



University College London  
Department of Clinical, Educational and Health  
Psychology  
Educational Psychology Group

**Extended School Non-Attendance: Theoretical and Practical Implications for  
Educational Psychologists.**

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**Programme Summary**

The aims of this day are to provide educational psychologists with up-to-date knowledge and an understanding of school non-attendance and engagement, and to hear about the practical action EPs are taking. This is at a time when hardly a day goes by without some media reference to the dire state of attendance in schools, particularly since the Covid-19 pandemic, and multiple opinions about causes and cures. Unsurprisingly, there is frequently more heat than light with too little consideration of evidence. As the artist Ai Weiwei remarked, 'Evidence is such a beautiful word'. For EPs, of course, a significant part of our role relates to the needs of children and young people experiencing extended non-school attendance. We understand the beauty in the word 'evidence' and so the day will provide a mixture of accounts from leading researchers and practitioners in the field, providing both research evidence and practice-based evidence to inform action in multiple ways.

Lunch and refreshments will be provided for those attending in-person on the day.

**This day will be held at 26 Bedford Way, UCL in the Lower Ground Lecture Theatre and also via a livestream.**

**Cancellation policy:** If a cancellation is made on or before **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> 2024**, then 80% of the registration fee will be refunded. After this date, no refunds can be made.

**Programme**

9.30	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>
9.40	<b>David Heyne – ‘The Evolving Landscape of School Attendance – Charting a Course via Research to Practice’.</b> <i>This presentation will explore the complex influences on attendance and absence, navigate tailored strategies for diverse needs, and critically examine the pyramid framework as a compass for our work in supporting all students.</i>
10.45	<b>Refreshment break – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Cafe</b>
11.15	<b>Caroline Bond - Educational attendance and participation for children and young people with additional needs experiencing anxiety and persistent school non-attendance.</b> <i>This presentation will explore some of the challenges relating to persistent school non-attendance and educational participation for those children and young people who have complex needs.</i>
12.15	<b>Adele Tobias - The ATTEND Framework – theory, development and use.</b> <i>This presentation will focus on what The ATTEND Framework is, how it was developed and the theory and ethos underpinning it. It will also cover how it is currently being used and possible next steps.</i>
13.00	<b>Lunch break – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Café and Rooms 305, 206, 219</b>
14.00	<b>Jerricah Holder - Moving from Recovery to Rediscovery: Supporting children with more entrenched and extended school non-attendance.</b> <i>Focusing specifically on the needs of children and families grappling with entrenched school avoidance and extended non-attendance, often where a child has not attended school for many years.</i>
15.00	<b>Comfort break – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Cafe</b>
15.10	<b>Matthew Fletcher - The use of telepresence robotic avatars to support educational engagement and attendance for pupils experiencing extended school non-attendance.</b> <i>This presentation will consider the use of telepresence technology to support educational engagement and reintegration after a period of non-attendance. It will focus on the use of the AV1 robotic avatar, which is currently in use across 50 UK local authorities.</i>
16:10	<b>Feedback and closing remarks</b>

## Contributors

**David Heyne** until recently was Associate Professor in the unit Developmental and Educational Psychology of the Institute of Psychology at Leiden University, and now has his own company, Excellence in Attendance Support. He is a founder member of the International Network for School Attendance. He is the leading researcher in the world in this field.

**Caroline Bond** is the Practice Placement Director for the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Manchester. As an EP she worked as part of a multi-agency autism team and her research has focused on promoting the inclusion of autistic pupils in school.

**Adele Tobias** is an acting Assistant Principal Educational Psychologist with Brighton & Hove EPS and author of The ATTEND Framework. She qualified as an EP at UCL in 2004 and completed a doctorate with The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust in 2017. Her doctoral thesis focused on school non-attendance and led to the development of the ATTEND Framework which was published in 2020 and is currently being piloted by several local authorities.

## Contributors

**Matthew Fletcher** is an educational psychologist in Wirral Council. His doctoral research explored the use of robotic telepresence technology to support pupils who experience extended school non-attendance. He has published three papers about this technology and its UK applications. Currently, he is co-developing a local authority pilot project which includes schools trialling the AV1 device to support education re-engagement.

**Jerricah Holder** is an experienced Educational Psychologist, trainer and author of the School Wellbeing Cards. Over the course of her career, Jerricah has developed a particular passion and interest in supporting the needs of children experiencing Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). Jerricah promotes a compassionate and child-centred approach to understanding and addressing barriers to attendance and school wellbeing. She has extensive experience of working with individual children alongside their family and school settings to increase resilience in school attendance, as well as developing more systemic approaches to EBSA that shift the focus onto early identification and intervention at a Whole School and Local Authority level.