

School Attendance

The Role of The Virtual School for

Children in Care

- The Virtual School has a statutory duty to promote and monitor education and progress for all children in care. This includes promoting good school attendance and monitoring and tracking attendance as part of the statutory PEP process.
- As a corporate parent, The Virtual School promotes good school attendance as this is vital to ensure children and young people achieve their full potential and have the best possible wider life chances.
- School attendance expectation for all children in care is 95% or above.

Virtual School Attendance Updates

- We have updated our attendance policy and attendance processes document which have been adopted by the Virtual School Management Board (VSMB). These documents have been emailed to all designated teachers and can also be found on our website.
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/vschool/policies-procedures-and-resources/virtual-school-policies-useful-guidance-and-documents/>
- From September 2025, all children in care will have an attendance target as part of their PEP document. Those with good attendance will receive a Pupil Premium Plus reward.
- From September 2025, the PEP document will have an updated attendance improvement plan for all students where attendance is below 90%. This plan will include consideration of push/pull factors as recommended by Gloucestershire EP service.



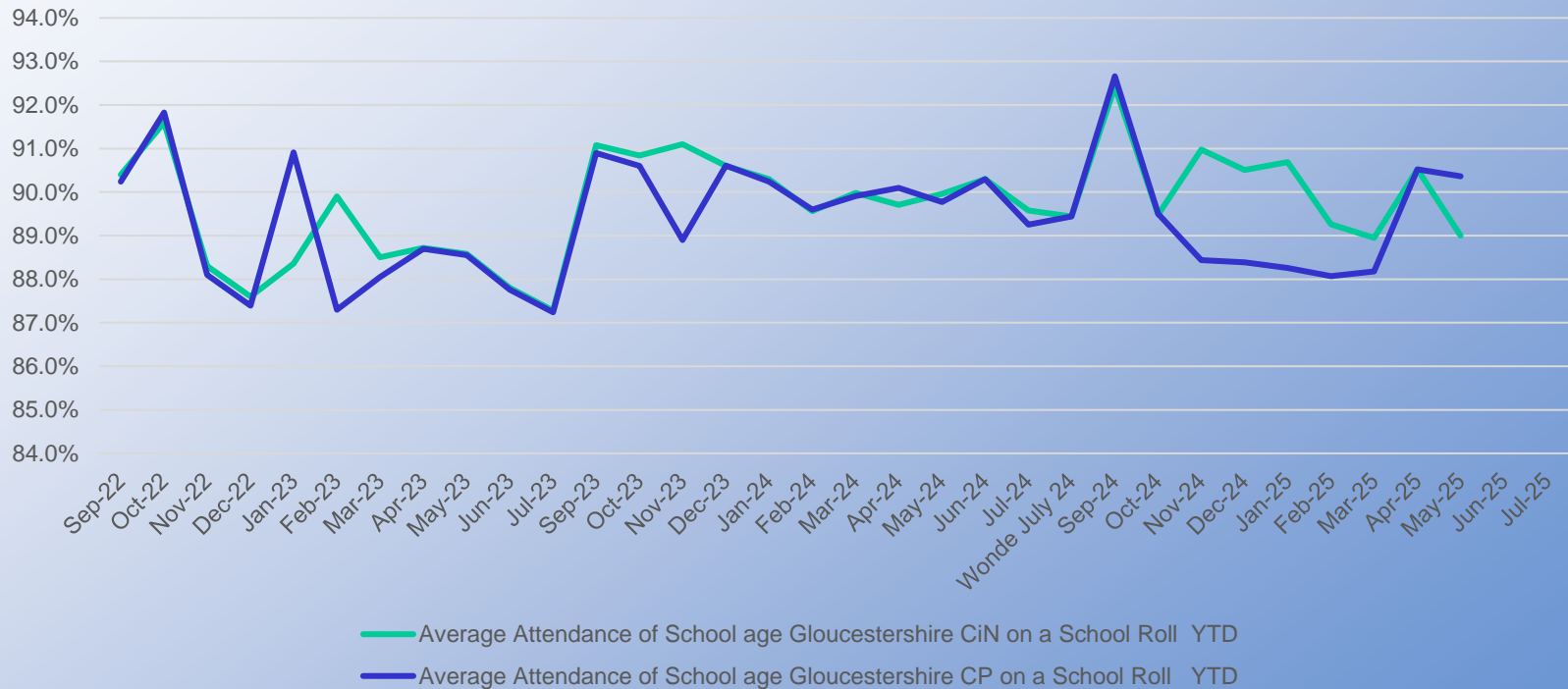
Attendance and Children with a Social Worker

- We track attendance across cohorts, not individuals
- Advice, support and guidance available
- Wide range of training is offered to support schools. (see training slide)
- Projects run to promote attendance e.g. Drawing and Talking, Y9/10 laptops etc. Through the Drawing and Talking project, early indications show that a therapeutic approach is having a significant impact on attendance and creating positive learning behaviours. There are possible spaces available on this course for 25/26. Please reach out if you are interested.



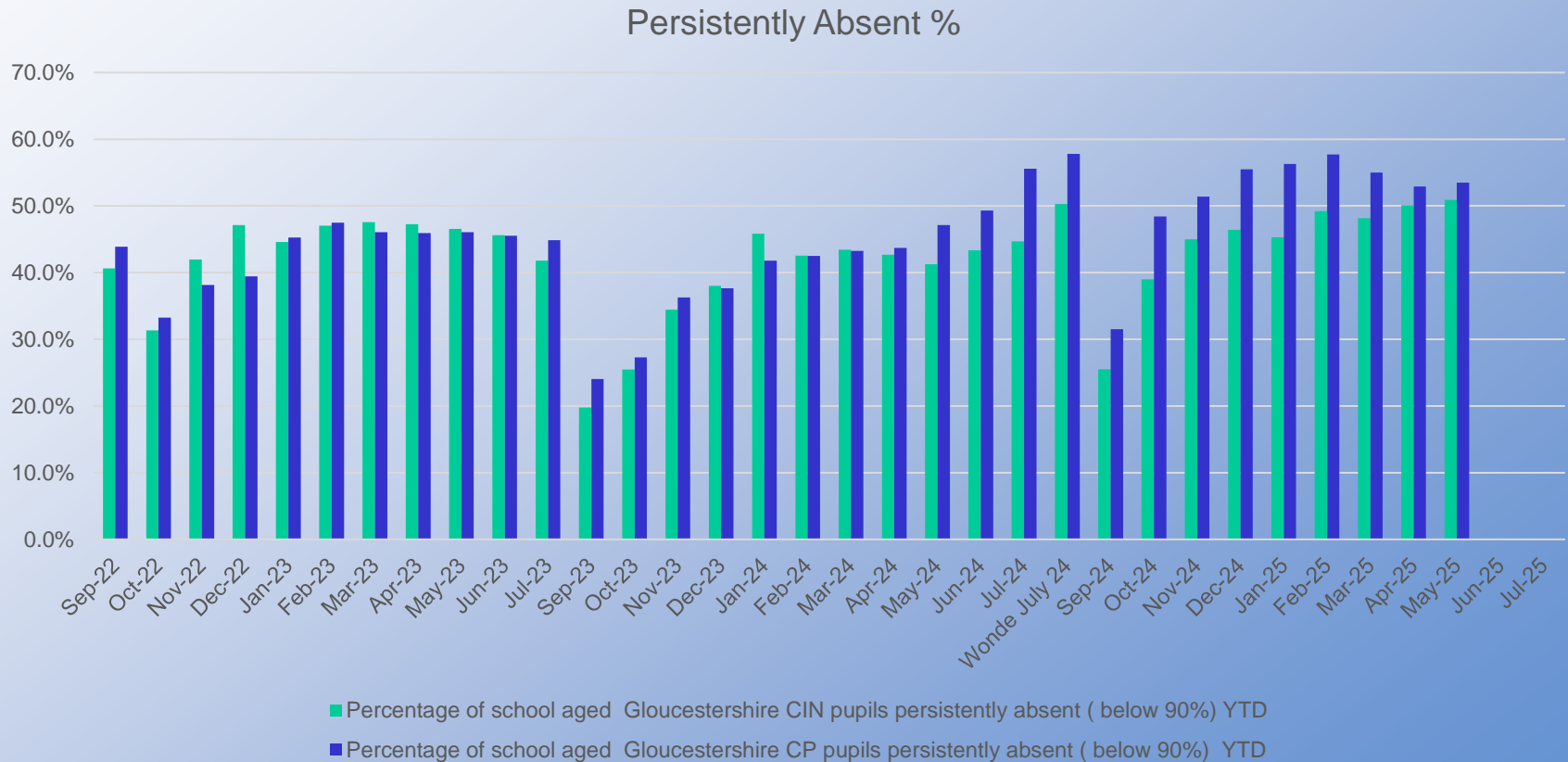
Average Attendance (CiN and CP)

Average Attendance on a School Roll



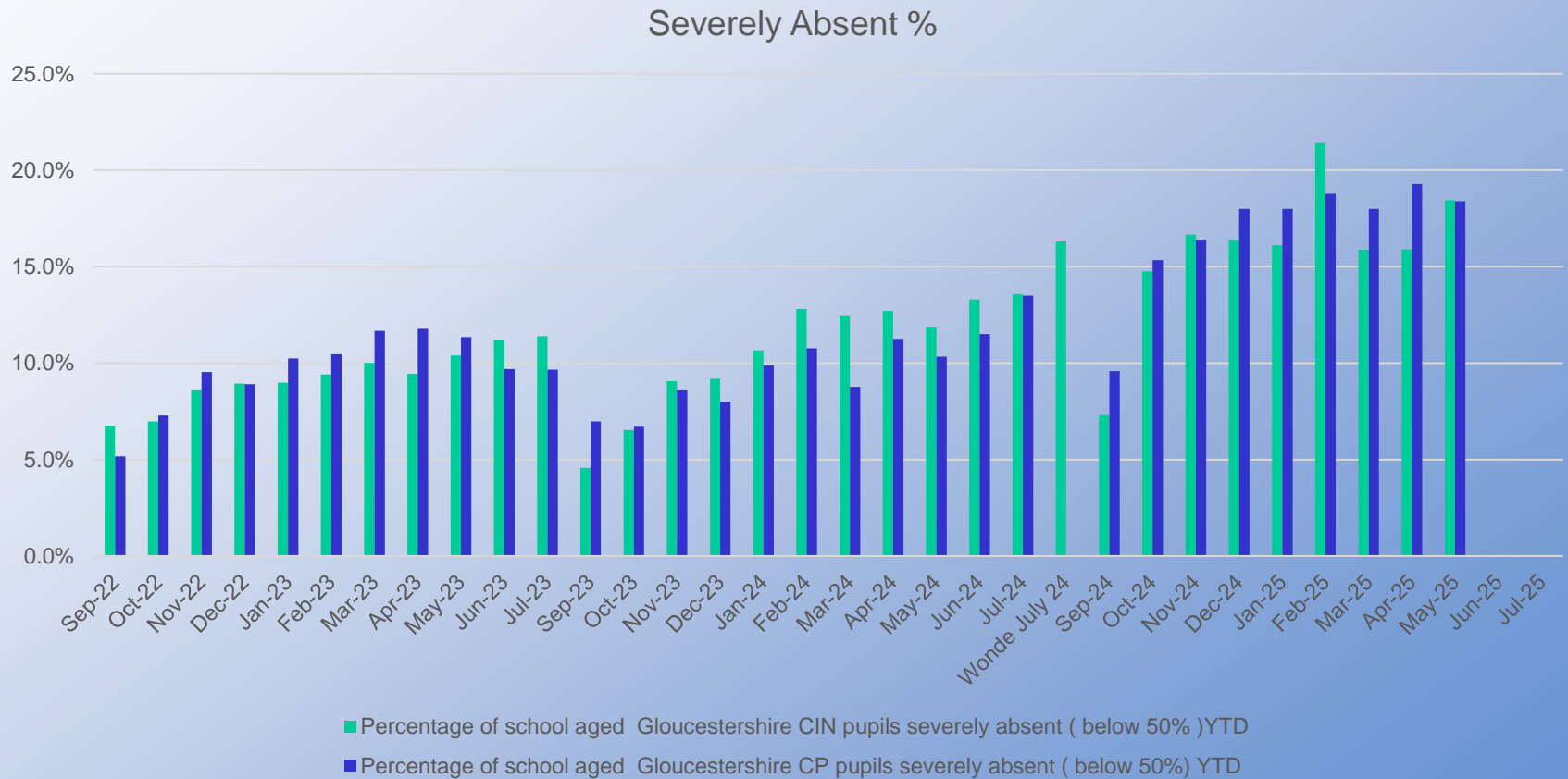


Persistent Absence





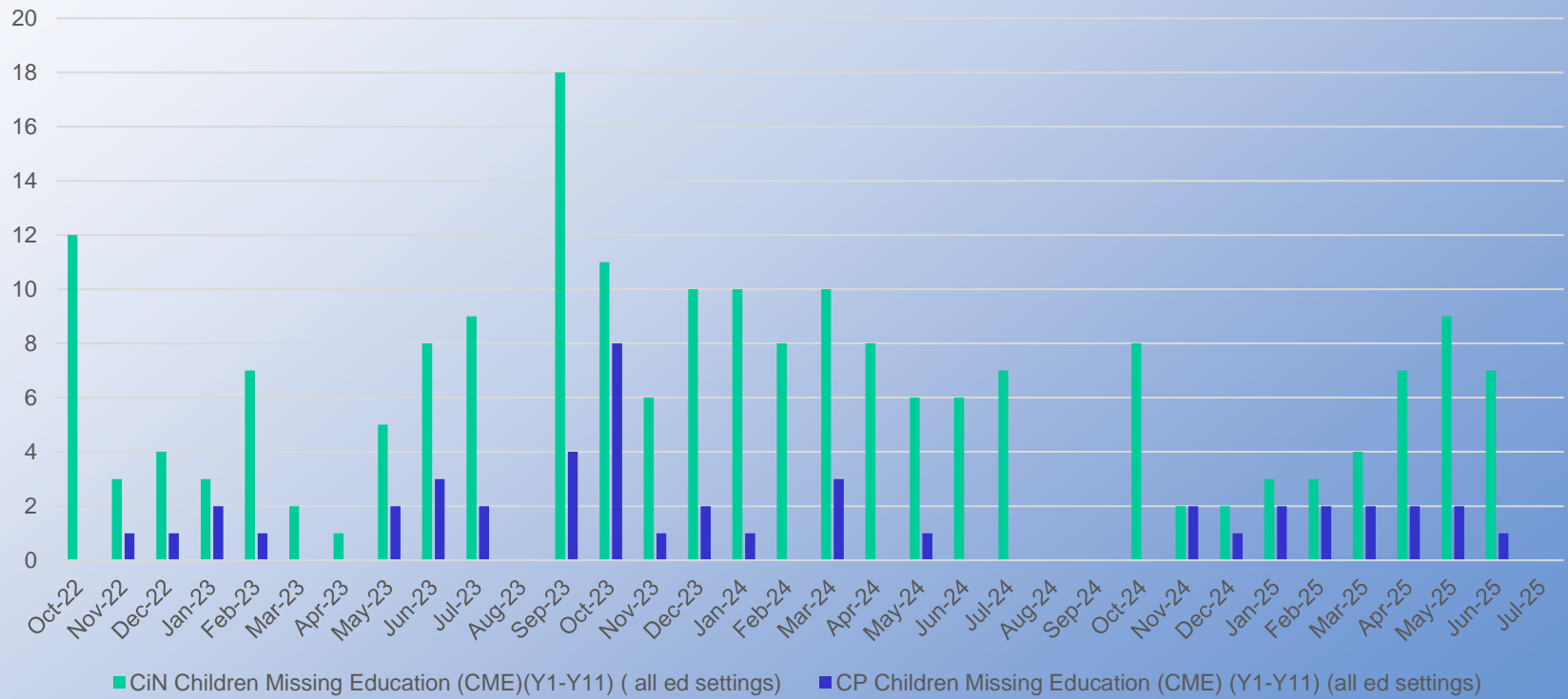
Severe Persistent Absence





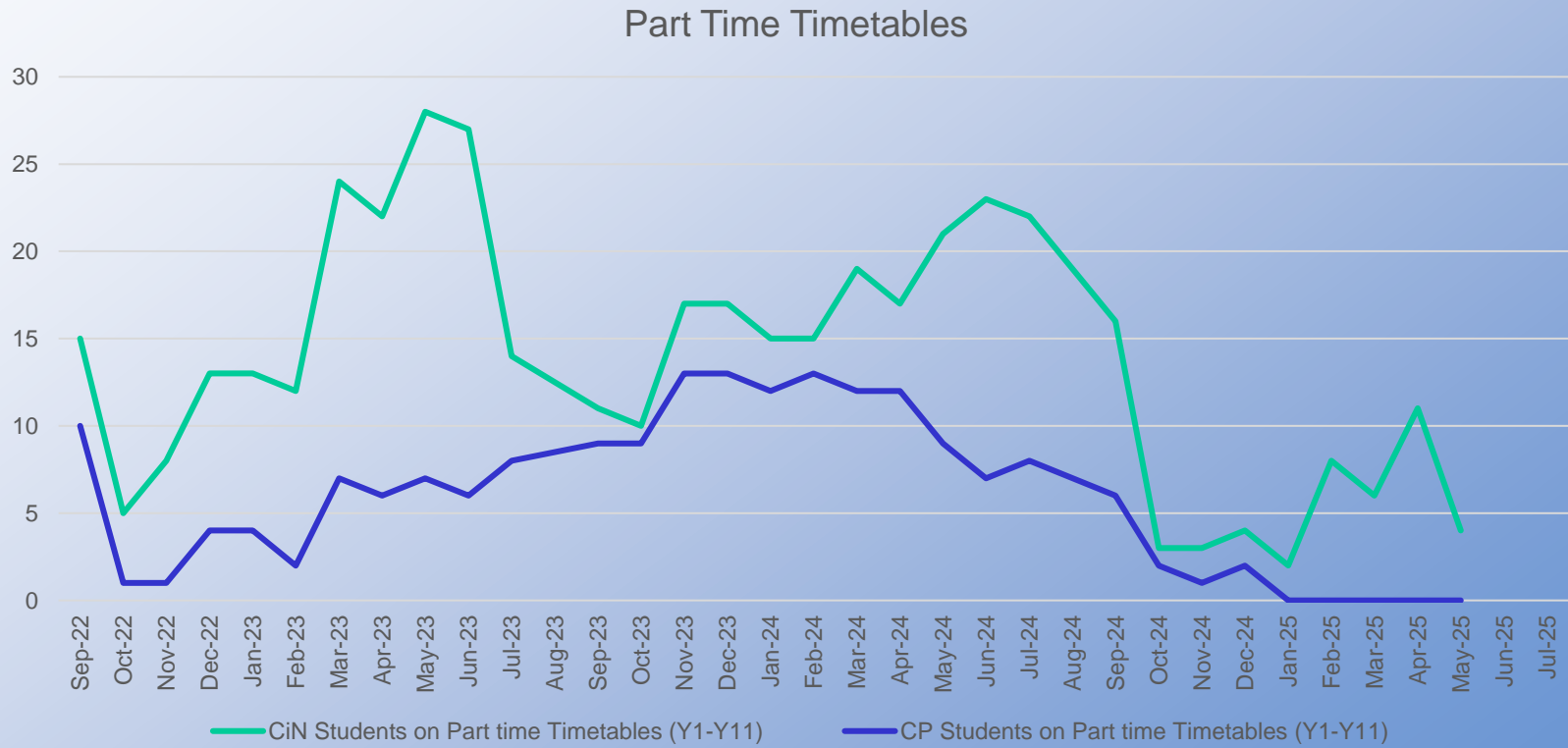
Children Missing in Education

CME





Part Time Timetables - this data is pulled from school's IMS. Is this being recorded correctly as graph show numbers are dropping?



Advice and Support

- Our website contains a range of information, support and training videos. www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/virtual-school/



- For advice about a specific pupil, please contact the Virtual School education advisor linked to your school in the first instance.
- If you are unsure who this is, please contact virtuelschooladmin@gloucestershire.gov.uk



What is Kinship Care?

- Kinship care is when a child lives full-time or most of the time with a relative or close family friend, usually because their parents are not able to care for them.
- Grandparents are the most common kinship carers, but older siblings, aunts, uncles, and people who know the child well can also take on the role.
- The most prevalent form of alternative care for children worldwide.
- Referred to as 'family and friends' carers' or 'connected people' by local authorities and in some documents.
- Kinship care can include informal and informal arrangements such as Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders.
- Although children in kinship care tend to have better educational outcomes than looked after children, their outcomes fall behind those children with no social worker involvement.



Championing Kinship Care Strategy

This new strategy builds on the existing support available for children to improve their educational outcomes which currently includes:

- Free school meals YP to receive Ever 6 pupil premium funding
- Pupil Premium+ funding for children previously in care. This is not ring-fenced for individual children in the same way it is for children in care. Schools should highlight to parents and carers that children previously in care are eligible for Pupil Premium+
- Fair Access protocol – in year school placement when unable to get a place via other means
- Virtual School Head (VSH) to provide advice and information to schools on request to promote the educational achievement of children who were previously in care
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to provide help for children within school to supportively engage with parents and carers when facing difficulties and challenges



Virtual School Kinship Expansion

As well as advocating for individual looked after children, VSH's promote the education of children who are previously looked after, through the provision of information, advice and guidance to their parents/carers and appropriate professionals. This remit of information and advice has been expanded to include children in formal kinship care arrangements. This includes:

Raising the visibility of the distinct needs of children in different types of kinship care arrangements and the disadvantages that they can experience.

Providing advice and guidance on education matters to parents, carers and professionals for previous children in care and those in kinship care.

Signposting to other services

Making training and resources available through our website

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/vschool/about-us/previous-children-in-care-and-kinship/>

For children previously in care and in kinship care, the Virtual School do not track or monitor individual students and do not casework with children or families, as the VS is no longer the corporate parent. The Virtual School hold no funding for children previously in care or kinship care.



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL