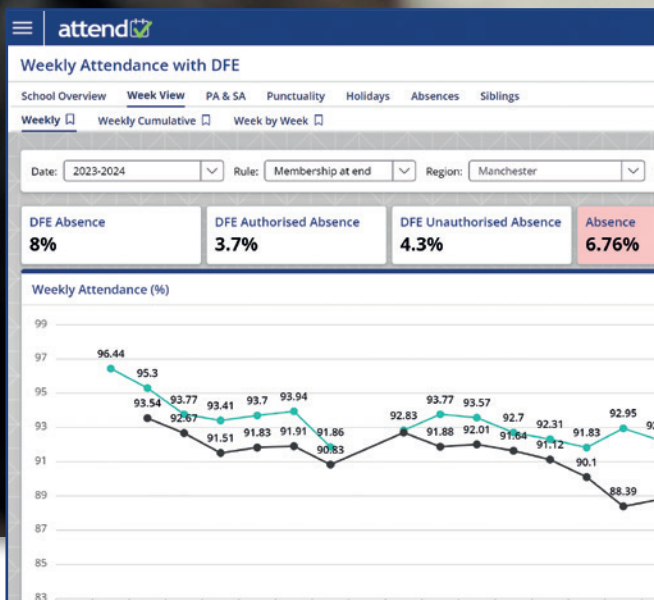


Strong Attendance. Stronger Ambition

How Denbigh School used Attend to sharpen attendance practice and reduce Persistent Absence.



• Supporting Schools with a Systematic Approach to Attendance

Denbigh School is a successful 11 to 18 mainstream secondary school in Milton Keynes, with strong outcomes and a clear commitment to high expectations, inclusion and student belonging.

Attendance was already a strength. Denbigh was not starting from a position of crisis, but leaders recognised that good attendance does not mean the work is finished. The school wanted to sharpen practice, reduce Persistent Absence, improve consistency and give staff the time, tools and visibility to act earlier.

This mattered because some attendance barriers were complex. Students could be affected by mental health needs, SEND, personal circumstances or wider challenges outside school. In Key Stage 4, some attendance habits had become more embedded over time. Denbigh's attendance work was therefore not

only about headline percentages. It was about culture, resilience, belonging and making sure the right support reached the right students at the right time.

"We've gone from operational to strategic."

• Embedding Attend into everyday practice

Denbigh saw Attend as a way to bring data, communication, workflow and intervention into one place, supporting both strategic oversight and daily operational practice.

The school uses Attend to manage stages, monitor patterns, track goal-seek milestones, identify students at risk and communicate with parents. Goal-seek milestones have been particularly useful because they turn attendance percentages into something more tangible for parents and students. Instead of only seeing a percentage, families can understand how many days are needed to move back into a stronger attendance position.

Case Study



DENBIGH SCHOOL

• Improving parental engagement

Parent communication has been a key part of Denbigh's attendance strategy.

Attendance communication is a sensitive part of school life. Messages about absence can feel personal to families, particularly when they involve scrutiny, expectations or requests for improvement. Denbigh wanted these communications to be clear and purposeful, but also constructive.

Using Attend, the school can send timely, personalised messages that help parents understand what their child's attendance means in real terms and what action they can take next.

Parent feedback showed that:

- 73% of parents reported being satisfied with Attend communications
- 87% of parents knew what action to take after receiving an Attend communication

In an area that can easily feel emotive or challenging, this is important. It shows that parents are not just receiving attendance information, they are understanding it. For Denbigh, Attend has helped make communication more consistent, more actionable and more focused on working with families towards improvement.

• Whole-school culture and shared responsibility

Denbigh's attendance improvement is not only about software. The school has worked hard to strengthen attendance culture for students, staff and parents, linking attendance with punctuality, expectations, resilience and belonging.

"We're instilling resilience into our young people so they have a sense of belonging to the school."

Attend supports this wider culture by making attendance visible, actionable and easier to discuss. Staff can see the data, understand the story behind it and act with greater confidence.

• Impact

Denbigh's confirmed figures show a clear improvement when comparing 2024–2025 with the current 2025–2026 year-to-date position.

Measure	2024–25	2025–26	Change
Overall attendance	94.28%	94.69%	+0.41 percentage points
Persistent Absence rate	14.7%	8.8%	-5.9 percentage points

"We've never had that data before, so it's been really, really insightful."

Attend is also used beyond the attendance office. Form tutors receive a weekly attendance report every Monday, which they use to recognise and reward students. Heads of Year have been trained to use Attend directly, giving them access to live data and allowing them to monitor attendance more confidently.

This has helped Denbigh build wider ownership of attendance and move from reactive follow-up to proactive intervention. The 10-week DfE signal runs daily, helping staff track key unauthorised absence thresholds without relying on manual checks. Attend also helps the school identify patterns around medical appointments, lateness and unexplained absence. In one example, the school spotted an emerging pattern linked to a particular illness and was able to respond pro-actively, sharing guidance with parents before the issue grew further.

"We can actually spend a lot more time working with families who show irregular attendance to school."

Persistent Absence reduced from 14.7 to 8.8% YTD

Overall attendance increased from 94.28% to 94.69% YTD

These improvements are particularly significant because Denbigh was already a strong-attending school. The story is not simply one of recovery from a low baseline. It is about using better systems, clearer communication and more consistent workflows to keep improving.

- **Leadership oversight and inspection readiness**

Attend has also strengthened leadership oversight at Denbigh. Attendance is discussed regularly at SLT level, with leaders able to review live information and understand where action is needed. This supports a more systematic approach, helping the school evidence that attendance concerns are identified, tracked and followed up as part of an embedded cycle of review, communication and intervention.

- **Partnership and support**

Denbigh also highlighted the importance of the support they received from the Attend team.

The onboarding process was described as supportive and responsive, with the school able to ask questions, shape set-up and make full use of the system. The relationship with Attend has helped the school build confidence and continue refining how the platform supports its attendance strategy.

“Our Attend Partner through the onboarding process was very supportive, very, very understanding.”

“Even when I reach out to Attend support with lots of questions, they always get back to me so quickly”

- **A message for other strong-attending schools**

Denbigh’s story is especially powerful for schools that already have good attendance and may feel they do not need additional support.

The school’s message is that Attend is not only for schools facing serious attendance difficulties. It can also help strong schools go further by making better use of time, improving consistency, identifying risk earlier and strengthening the link between data, communication and action.

For Denbigh, the impact has been both measurable and cultural. Persistent Absence has reduced, overall attendance has improved, staff have better visibility, parents receive clearer communication and leaders have a more strategic view of attendance across the school.

- **Conclusion**

Denbigh School shows how an already successful school can use Attend to move attendance practice forward.

Denbigh’s journey shows that attendance improvement is not only about responding to problems. It is about building a systematic, proactive and whole-school approach that helps every student belong, attend and succeed.

School: Denbigh School

Phase: 11 to 18 secondary

Location: Milton Keynes

Contributors: Leah Blackall, Lead Attendance Officer, and Mike Stewart, Attendance Lead SLT



Affordable Pricing, Outstanding Service

Attend was built to help schools strengthen attendance through practical, structured and sustainable approaches.

Our focus is simple, providing schools with powerful tools, responsive support and flexible workflows that make a genuine difference to day-to-day attendance practice.

From onboarding through to ongoing development, we work alongside schools to ensure Attend fits their processes, priorities and community.



How Attend Supports Schools

- Clear dashboards and actionable attendance insight
- Communication and staged intervention
- Home visit workflows and attendance chronologies
- Flexible tasks, appointments and action tracking
- Absence Watch, intelligent identification of attendance concerns
- Near real-time attendance visibility
- DfE comparative and strategic attendance data
- Structured workflows aligned to school practice



Continue the Conversation

To find out how Attend could support your school's attendance strategy, contact the team for a demonstration or discussion.

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www.attending.school

"It's powerful, but really straightforward to use."

Andy Clark, Education Welfare Officer

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