

CABINET – 27 FEBRUARY 2024

ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

<p>1. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>As the Member for Banbury Ruscote, schools (William Morris, North Oxfordshire Academy & Saint Joseph's) absence figures are of grave concern and I wanted to know what plans Oxfordshire County Council and the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Young People's Services have to tackle the problem.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council is keen to support all children and young people to attend school. With that in mind, we are working with the Department for Education on a range of actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing our internal capacity to support parents, schools and children• Rolling out the DfE toolkit• Working across Childrens, Education and Families service to ensure a joined-up approach to supporting families who may be experiencing challenges in their children attending schools.• Analysing the locality element of attendance data, so that we focus on communities most in need. <p>Each of the schools raised have been offered and accepted a Whole School Attendance audit, they are scheduled as follows:</p> <p>St Joseph's: Monday 26th February 2024 William Morris: 4th March 2024 North Oxfordshire Academy: 4th March 2024.</p> <p>The whole school audit will identify good practice and areas for improvement which will then be formerly fed back to each school as part of an action plan with a view of improving attendance for children</p>
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	<p>and young people, whilst ensuring appropriate support has been identified and implemented as part of targeted attendance plans.</p> <p>William Morris and North Oxfordshire Academy are in contact with the County Attendance team on a regular basis.</p> <p>Oxfordshire schools have had some improvement with school attendance, however, data shows that children under CP/CIN and those with EHCP's are doing less well than their peers. The senior leadership in Children, Education and Families are aware of this and are working together to support attendance.</p> <p>We are also working with partners such as the Violence Reduction Unit and Oxford Brookes to develop schemes to support those young people at risk of non-attendance so that they are able to benefit from the outstanding learning opportunities available in Oxfordshire schools.</p> <p>Attendance figures from Terms 1 and 2 show absence rates in Oxfordshire schools running at 7% as compared with the national average of 6.6%. Absence rates are highest in our special schools (12.8% compared to the national average for special schools of 12.6%), our secondary schools absence rate is higher than the national average for secondary schools (9.3% compared with 8.3%) and the rate in our primary schools mirrors the national average for primaries of 5.1%.</p>

Questions are listed in the order in which they were received. Should any questioner not have received an answer in that time, a written answer will be provided.