

**Press release**  
**For immediate release**

**5 October 2023**

## **Education charity, School-Home Support, launches a best practice toolkit to help schools boost attendance rates through whole family support.**

The toolkit is set out to help schools understand and implement the Government guidance to tackle the persistent absence problem in schools through a service of whole family support.

### **Highlights:**

- A new toolkit to provide support to school leaders on developing their school attendance policy has been launched by School-Home Support.
- It includes advice for schools on how to build a culture of good attendance and speaks to Government guidelines on improving attendance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) which advocates a support led approach to tackling poor attendance.
- The toolkit includes resources and templates to help schools to identify and tackle the underlying causes of absence through whole family support.
- Last week, [Parliament's influential Education Select Committee](#) called on the Government to fund more whole family support to tackle absence, referring to the School- Home Support's model as best practice in this area.

School-Home Support, an education charity, has developed a new toolkit to support school leaders on developing their school attendance policy, with a particular focus on building strong relationships with families to understand and tackle barriers to good school attendance.

There are currently 1.7 million children persistently absent from school, missing weeks, months or even years of their education and severely affecting their future life chances.

But schools can't solve this problem alone. Tackling the school attendance crisis will require a huge multi-agency, holistic approach over a sustained period of time.

### **Supporting schools to implement the Government guidance**

In response to high levels of school absence, this time last year the Department for Education (DfE) issued the guidance entitled [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) with the aim of helping schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities work together to maintain high levels of school attendance.

#### **School-Home Support.**

Solar House, 3rd Floor, 1-9 Romford Road, London, E15 4LJ

**T:** 0845 337 0850 **E:** [press@shs.org.uk](mailto:press@shs.org.uk) **W:** [www.shs.org.uk](http://www.shs.org.uk)

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School-Home Support

School-Home Support toolkit is set out to help schools understand and implement the new Government guidance as well as contributing to the current knowledge surrounding best practice in working with families to improve attendance.

### **What's in the Improving Attendance Toolkit?**

The toolkit encompasses a wealth of resources and strategies to empower schools on their journey toward improving attendance including:

1. Guidance on cultivating a culture of good attendance throughout the entire school community
2. Practical tools and proven strategies to develop and implement a robust attendance strategy
3. Information to understand the connections between attendance and safeguarding, ensuring the well-being of all students
4. Resources to establish attendance targets and reward pupils' achievements
5. Tips and insights for engaging in meaningful conversations with families to find out barriers to attendance

### **Training sessions to present the toolkit to schools**

Training sessions aimed at introducing the toolkit to multiple schools have been organised through online sessions. These sessions served as a platform to share the new toolkit but also to facilitate discussions around best practice in tackling school attendance, through whole family support.

One participant shared their thoughts on the training, stating, "We are currently in the process of reviewing our strategies for implementation in September. I find the toolkit to be very promising and well-structured."

*'As a Trust, the toolkit has given us a framework to evaluate how effective we are at understanding and addressing the complex reasons behind attendance issues across our academies. It has given both prompts, and signposting to great resources to help us ensure that we are using the full range of strategies to improve attendance.'*

Stephen Cox,  
Director of Secondary Education, FCAT

### **School-Home Support CEO Jaine Stannard said:**

"In the face of the school attendance crisis, we firmly believe that schools should not be left alone to tackle this problem. The School-Home Support toolkit is our way of extending a helping hand, equipping school leaders to build bridges with families and break down barriers to good

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attendance, ensuring every child has access to the education they deserve and the opportunity to thrive academically and personally."

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### **About School-Home Support**

School-Home Support is a national charity which supports families whose children are severely and persistently absent by addressing the root causes of high absence through whole family support. We are campaigning for an appropriately funded, reliable family support network around schools to support the growing number of vulnerable families who need help.

Since 1984, we have used early intervention and a whole family support approach to break intergenerational cycles of deprivation and low aspiration. Partnering with schools, local authorities and communities, our expert practitioners work one-to-one with families to establish long-term trusting relationships that build a bridge between home and school.

We look beyond the classroom to tackle the underlying causes of school absence such as poverty, domestic violence or mental health challenges, using bespoke support strategies to overcome barriers to learning and ensure children can achieve their potential.

**For access to the toolkit and interview requests please contact:**

**Teresa Caballero**

Email: [Teresa.Caballero@shs.org.uk](mailto:Teresa.Caballero@shs.org.uk)

Mobile: 07929 827 034

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