



Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP
Minister for Schools

Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/contactus/df

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Dear colleagues,

Thank you for the hugely important role you play in supporting the governance of our schools and trusts.

I am writing to ask you to support the Department for Education's new school attendance campaign, which is designed to influence parental attitudes toward school attendance, and to remind you of the incredibly important role that you play as a school governor in ensuring children are in school as much as possible.

Improving school attendance is vitally important. Between the last pre-pandemic academic year 2018/19 and academic year 2021/22, persistent absence (missing more than 10% of sessions) doubled to 1.6m (22.3%, or 1 in 5), with around 850,000 **more** children affected.

Resetting attitudes to school attendance

This is why the Department for Education is running a communications campaign on school attendance this term. We are reminding parents that **moments matter, attendance counts**.

This includes reassuring parents that the NHS and the [Chief Medical Officer](#) say it is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with

What you can do to support attendance at your school

As a governor or trustee, you play a key role in working together with school and trust leaders to set whole school attendance cultures. The Department's [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) guidance sets out the expectations of academy trust boards and governing bodies of maintained schools. The National Governance Association has produced [guidance](#) and a [webinar](#) for governors that will help you in meeting these expectations.

The expectations include recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it across the school or trust ethos and policies, as well as regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school and trust leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most. We would also be very grateful if you could support your headteacher or CEO to share these important messages about attendance with parents regularly.

If your school is not already doing so, you should consider joining the 87% of state-funded schools [sharing their daily school attendance data](#) which can be done easily with no additional burden on the