31.7	33.1	35.3	38.4
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>								
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):								
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	3.68	3.59	3.89	3.72	5.51	5.23	6.41	5.95
Medical/dental appointments	0.35	0.35	0.38	0.37	0.42	0.44	0.48	0.46
Religious observance	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.01
Study leave	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.03
Traveller absence	0.01	0.01	0.13	0.08	7.99	7.29	2.96	2.53
Agreed family holiday	0.51	0.43	0.38	0.33	0.32	0.24	0.39	0.30
Agreed extended family holiday	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.09	0.08	0.11	0.10	0.31	0.35	0.28	0.25
Other authorised circumstances	0.45	0.48	0.65	0.75	2.08	2.10	1.70	1.54
Unclassified (2)	0.03	0.02	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.08	0.05
Total Authorised Absence	5.20	5.03	5.70	5.48	16.70	15.73	12.35	11.15
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):								
Family holiday not agreed	0.10	0.11	0.09	0.09	0.21	0.19	0.28	0.31
Arrived late	0.07	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.33	0.30	0.20	0.20
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.63	0.65	0.88	0.85	5.95	6.17	5.02	5.58
No reason yet	0.19	0.15	0.32	0.24	1.24	1.10	1.18	0.82
Unclassified (2)	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03
Total Unauthorised Absence	0.99	0.98	1.41	1.28	7.74	7.78	6.70	6.94
Total Overall Absence	6.19	6.01	7.11	6.75	24.44	23.50	19.05	18.09

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.4: Reasons for absence by Mixed Ethnic Group

Reasons for absence by Mixed Ethnic Group	White and Black Caribbean		White and Black African		White and Asian	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>						
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):						
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	54.1	53.6	55.0	54.9	56.4	56.5
Medical/dental appointments	5.0	5.1	5.5	5.4	5.2	5.3
Religious observance	0.2	0.1	1.6	1.0	3.4	2.1
Study leave	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.0
Traveller absence	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Agreed family holiday	5.1	4.3	6.9	5.5	8.6	7.4
Agreed extended family holiday	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3
Excluded, no alternative provision	2.9	2.7	1.8	1.9	1.1	1.0
Other authorised circumstances	8.9	9.6	8.2	10.0	7.8	9.5
Total Authorised Absence	77.0	76.1	79.9	79.6	83.9	83.2
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):						
Family holiday not agreed	1.5	1.5	2.1	2.2	2.0	2.2
Arrived late	2.2	2.2	1.8	1.7	1.3	1.2
Other unauthorised circumstances	14.8	16.1	11.8	12.6	9.9	10.7
No reason yet	4.5	4.1	4.4	3.9	3.0	2.6
Total Unauthorised Absence	23.0	23.9	20.1	20.4	16.1	16.8
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>						
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):						
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	3.92	3.80	3.31	3.22	3.49	3.39
Medical/dental appointments	0.37	0.36	0.33	0.31	0.32	0.32
Religious observance	0.01	0.01	0.10	0.06	0.21	0.13
Study leave	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.06
Traveller absence	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Agreed family holiday	0.37	0.30	0.41	0.32	0.53	0.45
Agreed extended family holiday	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.21	0.19	0.11	0.11	0.07	0.06
Other authorised circumstances	0.65	0.68	0.50	0.59	0.48	0.57
Unclassified (2)	0.04	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03
Total Authorised Absence	5.62	5.41	4.85	4.70	5.22	5.01
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):						
Family holiday not agreed	0.11	0.11	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.13
Arrived late	0.16	0.15	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.07
Other unauthorised circumstances	1.08	1.14	0.71	0.74	0.61	0.64
No reason yet	0.33	0.29	0.27	0.23	0.18	0.16
Unclassified (2)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Total Unauthorised Absence	1.68	1.70	1.22	1.21	1.00	1.01
Total Overall Absence	7.30	7.12	6.07	5.90	6.22	6.02

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.5: Reasons for absence by Asian Ethnic Group

Reasons for absence by Asian Ethnic Group	Asian Indian		Asian Pakistani		Asian Bangladeshi	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>						
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):						
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	54.0	55.5	45.3	48.7	52.0	56.0
Medical/dental appointments	5.4	5.5	4.4	4.8	4.4	4.7
Religious observance	5.3	3.3	17.9	11.5	14.5	7.8
Study leave	1.4	1.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4
Traveller absence	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Agreed family holiday	12.8	10.7	6.1	5.5	3.6	3.4
Agreed extended family holiday	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.0	0.9
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7
Other authorised circumstances	6.3	8.9	5.6	7.8	4.3	5.8
Total Authorised Absence	87.1	87.1	81.9	80.9	80.9	79.8
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):						
Family holiday not agreed	3.8	4.2	3.9	4.9	3.3	4.3
Arrived late	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9
Other unauthorised circumstances	5.9	6.1	10.4	10.6	11.2	11.8
No reason yet	2.6	2.1	3.1	2.8	3.7	3.2
Total Unauthorised Absence	12.9	12.9	18.1	19.1	19.1	20.2
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>						
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):						
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	2.86	2.80	3.47	3.31	3.83	3.68
Medical/dental appointments	0.29	0.28	0.34	0.32	0.33	0.31
Religious observance	0.28	0.17	1.37	0.78	1.07	0.52
Study leave	0.07	0.07	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03
Traveller absence	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Agreed family holiday	0.68	0.54	0.46	0.37	0.27	0.22
Agreed extended family holiday	0.08	0.07	0.11	0.09	0.07	0.06
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.02	0.02	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.05
Other authorised circumstances	0.33	0.45	0.42	0.53	0.32	0.38
Unclassified (2)	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.08	0.05
Total Authorised Absence	4.65	4.42	6.28	5.50	6.05	5.30
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):						
Family holiday not agreed	0.20	0.21	0.30	0.34	0.24	0.28
Arrived late	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.06
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.31	0.31	0.79	0.72	0.83	0.78
No reason yet	0.14	0.11	0.24	0.19	0.27	0.21
Unclassified (2)	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01
Total Unauthorised Absence	0.69	0.66	1.39	1.30	1.43	1.34
Total Overall Absence	5.34	5.08	7.68	6.80	7.48	6.64

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.6: Reasons for absence by Black Ethnic Group

Reasons for absence by Black Ethnic Group	Black Caribbean		Black African	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>				
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):				
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	50.6	49.4	47.4	49.5
Medical/dental appointments	5.8	5.7	6.2	6.5
Religious observance	0.3	0.2	10.0	6.1
Study leave	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9
Traveller absence	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Agreed family holiday	4.8	3.9	4.8	3.9
Agreed extended family holiday	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
Excluded, no alternative provision	3.8	3.9	2.3	2.4
Other authorised circumstances	9.9	11.4	8.4	10.7
Total Authorised Absence	76.3	75.5	80.4	80.3
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):				
Family holiday not agreed	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.3
Arrived late	2.8	2.7	1.5	1.4
Other unauthorised circumstances	12.9	14.7	10.4	11.1
No reason yet	6.1	5.1	5.5	5.0
Total Unauthorised Absence	23.7	24.5	19.6	19.7
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>				
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):				
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	2.98	2.83	2.12	2.04
Medical/dental appointments	0.34	0.33	0.28	0.27
Religious observance	0.02	0.01	0.45	0.25
Study leave	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.04
Traveller absence	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Agreed family holiday	0.28	0.22	0.22	0.16
Agreed extended family holiday	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.22	0.22	0.10	0.10
Other authorised circumstances	0.59	0.65	0.38	0.44
Unclassified (2)	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	4.53	4.35	3.62	3.33
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):				
Family holiday not agreed	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.09
Arrived late	0.16	0.16	0.06	0.06
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.76	0.84	0.46	0.46
No reason yet	0.36	0.29	0.24	0.20
Unclassified (2)	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.01
Total Unauthorised Absence	1.42	1.41	0.89	0.82
Total Overall Absence	5.95	5.76	4.51	4.15

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.7: Reasons for absence by Chinese Ethnic Group

Reasons for absence by Chinese Ethnic Group	Chinese	
	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>		
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):		
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	50.8	51.6
Medical/dental appointments	7.3	7.0
Religious observance	0.6	0.1
Study leave	3.2	2.9
Traveller absence	0.0	0.0
Agreed family holiday	16.9	13.5
Agreed extended family holiday	0.9	0.9
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.4	0.4
Other authorised circumstances	8.3	11.9
Total Authorised Absence	88.2	88.2
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):		
Family holiday not agreed	3.1	3.1
Arrived late	0.9	1.0
Other unauthorised circumstances	4.7	5.2
No reason yet	3.1	2.5
Total Unauthorised Absence	11.8	11.8
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>		
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):		
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	1.81	1.87
Medical/dental appointments	0.26	0.25
Religious observance	0.02	0.01
Study leave	0.11	0.10
Traveller absence	0.00	0.00
Agreed family holiday	0.60	0.49
Agreed extended family holiday	0.03	0.03
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.01	0.01
Other authorised circumstances	0.29	0.43
Unclassified (2)	0.03	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	3.17	3.22
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):		
Family holiday not agreed	0.11	0.11
Arrived late	0.03	0.04
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.17	0.19
No reason yet	0.11	0.09
Unclassified (2)	0.00	0.00
Total Unauthorised Absence	0.42	0.43
Total Overall Absence	3.59	3.65

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.8: Reasons for absence by Special Educational Needs

Reasons for absence by SEN Provision	Statement of SEN		School Action Plus		School Action		No SEN	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>								
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):								
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	47.5	48.6	46.3	46.6	54.9	55.5	60.8	61.2
Medical/dental appointments	9.1	9.4	5.5	5.7	5.1	5.2	5.5	5.6
Religious observance	1.0	0.6	1.1	0.7	1.8	1.1	1.8	1.1
Study leave	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.3
Traveller absence	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.1
Agreed family holiday	5.4	4.9	4.5	3.8	6.1	5.1	9.2	8.0
Agreed extended family holiday	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Excluded, no alternative provision	3.5	3.3	4.7	4.3	2.0	1.8	0.7	0.6
Other authorised circumstances	13.6	13.4	9.7	9.9	7.2	7.8	6.5	7.7
Total Authorised Absence	80.9	81.2	72.8	72.1	78.2	77.6	86.3	85.9
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):								
Family holiday not agreed	1.0	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.9	2.2	2.1	2.4
Arrived late	1.0	1.0	1.7	1.7	1.4	1.5	0.9	0.9
Other unauthorised circumstances	14.7	14.5	19.5	20.7	14.4	15.2	7.8	8.3
No reason yet	2.5	2.2	4.6	3.9	4.0	3.6	2.9	2.5
Total Unauthorised Absence	19.1	18.8	27.2	27.9	21.8	22.4	13.7	14.1
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>								
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):								
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	4.41	4.35	4.44	4.27	4.21	4.07	3.37	3.27
Medical/dental appointments	0.84	0.84	0.53	0.53	0.39	0.38	0.31	0.30
Religious observance	0.09	0.05	0.10	0.06	0.14	0.08	0.10	0.06
Study leave	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.07
Traveller absence	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.01
Agreed family holiday	0.50	0.43	0.43	0.35	0.47	0.37	0.51	0.43
Agreed extended family holiday	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.32	0.30	0.45	0.39	0.15	0.13	0.04	0.03
Other authorised circumstances	1.26	1.20	0.93	0.91	0.55	0.57	0.36	0.41
Unclassified (2)	0.11	0.10	0.05	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	7.63	7.36	7.02	6.62	6.03	5.72	4.80	4.61
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):								
Family holiday not agreed	0.09	0.10	0.13	0.14	0.15	0.16	0.11	0.13
Arrived late	0.09	0.09	0.16	0.16	0.11	0.11	0.05	0.05
Other unauthorised circumstances	1.37	1.30	1.87	1.89	1.10	1.11	0.43	0.44
No reason yet	0.23	0.20	0.44	0.36	0.31	0.26	0.16	0.13
Unclassified (2)	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01
Total Unauthorised Absence	1.80	1.70	2.62	2.57	1.68	1.65	0.76	0.76
Total Overall Absence	9.43	9.06	9.64	9.19	7.72	7.37	5.56	5.37

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.9: Reasons for absence by selected National Curriculum Year Groups

Reasons for absence by National Curriculum Year Group	National Curriculum Year 2		National Curriculum Year 6		National Curriculum Year 11	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>						
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):						
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	61.2	61.0	61.7	61.7	44.3	45.4
Medical/dental appointments	5.2	5.1	5.3	5.3	5.6	5.8
Religious observance	2.4	1.5	2.1	1.3	0.8	0.5
Study leave	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.8	7.9
Traveller absence	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1
Agreed family holiday	12.3	10.9	11.0	9.6	2.5	1.7
Agreed extended family holiday	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.6	2.0	1.9
Other authorised circumstances	5.8	7.7	7.1	9.0	8.6	8.5
Total Authorised Absence	87.9	87.1	88.5	88.0	71.7	71.8
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):						
Family holiday not agreed	2.3	2.8	2.2	2.5	1.3	1.3
Arrived late	1.3	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.8	1.8
Other unauthorised circumstances	6.2	6.8	6.2	6.6	19.6	20.3
No reason yet	2.3	2.0	2.2	2.0	5.6	4.8
Total Unauthorised Absence	12.1	12.9	11.5	12.0	28.3	28.2
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>						
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):						
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	3.28	3.20	3.07	3.06	3.95	3.85
Medical/dental appointments	0.28	0.27	0.26	0.26	0.50	0.49
Religious observance	0.13	0.08	0.11	0.07	0.07	0.04
Study leave	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.69	0.67
Traveller absence	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Agreed family holiday	0.66	0.57	0.55	0.47	0.22	0.14
Agreed extended family holiday	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.18	0.16
Other authorised circumstances	0.31	0.41	0.36	0.44	0.77	0.72
Unclassified (2)	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	4.73	4.59	4.42	4.38	6.45	6.11
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):						
Family holiday not agreed	0.12	0.15	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.11
Arrived late	0.07	0.07	0.05	0.04	0.16	0.15
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.33	0.36	0.31	0.33	1.75	1.72
No reason yet	0.12	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.50	0.41
Unclassified (2)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02
Total Unauthorised Absence	0.65	0.68	0.57	0.60	2.55	2.41
Total Overall Absence	5.38	5.27	5.00	4.97	8.99	8.52

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.10: Reasons for absence by English Language Status

Reasons for absence by English as an Additional Language	English as an Additional Language		English as First Language	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>				
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):				
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	49.1	51.2	59.0	59.1
Medical/dental appointments	5.0	5.1	5.7	5.8
Religious observance	10.4	6.2	0.3	0.2
Study leave	0.6	0.6	1.2	1.1
Traveller absence	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
Agreed family holiday	7.6	6.5	8.1	6.9
Agreed extended family holiday	1.0	0.9	0.1	0.1
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.9	0.9	1.6	1.4
Other authorised circumstances	6.3	8.6	7.4	8.2
Total Authorised Absence	80.9	80.1	83.6	83.2
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):				
Family holiday not agreed	3.7	4.2	1.6	1.8
Arrived late	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.2
Other unauthorised circumstances	10.6	11.2	10.5	11.1
No reason yet	3.9	3.6	3.2	2.7
Total Unauthorised Absence	19.1	19.9	16.4	16.8
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>				
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):				
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	3.17	3.07	3.65	3.56
Medical/dental appointments	0.32	0.31	0.35	0.35
Religious observance	0.67	0.37	0.02	0.01
Study leave	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.07
Traveller absence	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02
Agreed family holiday	0.49	0.39	0.50	0.42
Agreed extended family holiday	0.07	0.05	0.01	0.01
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.06	0.05	0.10	0.09
Other authorised circumstances	0.41	0.51	0.46	0.49
Unclassified (2)	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	5.27	4.83	5.20	5.02
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):				
Family holiday not agreed	0.24	0.25	0.10	0.11
Arrived late	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.07
Other unauthorised circumstances	0.68	0.67	0.65	0.67
No reason yet	0.25	0.21	0.20	0.16
Unclassified (2)	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01
Total Unauthorised Absence	1.24	1.20	1.02	1.02
Total Overall Absence	6.51	6.03	6.23	6.04

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.11: Reasons for absence by Free School Meal Eligibility

Reasons for absence by Free School Meal Eligibility	Eligible for Free School Meals		Not Eligible for Free School Meals	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>				
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):				
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	51.1	51.7	59.6	60.1
Medical/dental appointments	5.0	5.1	5.8	5.9
Religious observance	2.5	1.4	1.4	0.9
Study leave	0.3	0.3	1.3	1.3
Traveller absence	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Agreed family holiday	4.1	3.6	9.2	7.9
Agreed extended family holiday	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2
Excluded, no alternative provision	2.3	2.1	1.2	1.1
Other authorised circumstances	8.3	8.7	7.0	8.1
Total Authorised Absence	73.9	73.2	86.0	85.8
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):				
Family holiday not agreed	1.6	1.8	2.0	2.3
Arrived late	1.8	1.8	0.9	0.9
Other unauthorised circumstances	18.0	19.0	8.2	8.5
No reason yet	4.7	4.2	2.8	2.4
Total Unauthorised Absence	26.1	26.8	14.0	14.2
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>				
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):				
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	4.61	4.42	3.39	3.30
Medical/dental appointments	0.45	0.43	0.33	0.32
Religious observance	0.22	0.12	0.08	0.05
Study leave	0.03	0.03	0.07	0.07
Traveller absence	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01
Agreed family holiday	0.37	0.30	0.52	0.44
Agreed extended family holiday	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.21	0.18	0.07	0.06
Other authorised circumstances	0.75	0.74	0.40	0.44
Unclassified (2)	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	6.72	6.28	4.92	4.73
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):				
Family holiday not agreed	0.14	0.15	0.12	0.13
Arrived late	0.16	0.16	0.05	0.05
Other unauthorised circumstances	1.63	1.63	0.47	0.47
No reason yet	0.43	0.36	0.16	0.13
Unclassified (2)	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Total Unauthorised Absence	2.37	2.30	0.80	0.78
Total Overall Absence	9.09	8.58	5.72	5.51

Source: National Pupil Database

Table D.12: Reasons for absence by IDACI Placement

Reasons for absence by IDACI	Most Deprived IDACI quartile		Second Most Deprived IDACI Quartile		Least Deprived IDACI Half	
	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE</u>						
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):						
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	52.2	53.3	58.2	59.1	62.2	62.4
Medical/dental appointments	4.9	5.0	5.5	5.7	6.3	6.3
Religious observance	3.4	2.0	1.5	0.8	0.6	0.4
Study leave	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.9	1.8	1.7
Traveller absence	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
Agreed family holiday	5.3	4.6	7.3	6.6	10.5	9.0
Agreed extended family holiday	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Excluded, no alternative provision	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.0	0.9
Other authorised circumstances	7.4	8.1	7.2	8.0	6.8	8.1
Total Authorised Absence	75.9	75.5	82.4	83.0	89.6	89.3
Percentage of absent sessions due to (1):						
Family holiday not agreed	2.0	2.3	2.0	2.2	1.8	2.1
Arrived late	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.2	0.9	0.9
Other unauthorised circumstances	16.3	16.9	10.9	10.8	5.5	5.9
No reason yet	4.4	3.9	3.5	2.9	2.2	1.9
Total Unauthorised Absence	24.1	24.5	17.6	17.0	10.4	10.7
Total Overall Absence	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>ABSENCE RATES BY REASON</u>						
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):						
Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	3.98	3.79	3.91	3.73	3.23	3.19
Medical/dental appointments	0.37	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.33	0.32
Religious observance	0.26	0.14	0.10	0.05	0.03	0.02
Study leave	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.09	0.09
Traveller absence	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Agreed family holiday	0.41	0.33	0.49	0.42	0.54	0.46
Agreed extended family holiday	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Excluded, no alternative provision	0.14	0.13	0.11	0.09	0.05	0.04
Other authorised circumstances	0.56	0.57	0.48	0.51	0.35	0.42
Unclassified (2)	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.02
Total Authorised Absence	5.83	5.39	5.56	5.26	4.67	4.59
Percentage of possible sessions missed due to (1):						
Family holiday not agreed	0.15	0.16	0.13	0.14	0.09	0.11
Arrived late	0.10	0.10	0.08	0.08	0.05	0.04
Other unauthorised circumstances	1.24	1.20	0.74	0.68	0.29	0.30
No reason yet	0.34	0.28	0.23	0.18	0.12	0.10
Unclassified (2)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Total Unauthorised Absence	1.85	1.75	1.19	1.08	0.54	0.55
Total Overall Absence	7.69	7.14	6.75	6.33	5.22	5.14

Source: National Pupil Database

Annex E: Contextual background of absentees

This annex provides information on the sample sizes and lower and upper bounds to the 95% confidence intervals for the proportions reported from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) in Chapter 3.

The following tables are included in this annex:

- Table E. 1 – Family composition (Chart 3.1)
- Table E. 2 – Family NS-SEC class (Chart 3.2)
- Table E. 3 – Family monthly income (Chart 3.3)
- Table E. 4 – Parental involvement (Chart 3.4)
- Table E. 5 – Parental aspirations for post 16 activity (Table 3.1)
- Table E. 6 – Young persons post 16 intentions (Chart 3.5)
- Table E. 7 – Feelings about school (Chart 3.6)
- Table E. 8 – Feelings about lessons (Chart 3.7)
- Table E. 9 – Feelings about marks (Chart 3.8)
- Table E.10 – Experiences of bullying (Chart 3.9)
- Table E.11 – Experiences of smoking cigarettes (Chart 3.10)
- Table E.12 – Experiences of drinking alcohol (Chart 3.11)
- Table E.13 – Experiences of risky behaviour (Table 3.2)

Table E.1: Family composition of PA and other pupils, 2006

Family composition	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Married couple	810	50.8	48.4	53.3	5040	71.6	70.6	72.7
Cohabiting couple	137	8.6	7.2	10.0	551	7.8	7.2	8.5
Lone father	49	3.1	2.2	3.9	137	1.9	1.6	2.3
Lone mother	574	36.0	33.6	38.3	1262	17.9	17.0	18.8
No parents in the household	24	1.5	0.9	2.1	45	0.6	0.4	0.8

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.2: Family's current NS-SEC class, 2006

Family NS-SEC class	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Higher Managerial and professional occupations	83	5.5	4.3	6.6	886	13.0	12.2	13.8
Lower managerial and professional occupations	257	16.9	15.0	18.7	1898	27.8	26.7	28.9
Intermediate occupations	98	6.4	5.2	7.7	446	6.5	5.9	7.1
Small employers and own account workers	70	4.6	3.5	5.6	477	7.0	6.4	7.6
Lower supervisory and technical occupations	166	10.9	9.4	12.5	842	12.3	11.5	13.1
Semi-routine occupations	186	12.2	10.6	13.9	689	10.1	9.4	10.8
Routine occupations	203	13.3	11.6	15.0	673	9.9	9.2	10.6
Not currently working	459	30.2	27.9	32.5	917	13.4	12.6	14.2

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.3: Total monthly income from work, benefits and anything else, 2006

Family income range	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Up to £432	71	4.6	3.5	5.6	124	1.8	1.5	2.1
£433 up to £866	257	16.6	14.7	18.4	462	6.8	6.2	7.4
£876 up to £1,299	257	16.6	14.7	18.4	690	10.2	9.4	10.9
£1,300 up to £1,732	168	10.8	9.3	12.4	676	10.0	9.2	10.7
£1,733 up to £2,166	145	9.3	7.9	10.8	646	9.5	8.8	10.2
£2,167 up to £2,599	130	8.4	7.0	9.7	707	10.4	9.7	11.1
£2,600 up to £3,032	93	6.0	4.8	7.2	596	8.8	8.1	9.5
£3,033 up to £3,466	55	3.6	2.6	4.5	458	6.7	6.2	7.3
£3,467 up to £3,899	41	2.7	1.9	3.5	356	5.2	4.7	5.8
£3,900 up to £4,332	39	2.5	1.7	3.3	388	5.7	5.2	6.3
£4,333 or more	86	5.6	4.4	6.7	1013	14.9	14.1	15.8

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.4: How involved parent personally feels in young person's school life, 2006

Parental involvement	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Very involved	423	26.6	24.5	28.8	1979	27.9	26.9	29.0
Fairly involved	673	42.3	39.9	44.7	3451	48.7	47.5	49.8
Not very involved	368	23.1	21.1	25.2	1400	19.8	18.8	20.7
Not at all involved	117	7.4	6.1	8.6	252	3.6	3.1	4.0

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.5: Post school activity parent want/will like their child to be involved in, 2006

Parental aspirations	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
What their main parent will like them to do								
Continue in full time education	1018	64.1	61.7	66.5	5877	82.9	82.0	83.8
Start learning a trade / Get a place on a training course	216	13.6	11.9	15.3	406	5.7	5.2	6.3
Start an apprenticeship	200	12.6	10.9	14.2	511	7.2	6.6	7.8
Get a full-time paid job (either as an employee or self-employed)	86	5.4	4.3	6.5	138	1.9	1.6	2.3
Something else	33	2.1	1.4	2.8	70	1.0	0.8	1.2
Don't know	36	2.2	1.5	3.0	86	1.2	1.0	1.5
What their main parent thinks they'll do								
Continue in full time education	892	56.1	53.7	58.5	5762	81.3	80.4	82.2
Start learning a trade / Get a place on a training course	196	12.3	10.7	13.9	418	5.9	5.3	6.4
Start an apprenticeship	154	9.7	8.2	11.2	462	6.5	5.9	7.1
Get a full-time paid job (either as an employee or self-employed)	200	12.6	10.9	14.2	235	3.3	2.9	3.7
Something else	64	4.0	3.0	5.0	96	1.4	1.1	1.6
Don't know	84	5.3	4.2	6.4	116	1.6	1.3	1.9

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.6: Young persons intentions after leaving compulsory education (year 11), 2006

Young persons post 16 intentions	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Staying on in full-time education	927	69.7	67.3	72.2	5134	88.1	87.3	89.0
Leaving full-time education	358	26.9	24.5	29.3	587	10.1	9.3	10.8
Don't know	44	3.3	2.4	4.3	105	1.8	1.5	2.1

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.7: Feelings about schools, 2006

Feelings about school	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
I am happy when I am at school								
Strongly agree	182	11.4	9.9	13.0	1804	25.6	24.6	26.6
Agree	757	47.4	45.0	49.9	4323	61.3	60.2	62.5
Disagree	373	23.4	21.3	25.5	571	8.1	7.5	8.7
Strongly disagree	217	13.6	11.9	15.2	206	2.9	2.5	3.3
Don't know	67	4.2	3.2	5.2	144	2.0	1.7	2.4
School is a waste of time for me								
Strongly agree	112	7.0	5.8	8.3	126	1.8	1.5	2.1
Agree	183	11.5	9.9	13.0	267	3.8	3.3	4.2
Disagree	729	45.7	43.2	48.1	2345	33.3	32.2	34.4
Strongly disagree	499	31.2	29.0	33.5	4157	59.0	57.8	60.1
Don't know	74	4.6	3.6	5.7	154	2.2	1.8	2.5
Most of the time I don't want to go to school								
Strongly agree	283	17.7	15.9	19.6	405	5.7	5.2	6.3
Agree	529	33.2	30.8	35.5	1347	19.1	18.2	20.0
Disagree	551	34.5	32.2	36.8	3283	46.6	45.4	47.7
Strongly disagree	175	11.0	9.5	12.5	1855	26.3	25.3	27.3
Don't know	58	3.6	2.7	4.6	160	2.3	1.9	2.6
I work as hard as I can in school								
Strongly agree	268	16.8	14.9	18.6	1535	21.8	20.8	22.7
Agree	732	45.8	43.4	48.3	4000	56.7	55.6	57.9
Disagree	464	29.1	26.8	31.3	1231	17.5	16.6	18.3
Strongly disagree	84	5.3	4.2	6.4	134	1.9	1.6	2.2
Don't know	49	3.1	2.2	3.9	149	2.1	1.8	2.5

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.8: Feelings about lessons, 2006

Feelings about lessons	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
In a lesson, I often count the minutes till it ends								
Strongly agree	342	21.4	19.4	23.4	811	11.5	10.8	12.3
Agree	658	41.2	38.8	43.6	2709	38.4	37.3	39.6
Disagree	486	30.4	28.2	32.7	2825	40.1	38.9	41.2
Strongly disagree	66	4.1	3.1	5.1	529	7.5	6.9	8.1
Don't know	45	2.8	2.0	3.6	174	2.5	2.1	2.8
I am bored in lessons								
Strongly agree	332	20.8	18.8	22.8	536	7.6	7.0	8.2
Agree	666	41.7	39.3	44.1	2403	34.1	33.0	35.2
Disagree	477	29.9	27.6	32.1	3408	48.3	47.2	49.5
Strongly disagree	53	3.3	2.4	4.2	443	6.3	5.7	6.8
Don't know	69	4.3	3.3	5.3	259	3.7	3.2	4.1
The work I do in lessons is a waste of time								
Strongly agree	93	5.8	4.7	7.0	147	2.1	1.8	2.4
Agree	204	12.7	11.1	14.4	439	6.2	5.7	6.8
Disagree	897	56.2	53.7	58.6	3881	55.1	53.9	56.2
Strongly disagree	323	20.2	18.3	22.2	2412	34.2	33.1	35.3
Don't know	80	5.0	3.9	6.1	170	2.4	2.0	2.8
The work I do in lessons is interesting to me								
Strongly agree	105	6.6	5.4	7.8	654	9.3	8.6	9.9
Agree	786	49.2	46.8	51.7	4494	63.7	62.6	64.9
Disagree	497	31.1	28.9	33.4	1411	20.0	19.1	21.0
Strongly disagree	116	7.3	6.0	8.5	175	2.5	2.1	2.8
Don't know	92	5.8	4.6	6.9	316	4.5	4.0	5.0

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.9: Feelings about marks, 2006

Feelings about marks	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
I get good marks for my work								
Strongly agree	108	6.8	5.5	8.0	1222	17.3	16.5	18.2
Agree	959	60.1	57.7	62.5	4821	68.4	67.3	69.5
Disagree	340	21.3	19.3	23.3	644	9.1	8.5	9.8
Strongly disagree	56	3.5	2.6	4.4	61	0.9	0.6	1.1
Don't know	134	8.4	7.0	9.7	301	4.3	3.8	4.7

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.10: Experiences of different types of bullying within the last 12 months, 2006

Experiences of bullying	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Name calling	295	18.6	16.7	20.6	953	13.6	12.8	14.4
Social Exclusion	266	16.8	14.9	18.6	674	9.6	8.9	10.3
Extortion	19	1.2	0.7	1.8	73	1.0	0.8	1.3
Threatened with violence	283	17.9	16.0	19.7	880	12.5	11.7	13.3
Experienced violence	212	13.4	11.7	15.1	602	8.6	7.9	9.2

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.11: Experiences of smoking cigarettes, 2006

Experiences of smoking cigarettes	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Experimental/non-active/unsure smoker	112	7.1	5.8	8.3	393	5.6	5.1	6.2
I sometimes smoke cigarettes now but I don't smoke as many as one a week	56	3.5	2.6	4.4	300	4.3	3.8	4.8
I usually smoke between one and six cigarettes a week	70	4.4	3.4	5.4	184	2.6	2.3	3.0
I usually smoke more than six cigarettes a week	526	33.3	31.0	35.6	685	9.8	9.1	10.5
Any experience of smoking cigarettes	763	48.3	45.9	50.8	1562	22.4	21.5	23.4

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.12: Experiences of drinking alcohol, 2006

Experiences of drinking alcohol	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Less often	214	13.5	11.9	15.2	877	12.5	11.8	13.3
Once every couple of months	208	13.1	11.5	14.8	959	13.7	12.9	14.5
Once a month	152	9.6	8.2	11.1	730	10.4	9.7	11.2
Two or three times a month	290	18.3	16.4	20.2	1394	19.9	19.0	20.9
Once or twice a week	317	20.1	18.1	22.0	1071	15.3	14.5	16.2
Most days	78	4.9	3.9	6.0	99	1.4	1.1	1.7
Don't know	33	2.1	1.4	2.8	126	1.8	1.5	2.1
Any experience with alcohol	1293	81.7	79.8	83.6	5256	75.2	74.2	76.2

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Table E.13: Experiences of risky behaviour, 2006

Experiences of risky behaviour	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Whether young person has graffitied on walls in the last year?	135	8.5	7.2	9.9	254	3.6	3.2	4.0
Whether young person has vandalised public property in the last year?	206	12.9	11.3	14.6	418	5.9	5.4	6.5
Whether young person has shoplifted in the last year?	180	11.3	9.8	12.9	417	5.9	5.4	6.5
Whether young person has taken part in fighting or public disturbance in the last year?	404	25.6	23.4	27.7	878	12.5	11.7	13.3

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 3

Annex F: Post 16 outcomes for young people

This annex provides information on the sample sizes and lower and upper bounds to the 95% confidence intervals for the proportions reported from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) in Chapter 5.

The following tables are included in this annex:

- Table F. 1 – Qualifications studied at age 18 (Chart 5.1)
- Table F. 2 – Attendance at Russell Group University (Chart 5.2)
- Table F. 3 – Higher education subjects studied (Chart 5.3)
- Table F. 4 – Main activity of young people (Chart 5.4)
- Table F. 5 – NEET activity (Chart 5.5)
- Table F. 6 – Types temporary employment contract (Chart 5.6)
- Table F. 7 – State-benefits claimed at age 18 (Chart 5.7)

Table F.1: Distribution of qualifications studied for by age 18, 2009

Qualifications studied at age 18	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	<i>N</i>	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	<i>N</i>	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
First/Other Degree	111	6.9	5.6	8.1	2123	29.7	28.7	30.8
Other HE	14	0.9	0.4	1.3	110	1.5	1.3	1.8
A Level	94	5.8	4.6	6.9	578	8.1	7.5	8.7
GCSE	30	1.9	1.2	2.5	83	1.2	0.9	1.4
Other	22	1.4	0.8	1.9	53	0.7	0.5	0.9

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Table F.2: Attendance at a Russell Group University, 2009

Attendance at Russell Group University	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	<i>N</i>	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	<i>N</i>	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Attending Russell Group Institution	10	7.9	3.3	12.5	525	22.7	21.0	24.4
Other Higher Education Institution	119	90.8	85.9	95.8	1779	77.0	75.2	78.7

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Table F.3: Higher education subjects studied by young people, 2009

Higher education subjects studied	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	<i>N</i>	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	<i>N</i>	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Medicine, dentistry and subjects allied to medicine	7	5.6	1.6	9.5	217	9.4	8.2	10.6
Biological sciences, veterinary sciences, agriculture and related subjects	16	12.0	6.4	17.5	252	10.9	9.6	12.2
Mathematical, computer and physical sciences	10	7.6	3.1	12.1	309	13.4	12.0	14.8
Engineering and technologies	6	4.2	0.8	7.7	99	4.3	3.5	5.1
Architecture, building and planning	7	5.3	1.5	9.2	45	2.0	1.4	2.5
Social studies	12	9.1	4.2	14.0	175	7.6	6.5	8.7
Law	7	5.4	1.5	9.3	124	5.3	4.4	6.3
Business and administrative studies	17	12.8	7.1	18.6	265	11.5	10.2	12.8
Mass communications and documentation	8	6.0	1.9	10.1	108	4.7	3.8	5.5
Languages, linguistics, classics and related subjects	11	8.6	3.8	13.4	280	12.1	10.8	13.5
Creative arts and design	18	13.8	7.9	19.7	290	12.5	11.2	13.9
Education	6	4.7	1.1	8.3	63	2.7	2.0	3.4

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Table F.4: Main activity of young people at the age of 18, 2009

Main activity	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	<i>N</i>	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	<i>N</i>	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Full-time Education	379	23.4	21.4	25.5	3345	46.9	45.8	48.1
Employed With Training	172	10.6	9.1	12.1	821	11.5	10.8	12.3
Employed Without Training	448	27.7	25.6	29.9	1596	22.4	21.4	23.4
Apprenticeship/training	117	7.2	6.0	8.5	487	6.8	6.3	7.4
Unemployed/Inactive (NEET)	500	30.9	28.7	33.2	877	12.3	11.5	13.1

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Table F.5: Activities of NEETs, 2009

NEET activity	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Looking for paid work	249	65.5	60.7	70.3	403	74.2	70.6	77.9
Looking after family/home full-time	89	23.4	19.1	27.6	75	13.9	11.0	16.8
Something else	42	11.1	7.9	14.2	64	11.9	9.1	14.6

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Table F.6: Types of temporary employment contracts, 2009

Temporary employment contract	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Seasonal work	15	12.4	6.4	18.3	94	18.9	15.5	22.4
Fixed term contract	44	37.1	28.4	45.8	155	31.3	27.2	35.4
Agency temping	32	27.0	19.0	35.0	63	12.7	9.8	15.7
Casual work	14	12.1	6.3	18.0	117	23.7	20.0	27.5
Other	14	11.4	5.7	17.2	66	13.3	10.3	16.3

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

Table F.7: State-benefits claimed at age 18, 2009

Benefits claimed at age 18	Persistent Absentees				Other Pupils			
	Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval		Weighted base	Proportion	95% Confidence interval	
	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)	N	(%)	Upper limit (%)	Lower limit (%)
Unemployment related benefits, or National Insurance Credits	15	0.9	0.5	1.4	72	1.0	0.8	1.2
Income support (not as an unemployed person)	68	4.2	3.2	5.2	159	2.2	1.9	2.6
Child benefit for your own children	21	1.3	0.7	1.9	65	0.9	0.7	1.1
Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit	119	7.3	6.1	8.6	132	1.8	1.5	2.2
Tax Credits	143	8.8	7.4	10.2	144	2.0	1.7	2.3

Source: National Pupil Database & LSYPE, wave 6

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