



ATTENDANCE POLICY

SHINE Multi Academy Trust

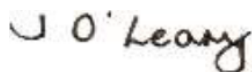
Management log

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Signed



Signed



Chair of the board

CEO

Related Policies

- * Complaints
- * Educational Visits
- * General Data Protection
- * Equality
- * Exclusions and Suspensions

All above policies are available through our academies local servers, directly through SHINE or through the Trust website www.shine-mat.com

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Equal opportunities statement

The SHINE Multi Academy Trust (SHINE) is committed to promoting equal opportunities and everyone will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

Summary of content

Part 1 – SHINE’s statement of intent regarding attendance

(Including SHINE’s vision concerning attendance across the Trust, absences, extended leave, religious observance and parents’ role).

Part 2 – Individual academies’ procedures for attendance

(Including how attendance is monitored, dealing with attendance and punctuality issues and how attendance is rewarded, plus procedures for Children Missing from Education (CME)).

Entitlement to attendance

In SHINE Multi Academy Trust, we recognise a child’s right to education as part of law and as a decent human principle.

Under the United Nations’ Conventions on the Rights of the Child, Article 28 sets out the child’s rights to an education:

Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and based on equal opportunity, they shall:

(a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all.

In UK law, every child has the right to education. This was made law following the European Convention on Human Rights treaty in 1950. It became law in the UK as part of the Human Rights Act 1998. The rights set out in this document state:

- the right to life
- the right to be kept safe from torture and cruel treatment
- freedom from slavery
- the right to a fair trial
- the right to respect for private and family life
- the right to an education.

Furthermore, the law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special education need they may have.

It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education by either attending a school or receiving education other than in a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at a school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means that the child should attend school, every day that it is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as illness or where school has given permission for the absence.

SHINE's statement of intent regarding attendance

SHINE and its member academies seek to ensure that all pupils receive an education that maximises opportunities to reach his or her full potential. Research shows a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment.

SHINE aims to improve its academies' attendance and punctuality by:

- promoting the value and importance of regular attendance
- providing consistent information to pupils and families
- reducing all forms of unauthorised absence

Across SHINE, we will work with parents/carers and other agencies to strive for every child to achieve 100% attendance and have impeccable punctuality. This will ensure that each child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

Targets are best achieved by working in partnership with all stakeholders. Targets need to be understood and owned by parents/carers, pupils, staff, local governors and trustees alike. This expectation applies throughout the education system from the Early Years through to Primary.

We will put clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance and punctuality for all pupils across SHINE.

In order to manage and promote regular attendance SHINE will:

- Monitor individual pupil attendance.
- Keep parents updated on attendance via letters home, newsletters, meetings and the school website.
- Report to parents on their child's progress and whether this has been affected by their attendance, via regular parent evenings and letters home.
- Celebrate and reward good and improved attendance through competitions, prizes, certificates and events. Each academy must have clear incentives, which support the drive for good attendance.
- Review attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil who is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee. Individual academies will then act upon this, using their own procedures and process (as agreed by their local governing body) to lessen the effects on a pupil's attendance and learning. As SHINE's academies are in different local authorities, these procedures may differ slightly depending upon the processes the Education Welfare Services (or similar local authority attendance service) operating in each local authority.

Attendance	Description	Approx.' days lost per year	Approx.' weeks lost per year
100% - 99%	Excellent	0-4	Less than 1 week
99%-96%	Expected	5-13	1 to 3 weeks
95%	Satisfactory	14	2 to 3 weeks
94% - 90%	Less than expected	15-18	3 to 4 weeks
Below 90%	Persistent Absentee	More than 19	More than 4 weeks
Below 50%	Severely Persistent Absentee	More than 90	More than 18 weeks

A positive approach

In SHINE Multi Academy Trust, we attempt to maintain a positive attitude towards attendance at school. We actively seek to share the positive benefits of a good attendance at school and encourage both the children and pupils with an exciting and engaging curriculum that entices children to want to attend school.

During September, we communicate with both children and parents about the benefits of good attendance. These are shared in class and in parental leaflets given to all families, plus on the school website.

We identify these positive benefits to a good attendance in an Attendance Parent Leaflet:

What are the POSITIVES that pupils and families get from children attending school all the time?

- Children benefit from structure and routine.
- Good attendance is a life skill vital for secondary school and later in life. It instils discipline.
- Allows school to perform their duty of care in terms of safety, provision of food and welfare and to support parents.
- Builds children's confidence both academically and socially.
- Children get to build strong, longer lasting, positive relationships with other children and staff
- It enables better teamwork in classes and allows classes to work together more.
- It allows parents to have some independent free or work time and thereby makes life less stressful for parents
- Children are on average more likely to succeed in school if they are attending regularly
- School is fun, challenging and provides many different life opportunities that children may not experience anywhere else.

We do also share with our children and parents, the negative aspects of poor attendance in an Attendance Parent Leaflet:

What are the PITFALLS of poor attendance for pupils and parents?

- It promotes a loss of learning and children struggle due to missing gaps of teaching.
- Friendships are disrupted and children find it more difficult to maintain friendships if they are continually absent.
- There can be loss of other social skills – being able to be a team player, empathy, patience etc.
- It can cause a child anxiety and may lead to worry and mental health issues if they are missing school.
- It will cause children to have additional work on top of their normal class work, as they will need to catch up to the rest of the class.
- Children miss out on other welfare aspects a school can offer – another person to listen, interaction, safety etc.

- Children lose confidence both academically and socially
- It limits the chances of building long lasting strong friendships.
- Anti-social behaviour caused by young offenders and incidents of things like knife crime in later life often have poor attendance at school as identifying factor in the person's early life

As well as this, we offer incentives for children to attend school regularly. This includes an individual incentive for children to attend school through a series of personal rewards that can be achieved over each half term, whole term and the year. Please see Appendix B – Rewards for Good Attendance. In addition to this, we offer class rewards for collaborative attendance over each half term and the whole year that pupils can earn together. Please see Appendix B – Rewards for Good Attendance.

All these rewards, along with the importance of attendance, how we monitor absence and our trigger process, the importance of punctuality and applying for a withdrawal from education are all shared with children and parents through assemblies, on the school website and via leaflets.

Attendance partnership expectations

Attendance is **EVERYBODY'S business** and therefore there are expectations placed on pupils, parents/carers and the academies.

We expect the following from all our pupils:

- To attend school regularly.
- To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day, having eaten breakfast.
- To talk to a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from all parents and carers:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- To instill in their children the reason why attendance at school is so important.
- To ensure contact is made with the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that their children arrive at school well prepared for the school day, having eaten breakfast.
- To talk to a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.
- To inform school of changes in their contact details
- To book medical appointments where possible outside the school day.

Parents/Carers and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing a good reason.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- To inform parents if a pupil's attendance level falls below the expected standard.
- To listen and understand the barriers to school attendance and offer the appropriate support and agree appropriate plans to improve attendance.
- Follow up support where necessary.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
<u>Academy Trust Boards and Governing Bodies</u> <i>(SHINE and Whitemoor Academy)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation (e.g., Pupil Registration, Working Together to Improving Attendance 2024) • Ensure an effective whole school culture of high expectations is underpinned by clear procedures and responsibilities. • Offer a clear vision for high attendance which is communicated to and understood by staff, pupils and parents • Have a clear trust and academy policy based upon high expectations • Regularly review and understand attendance data, discussing and challenging trends and helping school leaders to focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it the most within school. • Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. • Make sure staff, pupils and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe. • Expect good attendance and punctuality from all members of the school community and make sure that pupils understand its importance. • Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes. Empower staff to take responsibility for attendance. • Recognise attendance as an important area of school improvement. Make sure it is resourced appropriately (including through effective use of pupil premium funding) to create, build and maintain systems and performance. • Have a designated Senior Attendance Champion in the senior leadership team with clearly assigned responsibilities which are identified within the attendance policy, escalation of procedures and school improvement plan. • Make sure staff receive training/professional development and support to deploy attendance systems effectively. • Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools within Trusts.
<u>Headteacher</u> <i>(Mr Rob Lord)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a clear, written school attendance policy based on the expectations and ensuring the implementation of this policy – ensuring compliance with DfE Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities – Working together to improve School Attendance – September 2024 • Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, • Developing good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 - Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance. • Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers. • Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and the pupil body as a whole. • Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed. • Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness. • Monitoring and analysing data and trends. • Reporting to the Governing Body and Trusts the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets. • Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy. • Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school. • Open and honest communication with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. • Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable. • Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area, LA's and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent. • Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. • Ensuring all staff members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ treat pupils with dignity ➤ build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries ➤ take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence, handling confidential information sensitively ➤ understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being ➤ deliver clear messages about expectations, routines and consequences to new pupils and families through prospectus and admission/transition events ➤ use physical presence to reinforce routines and expectations on arrival and departure ➤ regularly communicate expectations for attendance and punctuality and school performance through regular channels of communication with staff, pupils and parents ➤ establish and monitor implementation of rewards for attendance and punctuality and sanctions for absence and lateness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring implementation of policy and practice, for example through form time, drop in, shadow late gate, planner checks • Engaging community businesses, partners and residents to promote attendance and report non-attendance. • Monitoring of whole school data regularly to identify reasons for absence, patterns, attendance of particular groups and the impact of interventions • Establishing and ensuring implementation and robust monitoring of arrangements to identify, report and support children missing education (CME) or at risk of becoming CME Ensuring compliance with guidance regarding Children Missing Education
<p><u>Role of the Senior Attendance Champion and member of the SLT</u></p> <p><i>(Mr Peter Bevington)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing the policy with the Head. • Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement. • Championing and improving attendance. • Ensuring practice is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust. • Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes • Oversight of data analysis, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families. ➤ Robust school systems which provide useful data at cohort, group and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children who have a social worker including looked-after children ▪ young carers ▪ children who are eligible for free school meals ▪ children who speak English as a second language ▪ children who have special educational needs and disabilities ➤ Keeping the Head and all school staff informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Compiling attendance data for the Head, the Governing Body and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) or equivalent officer in other local authorities within SHINE • Ensuring a positive working relationship with the EWO (or similar person in other local authorities) is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings. • Communicating messages to pupils and parents • School attendance, safeguarding and pastoral support policies which should clearly outline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the key principles ➤ rules pupils need to follow ➤ routines ➤ consequence systems • If required, holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school. • Undertaking home visits in line with the school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe • Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals. • Making sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly. • The escalation of procedures to address absence needs to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ understood by pupils, parents and carers ➤ implemented consistently ➤ reviewed regularly • Ensuring that the Local Authority is notified of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly via a CME referral.
<u>Role of Teaching Staff</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance. • Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently. • Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date. • Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns. • Informing the Senior Attendance Champion/line manager of any concerns. • Emphasising with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance. • Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy. • Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school. • Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. • Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable. • Modelling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. <p>All staff members should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ treat pupils with dignity ➤ build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries ➤ take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence ➤ handle confidential information sensitively ➤ understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity ➤ communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being <p>You should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually • Emphasise the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment • Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom • Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions • Apply rewards and sanctions consistently • Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence • Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality · Review form or tutor group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early and help set targets • Periodically review practice and consistency both across and between departments • Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction • Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils <p>Pupils at risk of severe or persistent absence – good practice recommendations (this list is not exhaustive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome pupils back following an absence and provide good catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lesson resources • buddy support • one to one input • meet with pupils to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems • establish action plans to remove barriers, provide additional support and set targets. • lunchtime arrangements
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support with uniform, transport, wake up routines or emotional wellbeing • lead daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support • make regular contact with families to discuss progress • consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups • prepare supporting resources to ensure pupils can access learning when they return • develop targeted intervention to address gaps and build pupils' confidence (including considering small group additional support) • contribute to action plans which attendance staff draw together where appropriate • provide tailored praise and encouragement when pupils attend and arrive on time
<p><u>Attendance Officer, Pastoral Staff, Parent Support Workers and Family Intervention Workers</u></p> <p>(Mrs Brooke Marsay and Mrs Ellen Kelliher)</p>	<p>Expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the recording of attendance and absence data is accurate. • To ensure robust day-to-day processes are in place. • To track and follow up absence and poor punctuality • Provide appropriate support and challenge to establish good registration practice. • Carry out robust first day calling procedures including priority routines for vulnerable children including children with a social worker. If absence continues without explanation, further contact should be made to ensure safeguarding. • Identify any absences that are not explained for each session and contact parents to understand why and when the pupil will return. • Where absences are recorded as unexplained in the attendance register the correct code should be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 working days after the session. • Where reasonably possible, ensure school holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. • Keep parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning). • Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school. • Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals. • Undertake home visits in line with your safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe. • Identify and, where possible, mitigate potential barriers to good attendance in liaison with families and relevant support agencies. • Implement children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where pupils have additional vulnerabilities, which may require multi-agency meetings try to arrange those meetings outside of lesson time, where possible. Engage with feeder schools or organisations to access absence information in order to identify target cohorts prior to transfer, including mid-year transfers and managed moves. <p>Pupils at risk of persistent absence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide regular attendance reports to tutors to facilitate weekly reviews with leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes · Initiate and oversee the administration of absence procedures. <p>This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> letters home attendance clinics engagement with local authorities and other external agencies and partners work with families and the community to identify which methods of communication work best, recognising potential barriers in hard-to-reach families and find methods that work and are understood consideration as to whether further interventions are required in line with the statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures provide regular reports to leaders on the at-risk cohort provide regular reports/caseloads to local authority attendance team or independent attendance organisations to raise awareness of emerging at-risk pupils <p>Pupils who are persistently absent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement persistent absence action plans with pupils and families which address barriers and help establish positive attendance routines · Identify tailored intervention which meets the needs of the pupil, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ mentoring ➤ careers advice and guidance input ➤ college placement ➤ out of hours learning ➤ alternative provision where appropriate Lead daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and impact of support, make regular contact with families to discuss progress Hold regular meetings or reviews of caseload with the Senior Attendance Champion, external partners and alternative providers to check on welfare and review progress Liaise with school leaders (designated safeguarding, special educational needs coordinator and pastoral leads) on referrals to external agencies and multi-agency assessments Coordinate and contribute to multi-agency meetings to review progress and agree on actions
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with Education Welfare Officer and other agencies to ensure the appropriate use of statutory parental responsibility measures · • Provide regular reports to leaders on the impact of action plans and interventions
<u>Parents</u>	<p>Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have. Most parents fulfil this responsibility by registering their children at a school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents whose children are registered at a school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school every day school is open. Parents are responsible for: • Ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance. • Instilling in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly. • Impressing upon their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct. • Informing the school on the first day of absence, by 9.15 am at the latest or leaving a message on the absence voice line. • Providing the school with an explanation for the absence. • Informing the school of any changes to their contact details. • Taking an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parent's evenings and other relevant meetings. • Working in partnership with the school to resolve issues and help the school to understand their child's barriers to attendance. • Proactively engage with the support offered by school to prevent the need for more formal support. • If formal support is needed, proactively engage with this support to prevent the need for any legal intervention. • Booking any medical appointments around the school day where possible. • only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance. • Treating staff with respect • Actively supporting the work of the school • Calling staff for help when they need it • Communicating as early as possible circumstances which may affect absence or require support

Legislative framework

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (sec 444) to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and fulltime basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their children receive education. Estranged parents with whom the child has had regular contact may be prosecuted as well as the day-to-day carer. Each situation must be dealt with on an individual basis, always remembering the welfare and safety of the child is the paramount concern. The term 'parent' also includes those who are not a natural parent but have parental responsibility for the child as defined by the Children Act 1989 or who have care of the child as defined by the Education Act 1999.

Our school procedures follow the expectations set out by the Department for Education in the guidance Working Together to improve school attendance (August 2024).

Our procedures are based around the principles and stages of:

- Preventing poor attendance
- Early intervention and Early Help to address early patterns of poor attendance and agree ways to improve
- Targeted interventions (including Early Help and Formal interventions) for those children who are persistently absent or severely absent
- Understanding barriers to individuals' attendance and agree individual plans for children with specific needs.
- Formal Statutory Interventions where support has not been effective or engaged with

Absence

If a child is absent from school, then parents should contact the school on the first day of absence to inform the school of the reason for absence. Parents are expected to maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

At 9.15am school registers are checked for any absences where there has been no contact by parents and reason given. School staff will telephone parents to ascertain a reason for the child's absence from school. If there is no answer, a message will be left asking parents to return the call and a text message is sent.

If staff are concerned about a child's absence or there is no response to the phone call or text messages, they will follow the process in detailed in Appendix F. This includes telephone calls to parents, other emergency contacts, home visits, referrals to the Education Welfare Officers (or other local authority equivalent) or Social Care/MASH and to the police for a visit to see the child. Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

It is imperative that up-to-date contact numbers and details are provided to school. Schools are required to hold more than one emergency contact per child. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides.

Illness

Not all illness requires an absence from school. For minor childhood ailments such as coughs, colds, earaches we would not expect children to be absent. However, when a parent makes the assessment that their child is unfit for school, they should follow the above absence process.

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In most cases, a parent's explanation of their child's illness can be accepted without question or concern. In circumstances where there are concerns about a child's attendance or reason for absence, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

School will challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance. In fact, it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Child is absent and there are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness
- Child is absent and the same reasons for absence are frequently repeated
- Child is absent and attendance is below expected levels and there is a concerning pattern of absence/reasons for absence
- Where there is a medical problem and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support

Authorised absences

The Department for Education has issued guidelines to all schools detailing valid reasons for authorised or justified absences:

- When a child is ill or receiving medical attention.
- Days of religious observance notified in advance.
- Absence due to family circumstances (e.g., bereavement, serious illness).

There are other absences, such as 'Approved Sporting Activity' that can be authorised and there will be events affecting families, some unforeseen, which will necessitate absence from school and professional discretion will need to be used in these cases about whether the absence can be authorised. The specific circumstances potentially encountered by military families, young carers, SEND and children with medical needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those where:

- No letter or acceptable explanation is provided by parent(s)
- The reason for the absence does not fall into one of the categories of authorised absence above.

The following activities are examples of what would be classified as unauthorised:

- Holiday
- Minding the house
- Caring for relatives
- Awaiting repair people
- Shopping

- A birthday or family celebration.

There are clearly some grey areas. The guidance makes it clear that only truly exceptional occasions should be classified as authorised.

Government guidelines make it plain that, in the final analysis, it is the school (via the Headteacher) that judges whether an absence is authorised or not. A note from home therefore does NOT automatically make an absence valid/justified/authorised. The Headteacher will make decisions as to whether an absence is authorised or not. It is the Headteacher's prerogative to request that the parent(s) provide a certificate for short-term illnesses and to request a doctor's notification in the case of long-term illness.

Medical appointments

Parents should avoid making routine medical appointments and dental appointments during the school day. In most cases, appointments can be made outside of the school day/during the school holidays. Where appointments must be taken during the school day, only the time for the appointment and travel to and from will be classed as an authorised absence. Pupils are expected to return to school for the remainder of the day/attend school prior to the appointment. Parents are required to provide a copy of an appointment letter or card prior to the day of the appointment.

Extended leave or withdrawals from education

The 2013 Amendments of the 2006 Education Act say that Withdrawal from Education (Extended Leave) may only be allowed in 'exceptional circumstances' at the Head Teacher's discretion. At Whitemoor Academy, the Leadership Team will not authorise any request for leave, except in exceptional circumstances, such as a death of close family member or life-threatening illness.

Further information can be found in Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulation 2006.

All applications for withdrawals from education should be made at least 4 weeks in advance by the parent(s) or carer(s) in writing or on the form available from the school office. The request should include any flight details, both outbound and inbound and any relevant medical evidence to substantiate that the request is in exceptional circumstances.

All requests will be treated on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration:

- a. the circumstances of the withdrawal – it must be EXCEPTIONAL circumstances.
- b. the amount of time requested.
- c. age of the pupil.
- d. the pupil's general absence/attendance record; and
- e. proximity of SAT's and public examinations.

School will respond to all requests for a withdrawal from education in writing, giving the reasons for the decision.

It is particularly important that letters approving a request clearly state:

- a. the expected date of return.
- b. that the parents are expected to contact the school if anything delays the pupil returning to school when expected; and
- c. what action will be taken if the pupil fails to return when expected.

Similarly, a letter refusing a request will explain the reasons for the refusal and what action will be taken if the parents ignore the refusal and keep their child away. Failure to comply with the school procedures will result in further action being taken.

If a school agrees to the withdrawal from education, the absence is authorised (use Code H).

If the parents do not apply for the withdrawal from education in advance of taking it, the pupil must be recorded as unauthorised absence using code G. This will result in an application for a fixed penalty notice from the Local Authority levied against each parent of each child.

If a school does not agree to the withdrawal and the parents continue with the withdrawal from education, the absence is unauthorised (Code G). If parents keep a child away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is recorded as unauthorised (Code G). This will result in an application for a fixed penalty notice levied against each parent of each child. The child's school place may be at risk should they not return on the date given.

If a family take leave without informing the school, then a fixed penalty notice will be sought via the Local Authority.

Penalty notices

From 2024/25, penalty notices will be governed by The National Framework for Penalty Notices. This comes to force on the 19th August 2024.

Penalty Notice fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. e.g., 3 siblings absent for term time leave would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

The first Penalty Notice issued for term time leave or irregular attendance will be:

- £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days
- £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term time leave or irregular attendance within in 3 years, the amount fined will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

The third time an offence is committed for Term time leave or irregular attendance within 3 years, a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show on the parents' future DBS certificate, due to a failure to safeguard a child's education'.

In terms of irregular attendance, Penalty Notices will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive day. INSET training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was an intent to be absent for term time leave.

Penalty Notices will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

Religious observance

Under our ethos of 'Dare to be Different', we recognise the vibrant and diverse faiths and values of all our communities. We promote and celebrate our varied heritage as one of the strengths of SHINE.

The Pupil Regulations 2006 states that absence for religious observance should be treated as authorised absence "on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to

which the parents belong". SHINE will allow one day for each religious festival, with no more than three days in an academic year. Additional days off for shopping or for extended celebrations will be treated as unauthorised absence.

In respect to pilgrimages, the academy will request to see copies of the travel information. Dates of return should be agreed prior to the period of leave. Parents should be advised about this policy regarding unavoidable delays in return or taking extended leave that has not been authorised by the academy.

Safeguarding

Any safeguarding issues pertaining to a child being taken out of school in circumstances that cause concern, will be addressed first to one of the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads and following this to the Social Care Duty Team covering the area where the child lives.

Dealing with punctuality issues

The registration periods at Whitemoor Academy start from 8:35am (in the morning), 12:30pm for Foundation Stage, 12:45pm for Year 1, 1:00pm for Year 2 and 1:15pm for Key Stage 2 (in the afternoon). The official registration period lasts for ten minutes, after which time the register will close. Any pupil arriving after this registration time will have to report to the school office, as all gates will be locked at 8:45am.

School gates are opened from 8:35am and closed at 8:45am to encourage all families to arrive for school on time. The school gates are monitored daily by a mixture of the School Leadership Team and Family Support Worker.

Any child arriving after 8:45am will be marked as L for lateness. This will be recorded for all children arriving late regardless of time. The office will ask for reasons for pupils arriving late and this will also be recorded. Where parents have either rung school explaining they will be late due a one-off incident (e.g., car would not start) or there is a genuine reason e.g., traffic accident this will be noted.

Any child arriving after 9:15am will be marked as a U for lateness after the registers are closed. This absence would be an unauthorised absence. The office will ask for reasons for pupils arriving late and this will be recorded. Where parents have either rung school explaining they will be late due a one-off incident (e.g., car would not start) or there is a genuine reason e.g., traffic accident this will be noted.

If the child has attended a medical appointment, where evidence is provided, then the absence will be recorded with M – for medical.

Every three weeks, the Attendance Lead and reception staff will monitor the recorded late marks. Parents of any pupil who is persistently arriving late to school will be invited into school for a meeting with the Attendance Lead and Parent Support Worker.

This system allows for both the school to try and work with the parents/families through the meeting but also makes clear the responsibility for punctuality falls on the parents of individual children. We are fully appreciative of individual family circumstances, especially if the children of the family are in several schools and will take these factors into consideration.

All the above will be reflected in school brochures, newsletters and on the school website.

Use of attendance data

All schools must provide their attendance data to the DfE, most schools use their management information systems to send their data via school census. The figures returned are then published by the DfE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

We collect, use and store attendance information about our pupils and may receive information about you from your previous school. The information we keep regarding attendance includes name, contact details, attendance records, late records and any relevant medical information.

Where there is cause for concern, this information is shared with Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) or equivalent local authority officer during regular attendance meetings held at school. EWOs then follow up attendance concerns with parents and carers on school's behalf. We will also share attendance information with Social Care if there is a concern about attendance or child is on a child protection or child in need plan.

Next Review

This attendance policy will be reviewed in August 2025, in readiness for the following academic year.

APPENDICES

The appendices refer to specific strategies that each individual academy may follow up but these are not applied across the whole SHINE Multi Academy Trust

Appendices for Whitemoor Academy

- A. Monitoring Procedure and Attendance Trigger Process
- B. Rewards for Good Attendance
- C. Lateness Chart
- D. Alterations to the Register
- E. Child Missing from Education Procedures
- F. New Attendance and Absence Codes

APPENDIX A

Monitoring Procedure and Attendance Trigger Process

Our overall aim is to work with families and wider stakeholders in order to achieve high standards of attendance, where all that are able to attend school do so regularly.

We aspire for every child to achieve 100% attendance each year, so that there is no loss of learning and children have the best chance to make great progress in all subject areas.

We understand our responsibility to rigorously use attendance data to identify poor attendance (both individually and in cohorts) and work collaboratively with all parties to resolve any problems before they become entrenched. When patterns of poor attendance are identified, we will listen to, discuss and work with parents in identifying barriers to attendance and how these can be resolved swiftly. This may mean pupils and parents accessing support, including early help or whole family plans, where absence is a symptom of wider issues, to remove these barriers.

Where absence problems persist and voluntary support is not working or being engaged with, partners will work together to formalise and explain what the consequences of continued poor attendance will be and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include referrals to Education Welfare Service and more formalised support through a parenting order or education supervision order.

Ultimately and if all other avenues have been exhausted and support is ineffective in raising attendance levels, there will be a need to enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the rights of the child to an education.

In this we follow the framework as set out in Working Together to Improve Attendance August 2024

EXPECT
MONITOR
LISTEN and UNDESTAND
FACILITATE SUPPORT
FORMALISE SUPPORT
ENFORCE

Monitoring of school attendance will occur every Monday morning involving the Deputy Headteacher, Parent Support Worker and Attendance Officer. They will undertake a weekly and overall review of attendances of both individuals, classes, vulnerable groups (especially those targeted from previous year's data) and whole school data. The process will be supported by the whole staff, governing body and through 1:1 support from the Education Welfare Service.

With individuals, the team will keep a check of the pupil's weekly attendance levels and their on-going yearly attendance levels. Children with attendance over 95% will just continue to have their attendance monitored each week. Where attendance has fallen below 95% either for a week, or in the total attendance level for the year so far, further scrutiny will occur to discover the issues that have caused this drop in attendance. This will lead to a series of communications between the school, the pupils and parents through the form of letters and meetings to ascertain the difficulties and help provide support and solutions where possible. Please see the below table for explanation as to how this process works and at what level.

With classes, we will monitor the week-on-week attendance levels of each class and identify any patterns in levels. Where patterns have been identified, we will speak to the class team to see if there have been any reasons to explain the fluctuation in attendance e.g., a bout of chicken pox. Again, we look to offer support and advice to the class team and the parents and pupils to prevent any barriers to attendance.

In a similar manner, we will also monitor the attendance levels of key groups within our school paying particular attention to the Pupil premium group and SEN group. In here, we will also monitor any specific groups that have been identified from the school's previous attendance data.

The final group of children we will pay close attention to are those who are either on Child in Need or Child Protection plan.

Attendance Trigger Process

<u>Absence Levels</u>	<u>Action</u>
Attendance between 98% - 100% (Children accessing all learning opportunities)	Nothing will occur at this level. This is the optimum level of attendance, which we are aiming for all our children to achieve. Children will achieve their best both educationally, socially and mentally with attendance at this level
Attendance between 96% - 97% (Children missing few opportunities for learning)	Nothing will occur at this level. Children are maintaining a good level of attendance and there is every chance child will still be successful in their learning. At the end of each half term. Children with above 97% attendance will receive a GREEN letter thanking for their efforts in maintaining such a high level of attendance.
Attendance between 96% - 95% (Children at risk of underachievement)	At this stage, it may be noted that a child's attendance is falling and it would be worth looking to see if there is a pattern or reason. The school Parent support worker will ring families and parents to see if there are issues with school attendance and where school may be able to support

<p>Attendance below 95% (Children at medium risk of underachievement)</p>	<p>At this stage, a trigger will have been hit. Parents will receive a first official concerns letter stating that attendance has fallen below 95% and ask them to improve this attendance over the next fortnight, along with the importance of attendance parents' leaflet. The child's attendance will now be monitored over the next fortnight or until 95% is achieved again. Children who achieve this level from a lower percentage will be acknowledged by the school.</p>
<p>Attendance below 93% (Children at high risk of underachievement)</p>	<p>At this stage a second trigger will have been hit. Parents will receive a second concerns letter stating that attendance has fallen below 93% and that school asks the parents to arrange a meeting in school with the Attendance team to discuss why there are issues with attendance and if the school can offer any support in helping to raise attendance levels, including an Early Help assessment. The school alongside the parents will create an attendance improvement plan (AIP). School will also outline what could happen if attendance does not improve. The parents will be given a fortnight to improve the attendance levels and the attendance will continue to be closely monitored to look for improvements. Children who achieve this level from a lower percentage will be acknowledged by the school.</p>
<p>Attendance falls below 90% Persistent Absentee (Children at extreme risk of underachievement - +19 days off in a year)</p>	<p>At this stage a third trigger will have been reached. The child is now officially a persistent absentee as they are missing 10% of their education (the equivalent of half a day each week) Parents will now receive a third warning letter to tell them that have hit the persistent absentee level and that the school will now refer the family to the Education Welfare Services and ask for their help in raising the attendance levels back to acceptable levels. At this stage, the EWS will invite the parents to attend a Parents' Panel meeting to discuss their child's attendance and they will begin to monitor the attendance level and expect improvements At this stage, the EWS can offer pupils contracts and education supervision orders. Where support is not working or parents are not engaging, this may as a last resort result in legal intervention.</p>
<p>Attendance continues to fall Persistent or Severe Absentee (Children at severe risk of underachievement)</p>	<p>The EWS, with the school will continue to act to find solutions to any issues that may be affecting the attendance level of the child. They will agree a joint approach as the child becomes a severely persistent absentee. This will also include working with social care and other safeguarding partners. Legal interventions are likely at this stage including use of Penalty Notices.</p>

APPENDIX B

Rewards for Good Attendance

At Whitemoor Academy, the expectation is that all children attend school on a regular basis. To aid with this, we issue collective rewards for attendance, both on a weekly and half-termly basis.

During Monday assembly, the first- and second-best attending classes in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are recognised, with their 'Attendance League' points recorded on a display in the hall. The first-best attending class in each phase is given a certificate, and the class with the highest overall attendance figure is presented with the 'Attendance Trophy.'

At the end of each half-term, the classes in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with the most 'Attendance League' points receive a treat, such as movie and popcorn, Kurling, archery, etc.

While we believe recognition of good attendance can be helpful, research shows that awarding perfect attendance for a term or the school year can have negative impact, since the children who struggle the most will soon be left out.

APPENDIX C

Lateness Chart



APPENDIX D

Alterations to the register

As the school register is a legally binding document, it is therefore important that it is completed carefully and accurately by ALL members of staff.

As part of their roles in monitoring attendance and absence, the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Attendance Officer will correct any oversights where the incorrect code has been entered e.g., where a U code should have been entered instead of L or where I has been put into the register for illness, after a letter stating the need for medical proof (due to low attendance) has been sent home.

Any alterations will be noted in the comments box along with the date. The following abbreviations will be made:

RL – Rob Lord (Head Teacher)

PB – Pete Bevington (Deputy Headteacher and Senior Attendance Champion)

BM – Brooke Marsay (Attendance Officer)

Appendix E

Whitemoor Academy Children Missing from Education Procedures

Key Principles (from Children Missing Education (DfE) September 2016)

[Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544111/Children_Missing_Education_Guidance.pdf)

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Local authorities should focus their resources effectively in intervening early in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes.

Methods Employed by Whitemoor Academy to prevent CME occurring

We employ several procedures to help prevent children becoming a child missing from their education.

- The office staff send daily text messages (via School CoMMs) and call all available contacts if a child is absent from school. If contact is not made, the office staff will discuss this with Attendance Lead or other DSLs in school, considering the vulnerability of the child and family.
- If a child is still absent on a third consecutive day and no contact has been made, the Attendance Lead/DSL/FSW will then follow up this action by firstly trying to contact the parents and other contacts. If there is still no response, they will visit the home address. A letter advising parents/carers of the visit will be posted at the address.
- All absences are followed up by the office staff, firstly using the daily text service and then through a series of three letters asking for an explanation why the child was absent. On reaching the third letter, the Attendance Lead is informed and if no reason is forthcoming, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- If parents are looking to take an extended leave of absence of any kind, they are encouraged to fill out an extended leave of absence form and provide all relevant details and paperwork

that must accompany this request e.g., flight details. School will then send a letter either sanctioning or denying the request with reasons given.

- Parents can discuss leaves of absence with members of the class team and the Leadership Team.
- If after 2 weeks, no contact has been made and there is no response at the home address, the relevant CME referral form will be completed and sent to the Children Missing from Education department of Nottingham City Council.
- The CME of Nottingham LA will then take up the search for the child using their resources and will report back to the school, within the next 2 weeks.
- No child will ever be taken off roll without the permission of the CME Team at Nottingham LA.

As part of our commitment to ensuring all children remain safe, we ask for 2 emergency contacts for each child and children's details will be routinely checked each term.

Also, for families who move from abroad, a previous address from the families' home country will be required, wherever possible

Flow chart for possible CME

Time Frame	Action
Day 1 to 3	Text messages and phone calls sent via the School COMMs system. Discussion held with Attendance Lead or other DSL
Day 3	Attendance Lead/DSL/PSW informed, follow up call made, and home visit instigated. Letter posted through door at the address.
Week 2	Further texts, calls and home visits undertaken. Attendance Lead will also contact schools where siblings may attend.
Day 10	Referral to the CME Nottingham LA
Day 10 – 20	CME department of Nottingham LA to follow up on missing child, School to continue to monitor
Day 20	CME Nottingham LA make recommendation and report to the school

Appendix F

New Attendance and Absence Codes

Code	Reason for this code
Λ	Present codes for morning and afternoon sessions
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-timetable
D	Dual registration
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
G	Leave not granted by the school
I	Illness
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
M	Medical or dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided or the absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
P	Participating in a sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements

R	Religious observance
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
U	Arrival in school after the registration closed
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending Work Experience
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure