



Culture, Systems and Practice

January 2025

Copyright

Crown copyright 2025.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence.

To view this licence, visit the [National Archives website](#).

Please [contact us](#) if you would like to know more about Education Scotland publications.

First published August 2024.

[Views expressed in this report are not necessarily those of Education Scotland or any other government department.]

Contents

Copyright	2
Contents	3
Purpose	4
Culture	5
Systems	7
Practice.....	8

Purpose

The three themes of 'culture, systems and practice' are integral when considering approaches to improving attendance and engagement. These should be considered as cogs which are interdependent.

The purpose of this resource is to support educational establishments and practitioners to:

- Identify the elements within culture, systems and practice that are working well
- Identify any areas that could be strengthened, next steps and possible tests of change
- Have easy access to existing materials that support approaches within culture, systems and practice

This resource is intended to be a 'easy to use audit' tool. A comprehensive set of reflective questions to support self-evaluation and improvement planning can be found here: [Promoting attendance self-reflection questions for educational-settings](#).

Within each of the three themes, you will find links to resources already available. This is not an exhaustive list but is intended to be a helpful reference.

Culture

Key elements which promote an inclusive and caring **culture** are outlined below. This is designed to be used as a 'quick check' that will help establishments to quickly identify the elements of where they should focus their self-evaluation efforts to improve attendance and engagement. When areas for further development have been identified, [Promoting attendance self-reflection questions for educational-settings](#) will support both the self-evaluation and planning process.

Rate each element between 1 (significant area for improvement) and 5 (major strength).

Elements	Rating (1-5)	Comments
Clear leadership is in place to drive forward improvement		
Equity and inclusion are embedded		
Compassionate, flexible relationships are in place		
Support is available for families to build their confidence		
Feelings of safety and belonging for all are prioritised		
Universal and targeted approaches to improve attendance and engagement are balanced		
The views and contributions of parents and carers, partners and community members are valued		
All stakeholders understand the importance of attendance and engagement		
Evidence of cross-sector working - avoiding a discrete problem-solving approach		
Clear arrangements for effective transitions are in place		
Staff wellbeing is supported effectively		
Whole-school approaches to mental-health and wellbeing in place		
Consistency of language and understanding of approaches to promote an inclusive and caring		

culture, underpinned by professional learning		
---	--	--

Systems

Key elements which support the development of effective **systems** are outlined below. This is designed to be used as a 'quick check' that will help establishments to quickly identify the elements of where they should focus their self-evaluation efforts to improve attendance and engagement. When areas for further development have been identified, [Promoting attendance self-reflection questions for educational-settings](#) will support both the self-evaluation and planning process. ,

Rate each element between 1 (significant area for improvement) and 5 (major strength).

Elements	Rating (1-5)	Comments
Effective use of data to identify early warning signs		
Rigorous tracking and monitoring of all absences		
Analysis of 'actionable data'		
Identify history of absence		
Evidence-based support approaches		
Whole school approaches are clear and used consistently		
Systems highlight absence through a range of lenses		
Multi-dimensional, multi-tiered systems of support		
Processes are in place to ensure the voices of children, young people and families are acted on		
Systems align with the language and ethos of an inclusive and caring culture		
Support identification of professional learning needs		

Practice

Key elements which will support **practice** are outlined below. This is designed to be used as a 'quick check' that will help establishments to quickly identify the elements of where they should focus their self-evaluation efforts to improve attendance and engagement. When areas for further development have been identified, [Promoting attendance self-reflection questions for educational-settings](#) will support both the self-evaluation and planning process.

Rate each element between 1 (significant area for improvement) and 5 (major strength).

Elements	Rating (1-5)	Comments
Approaches align to the values and culture		
'Getting it Right for Every Child' is at the centre		
Reflects the views of the young person		
Evidence of curriculum flexibility and learning pathways		
Consideration given on how to promote access low income supports		
Prioritisation given to social and emotional support		
Ensures the building of connections with a key person		
Targets underlying causes such as wellbeing and additional support needs		
Activates children and young peoples' motivation		
Focus on high-quality learning and teaching		
Understands the barriers for the young person(s) attendance and engagement		

