Managing secondary school attendance during the pandemic: What can we learn?

Dave Kilby

Cavendish School
Believing in Excellence

2020-21   Cavendish: 94%

                National released
today!

2019-20   Cavendish: 95.6% (T3)

2018-19   Cavendish: 95.8%

                National: 94.5%

Cavendish's Historic Attendance

How has the pandemic affected our attendance?

Isolating (X codes), or positive (I02) has meant less pupils have been able to come into school.

Detrimental effect on pupils attainment, attendance and well-being.

- Pupils have had to deal with a lot of change.
- A lot of pupils have spent extended amount of time at home and online.
- The consistency and safety of school has not been there for some pupils.
- Multiple pupils struggling with their mental health.

Ensuring consistency through a whole school approach

- Pupils
- Parents
- Form Tutors/ Class Teachers
- Progress Leaders
- The Attendance & Medical Team
- SLT (fortnightly meeting and termly booklet)
- Governors (Regular Gov report and meetings)

Attendance has high profile throughout the school
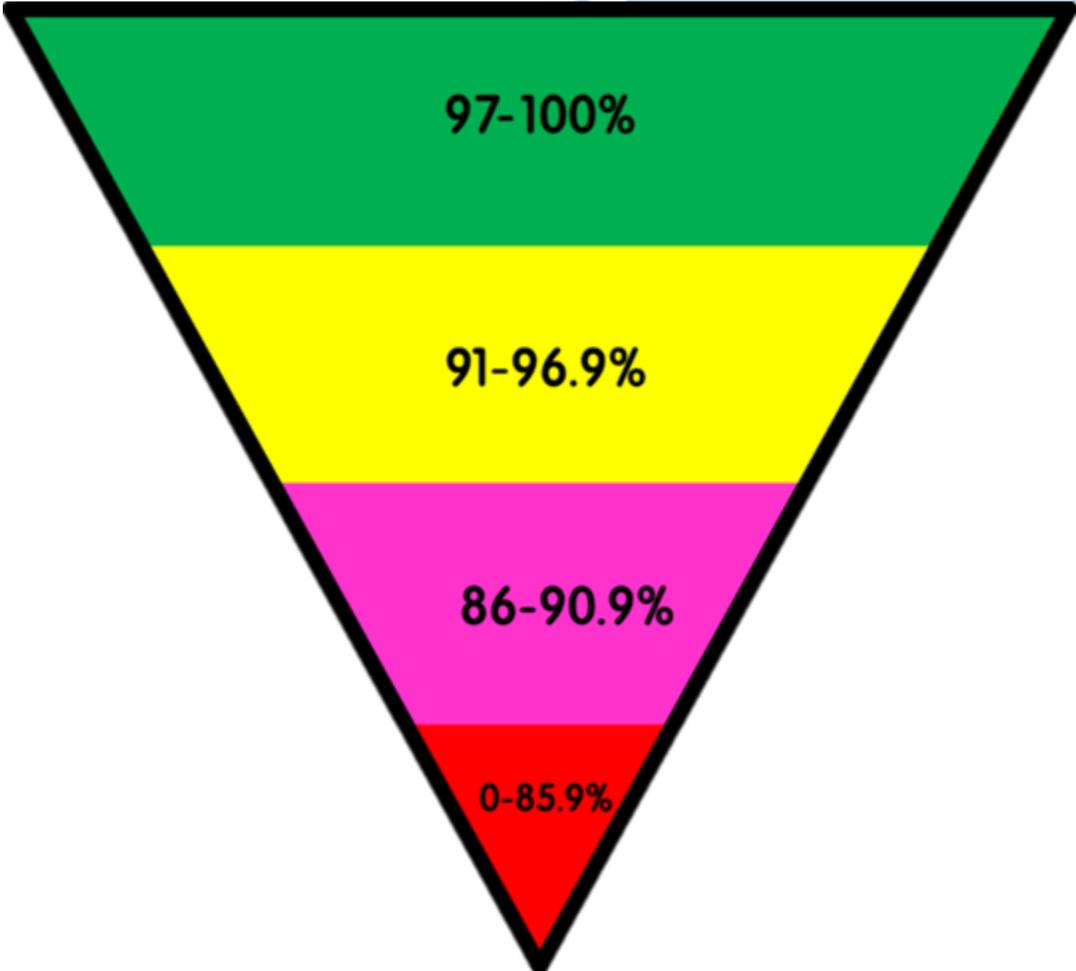
97-100%
91-96.9%
86-90.9%
0-85.9%

100%-97%	0-6days missed	No Concern
91%-96.9%	7days -18days missed	Risk of underachievement
86%-90.9%	19-28 days missed	Severe risk of underachievement
0%-85.9%	29+days missed	Extreme concern - underachievement

People in post

Enough people are needed to bring out change and ensure consistency:

- 3 Attendance and Welfare Team
- 30 form tutors
- 5 Progress Leaders
- 5 Guidance Leaders
- On-site provision
- SLT member who line manages attendance
- Governor linked to attendance

Weekly Attendance Meetings

Weekly tracking of attendance which is used across the school

- Relevant Progress Leader, SENCO, On-site provision meeting with Attendance Team weekly.
- Consistent systems and language
- Pupil Premium and SEND first approach
- Drops in attendance monitored and actions linked to this
- Those below thresholds have clear recorded actions which are monitored closely.
- Actions from previous week are checked.

#FFTCONF22

The role of the Progress Leader

- Meet with the Attendance officer weekly

- Create a set of actions for pupils whose attendance has fallen.

- Monitor the completion of these actions.

- Liaise with Guidance Leader for mental health support (listening service, on-site counselling).

- Arrange meetings with parents (e.g. anxiety, reduced timetable)

The role of the Attendance and Welfare Team

- On top of meeting Progress Leaders/SENCO weekly, they:
  - Complete absence calling
  - Log any absences due to mental health on MyConcerns
  - Consistent with asking for medical evidence
  - Consistent with next step actions
  - Put pupils on an attendance plan when nesessary and monitor

The role of the form tutor/ class teacher

- Attendance triangle in all classrooms and updated weekly

- Tutor time dedicated to Attendance
  - Attendance in planners
  - Tutors display attendance for all pupils
  - Discuss any issues with pupils and record on SIMS - STA
  - Contact home (daily) when pupils are late to school
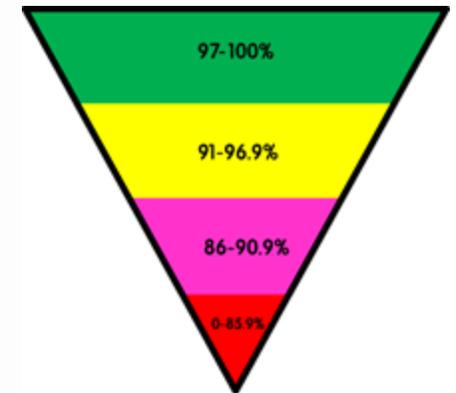
97-100%		
91-96.9%		
86-90.9%		
0-85.9%		

100%-97%	0-6days missed	No Concern
91%-96.9%	7days -18days missed	Risk of underachievement
86%-90.9%	19-28 days missed	Severe risk of underachievement
0%-85.9%	29+days missed	Extreme concern - underachievement

Contextual data - reporting

Attendance for schools is currently lower than pre-pandemic.

- Where are the gaps/differences?
- Comparison to National 18/19
- Comparison for each group (vulnerable pupils, year groups etc)
- FFT National and FFT Regional
  - More accurate picture. Celebrate the positives!

A Stepped Approach

Relevant Progress Leader, SENCO, On-site provision meeting with Attendance Team weekly with stepped follow up actions:

- Tutor/ Class teacher actions
- Letter of concern
- Progress Leaders to call parents/carers
- Invite to attend support meeting
- Attendance plan agreed
- Targets set
- 10 in 10 warning issue
- Attendance monitored and regular reviews
- U Codes warning letters