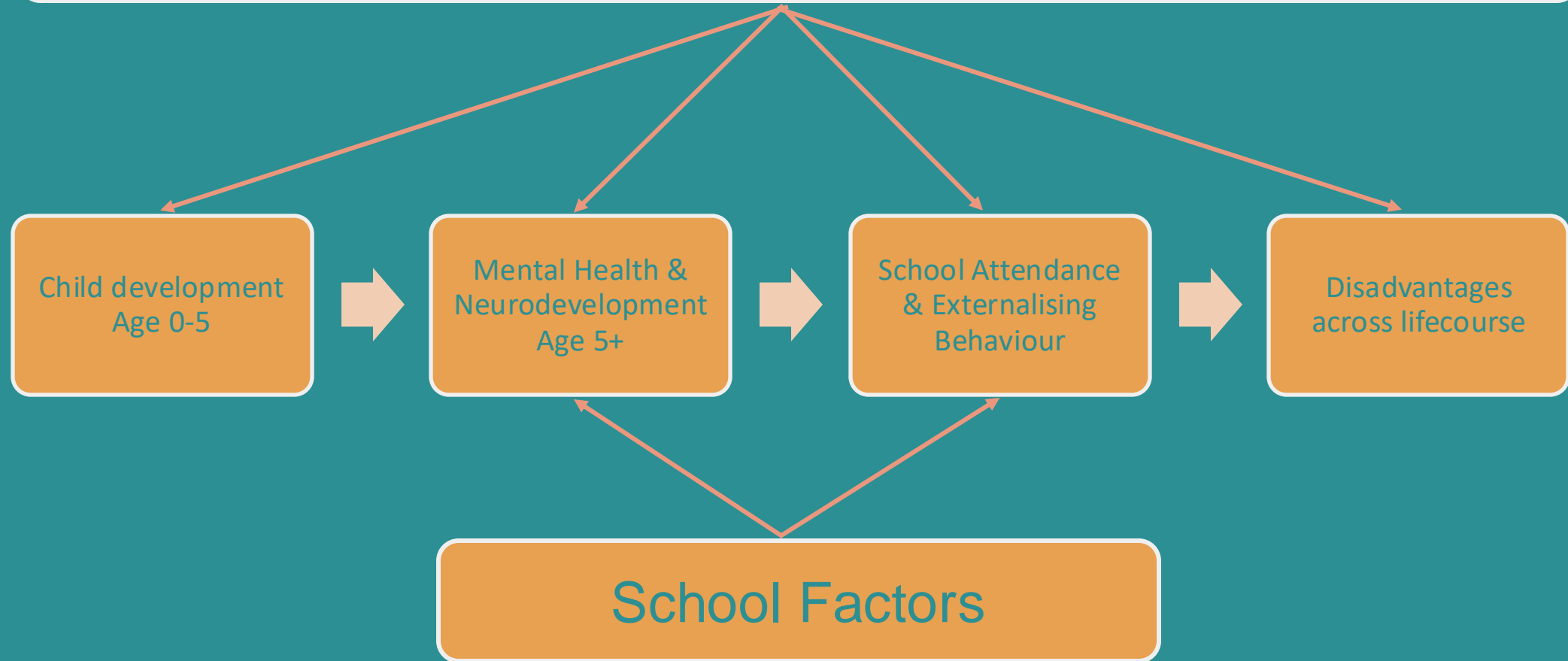


Childhood development, household circumstances, and school attendance

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Family & Household Circumstances



Research questions

1. How do household circumstances in the early years impact on pre-school development and mental wellbeing?
2. How do these factors interact to determine school attendance patterns?
3. Can good school attendance help to mitigate the impact of challenging household circumstances on later child development?

Family & Household Circumstances

Understanding Society
Deprivation
Parental wellbeing

National Pupil
Database:
Attendance

National Pupil
Database:
School attainment

Child development
Age 0-5

Mental Health &
Neurodevelopment
Age 5+

School Attendance
& Externalising
Behaviour

Disadvantages
across lifecourse

Understanding Society Pregnancy early
childhood collection:
Early years child development

External Linkage DfE
Statistics
School characteristics

School Factors



Project panel meetings.



Webpages detailing the project findings.



An online slide deck of findings



Academic journal article.



Academic conference presentation



Presentation to the DfE



Shareable code scripts hosted on github.



Blog summarising the project



First look findings June 2025



Final outputs from November 2025



- How does this work fit with ongoing work at the DfE?
- Are there particular areas that are of interest and could be prioritised?



References

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Possible Issues

Coverage of school attendance within the US sample of children may not support trajectory modelling

- Use time limited attendance period, e.g., attendance in foundation and key stage 1.

Coverage of the NPD data within US sample may not include key stage 4 measures of educational attainment (e.g., GCSEs).

- Use earlier key stage measures, with greater coverage e.g., key stage 1 and 2.

Attendance data during covid problematic due to periods of school closures etc.

- End trajectory modelling period prior to the start of COVID (autumn term 2019).

Methods

- **Data tidying**
- **Latent growth models** will be used to assess attendance trajectories
 - E.g., child had stable, improving or worsening attendance over time.
- **Factor analysis** to establish robust measures of child development
 - Allowing several measures of child development to be combined for each developmental stage.
- **Structural equation models** to understand the mediating pathways for household circumstances and child development on attendance trajectory