

Barnet Primary Schools Conference

October 8th 2014

“In to Win” Improving Achievement by Tackling Absence

Welcome and Introduction

Ian Harrison (Director of Education and Skills)

Why are we here?

- **Attendance is a school improvement issue:** correlation between regular attendance and good achievement at every key stage
- **Attendance is an equalities issue:** attendance of some disadvantaged groups particularly poor
- **Attendance is a safeguarding issue:** poor attendance can be an indicator of wider problems within a family
- **Attendance is a leadership issue:** poor attendance can impact on leadership judgement in inspection; robust leadership of attendance makes the biggest difference

Attendance and Attainment in Barnet

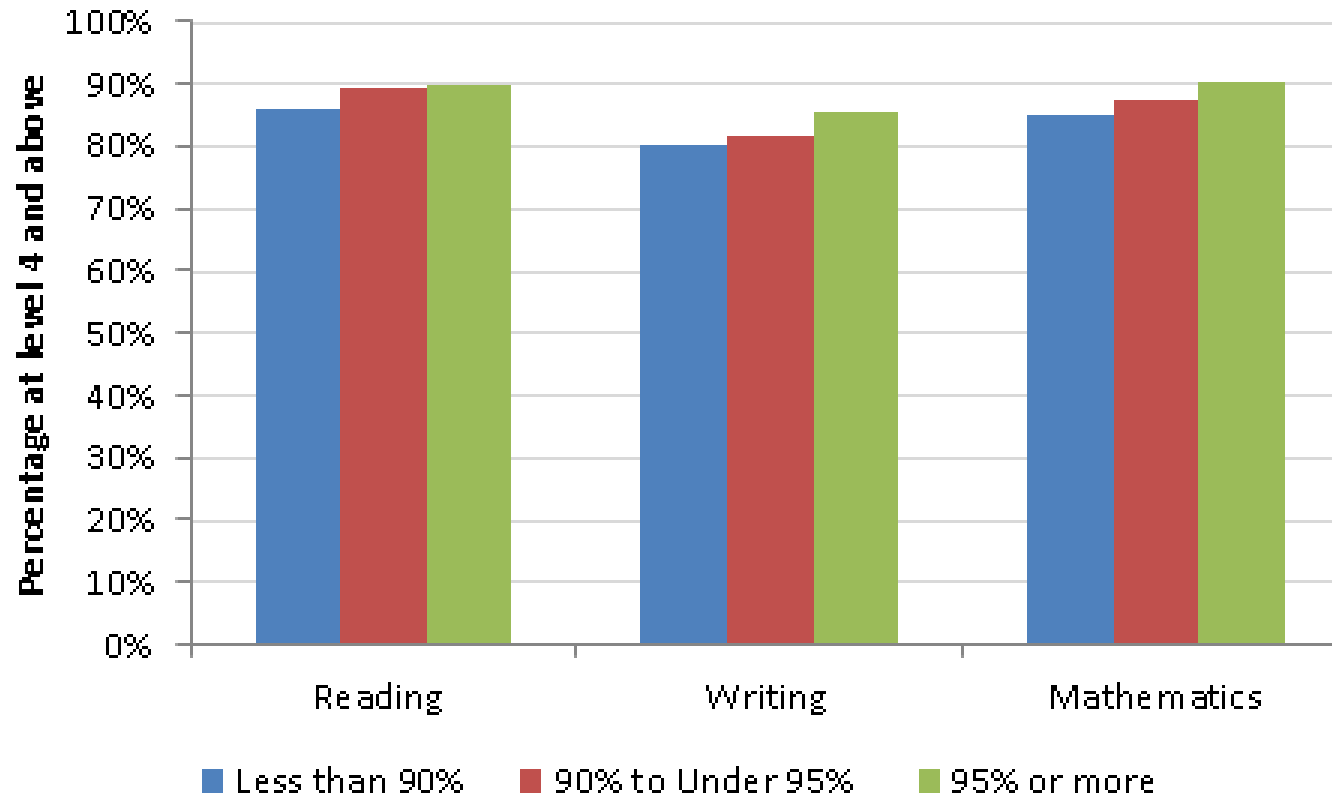
Source: Attendance Data- School Census, Attainment Data – Key to Success Key Stage 2 2012/2013

	Percentage of Attendance			
	<90%	90-95	95+	All Attendances
Pupils with L4+ in Reading, Writing, Maths	406	579	1,601	2,586
Total Number of Pupils where Attendance is provided	547	751	1,975	3,273
Percentage Achieving Level 4+ in all subjects	74%	77%	81%	79%

- There exists a link between attendance and examination performance in Barnet (as attendance increases, attainment increases). With attendance below 90% 74% of pupils achieved a level 4+ in *reading, writing and mathematics*, this increased to 77% when attendance was between 90-95% and 81% when attendance was above 95%.

Attendance and Attainment by subject

Source: Attendance Data- School Census, Attainment Data – Key to Success Key Stage 2 2012/2013



Average Attendance in Barnet schools

Source: DfE Performance Tables 2013

Barnet Primary Average	94.9%
Infant Average	93.4%
Junior Average	95.0%
Joint School Average	95.1%
National Primary Average	95.2%

Barnet Secondary Average	94.8%
National Secondary Average	94.2%

Barnet headlines

- Primary school attendance in Barnet **below national and London averages** in 2012-13 and autumn 2013
- **Authorised absence higher** in Barnet than in almost all other London LAs
- **Significant differences** between levels of attendance in otherwise similar schools
- Average **attendance of pupils in infant schools lower** than of pupils of the same age in primaries
- **Groups issue** – eg SEN and FSM

Key figures – Barnet primary phase schools 2012-13

- **Attendance range** (over five half terms) 89.6% - 96.7%
- **More than 50 schools** below 95.3% attendance (national average)
- **19 schools** 1% or more below national average
- **11 schools** 1.5% or more below national average (in the bottom 10% nationally and subject to additional scrutiny in inspection)
- **6 schools** 2% or more below national average

Conference aims

To enable participants to:

- **Understand:** the relationship between attendance and achievement, where responsibility for improving attendance should sit, how similar schools have brought about improvement in attendance and where guidance and supportive resources can be found
- **Identify:** why attendance is poor and what barriers there are to improvement
- **Plan:** to overcome these barriers and reduce absence

Areas to be covered

- **National and local context:** including the link between attendance and achievement, how attendance is inspected and how powers of enforcement can be used
- **Effective practice:** presentations from Greenwich LA and local headteachers, introduction to the Barnet attendance web pages
- **Discussion:** including Q&A, networking opportunities
- **Planning for improvement:** opportunities for school teams to work together

Next steps

- Development by school leaders of targeted **attendance action plans**
- Review of action plans and current attendance figures during autumn term **achievement reviews**
- Continued discussion of **attendance initiatives** in Network Meetings
- Continued development of **attendance website** to support sharing of effective practice
- Follow up **half day conference** in summer term to celebrate success?