



Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel

Attendance Introduction

30th. October 2023

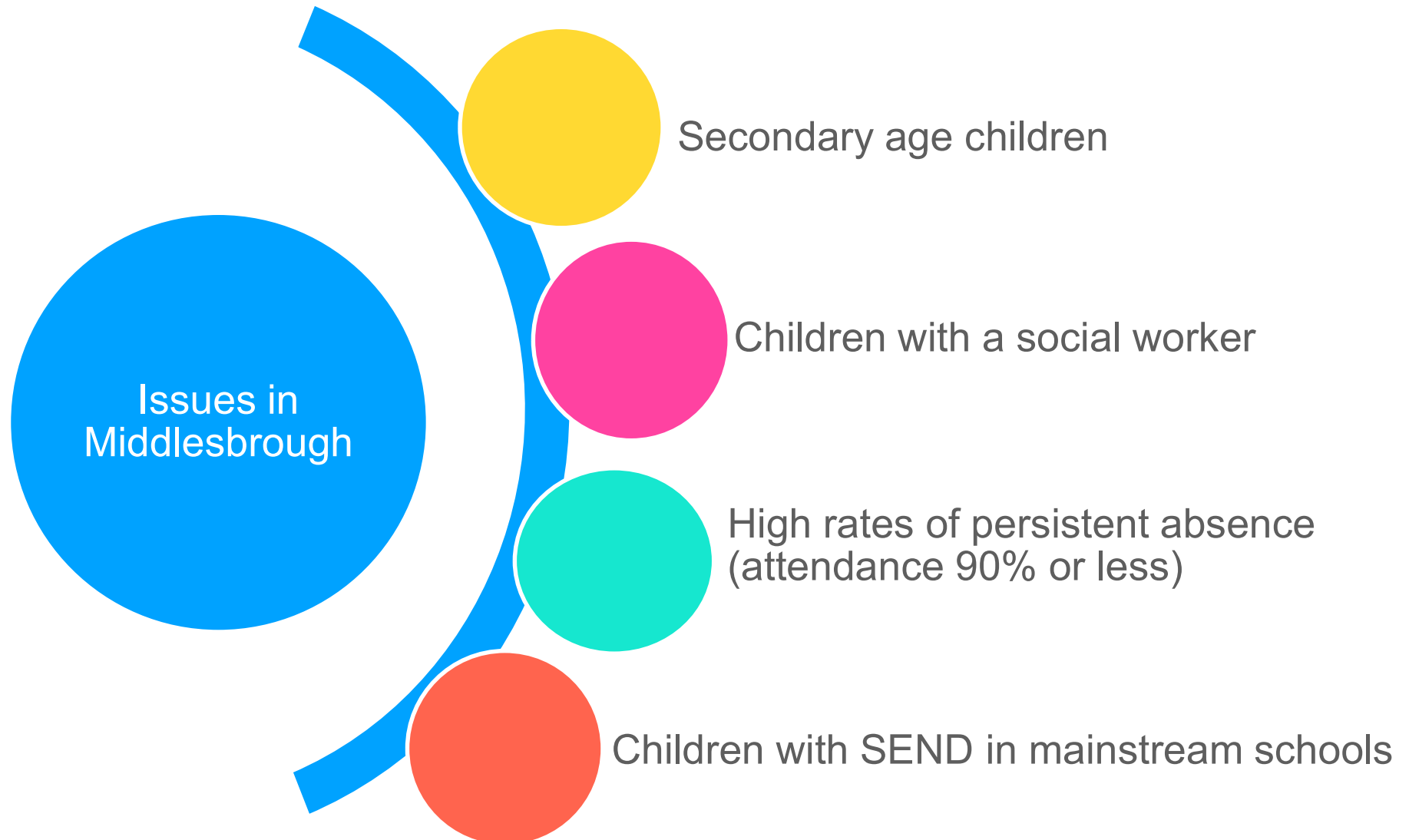
Why does good attendance matter?

'Children with no absence are 1.3 times more likely to achieve a level 4 at GCSE and 3 times more likely to achieve a level 5 compared to children with between 10 and 15% absence during key stage 4'.

DfE Link Between Absence and Attainment

What is attendance like in Middlesbrough?

Attendance in Middlesbrough is lower than the national and regional averages. In the next meeting we will have a deeper dive into the data but broadly the issues are:



Why is this a concern?

These are the most vulnerable groups of children.

They are the groups who perform least successfully in exams.

They are the children who are least likely to progress into further and higher education

They are the children most likely to be exploited.

They are the children most likely to be drawn into antisocial behaviour.

In short – they are the children who most benefit from the protective and nurturing influence of school!

What are we doing about it?

- With the support of a DfE Attendance Advisor we have developed an Attendance Strategy to help support school leaders to address poor attendance, setting out where help is available.
- We have recruited two additional EWO staff (July 2023) so that more targeted support can be offered to schools and families.
- We are part of the Attendance Alliance that is being developed in the North East by DfE.
- We have put in place the VCAP project to bring together social workers, schools and families to help remove barriers to attendance for children with a social worker (see slide 8).
- We have negotiated additional financial support from DfE (£350k) to help those schools where PA is significantly high by providing additional attendance staff.

- DfE has commissioned Barnardos to run an attendance mentoring programme in Middlesbrough where mentors work directly with children and their families where attendance is identified by the school as a significant issue.
- LA Ed Psych team is developing a piece of work on emotionally based school avoidance, with the aim of developing bespoke strategies to support children to improve their attendance.
- All social workers have been supplied with web based access to live attendance data for their children, to ensure they have a clear understanding of when attendance becomes a concern.
- LA is providing schools with opportunities to share best practice in improving attendance. The first event is an Attendance Conference at Middlesbrough Football Club on 7th November. The event is sold out!

The Vulnerable Children Attendance Project (VCAP)

VCAP delivers the Local Authority's strategic role in promoting the education outcomes of Children with a Social Worker (CWSW) (as required in the DfE June 22 Education Document – Promoting the education of children with a Social Worker.)

The objectives are:

- Rigorously track local attendance data for CWSW
- Make attendance a key focus of all frontline council services.
- Use attendance data from all schools to identify the CWSW school age cohorts, schools, and neighbourhoods to focus on.
- Ensure all frontline staff involved in attendance, associated teams and local partners understand their role in delivering this strategy and work together.
- Have a dedicated Attendance CWSW School Officer and VCAP Lead who provide communication and advice to the following three core functions:
 - Targeted Support Meetings
 - Multi-disciplinary support for families
 - Information, advice, and guidance to key stake holders

VCAP will monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker by:

- Triangulating data using existing collection methods.
- Identifying children who are persistently and severally absent.
- Driving a multiagency approach to care planning focused on improving attendance for children with below 20% attendance
- Providing training on barriers and evidence-based strategies for all key stakeholders.