

Whitemoor Academy Attendance Strategy 2026-2029



Creating a culture of belonging, high expectations and inclusive attendance



Vision and Ethos

“It takes a whole school to improve attendance because attendance is a team sport with an individual focus.”

At Whitemoor Academy, attendance is everyone’s responsibility.

We believe that every child can achieve excellent attendance when they feel safe, valued, included and successful. It is not viewed as a standalone process but as a key indicator of a child’s engagement, wellbeing, safeguarding and sense of belonging.

We are ambitious for every pupil and recognise that strong attendance underpins achievement, personal development and equality of opportunity.

We recognise that poor attendance can widen disadvantage. Every day a pupil is absent is a missed opportunity to benefit from learning, enrichment, relationships and support.

We believe attendance is a social justice issue. Every child deserves full access to our curriculum, pastoral support, enrichment opportunities, leadership experiences and the wider opportunities school provides.

Through a culture of belonging, high expectations and strong partnerships with families, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil is known, valued and supported to attend school regularly and achieve their full potential.

Why Attendance Matters

School is a place of hope, excitement, learning, awe and wonder. Regular attendance enables children to develop knowledge, skills, self-worth, belonging and confidence. It also enables us to be a trusted and consistent presence in every child’s life.

Excellent attendance is also a safeguarding priority. We know that children are safest when they are in school, visible to trusted adults and able to access the support they need.

Excellent attendance improves not only academic outcomes but also children’s confidence, wellbeing, aspirations and future life chances.

Our Improvement Journey

Over the last three years Whitemoor has secured sustained improvement. Attendance increased from 91.8% to 94.2% and persistent absence reduced from 29.1% to 14.1%. Attendance of Pupil Premium children improved from 89.2% to 92.2%. Persistent absence of Pupil Premium children reduced from 44% to 21.2% over the same period, significantly narrowing the disadvantage gap. Persistent absence for all pupils and disadvantaged pupils is now below pre-pandemic levels.

These outcomes have been achieved through a relentless focus on culture, belonging, early intervention, family partnership and the removal of barriers to attendance.

The Inclusive Attendance Programme

As a participating school, we use the Inclusive Attendance approach. Attendance is considered through the lens of relationships, belonging, pupil voice, contextual understanding, graduated support and proportionate challenge. We seek to understand causes of absence rather than simply symptoms.

We recognise that attendance difficulties are often complex and that lasting improvement comes through relationships, trust and understanding. We seek to work with families rather than do things to families, ensuring that support is compassionate, proportionate and effective.

We recognise that barriers to attendance may include emotional wellbeing, mental health, SEND needs, family circumstances or other individual factors. Our response is based on understanding and addressing these barriers wherever possible.

Our Six Pillars

These six pillars underpin all attendance work at Whitemoor Academy and inform our decision-making, intervention planning and evaluation. They ensure that attendance improvement is both strategic and child-centred.

1. Belonging before barriers; 2. High expectations with compassion; 3. Early identification and intervention; 4. Families as partners; 5. Data-informed decision making; 6. Every pupil known and supported.

How We Build Belonging

Warm welcomes, positive relationships, pupil voice, enrichment opportunities, leadership roles, inclusive classrooms and strong transitions all contribute to pupils wanting to attend school.

We want every child to be known, noticed and valued. Through positive relationships, pupil leadership opportunities, extra-curricular participation and meaningful pupil voice, we create a culture where children want to attend and feel proud to belong.

Using Data Intelligently

Fortnightly, half-termly and termly analysis identifies emerging concerns. Particular attention is given to disadvantaged pupils, SEND pupils and those at risk of persistent absence.

Attendance data is used not simply to identify absence, but to identify needs, trends, risks and opportunities for support. We routinely analyse attendance by year group and vulnerable groups to ensure that no child is overlooked.

Graduated Response

Support begins early through conversations, attendance plans, family meetings and external agency support. Formal procedures are used only when supportive approaches have not secured improvement.

Our approach is rooted in early identification, timely intervention and collaborative problem solving. We seek to remove barriers wherever possible whilst maintaining high expectations for attendance.

Roles and Accountability

Attendance is a shared responsibility. Regular monitoring and challenge take place at governance, leadership, safeguarding and classroom level. Clear roles, responsibilities and accountability structures ensure that attendance remains a whole-school priority.

Further detail regarding responsibilities is provided in Appendix A: Attendance Roles at Whitemoor Academy, which should be read alongside this strategy and the Attendance Policy.

Success Measures

Reduced persistent absence, improved punctuality, positive family engagement and sustained improvements for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups. Success will also be reflected through stronger levels of belonging, improved wellbeing, enhanced safeguarding outcomes and increased participation in the wider life of the school.

Our Future Ambition

Our ambition is to secure attendance that is consistently above national averages whilst continuing to reduce persistent absence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. We will continue to promote a culture of belonging, maintain high expectations and work closely with families to ensure that every child attends regularly, participates fully in school life and achieves their full potential.

Appendix A: Attendance Roles at Whitemoor Academy

Link Governor	Headteacher	Senior Attendance Champion	DSL & Family Liaison Officer	Office Staff	Class Teachers
• Holds leaders to account for attendance outcomes • Overview of whole-school attendance data • Ensures statutory duties are fulfilled e.g. CME referrals. • Reports attendance trends to the LGB	• Holds Senior Attendance Champion to account for attendance outcomes • Monitors whole school attendance data • Final sign-off for Notices to Improve and Formal Warning Notices.	• Strategic lead for attendance • Implements and tracks impact of attendance strategies • Policy review and implementation • Monitors and analyses weekly attendance data • Identifies pupils who are at risk of PA or are PA. • Leave of absence request sign off • Advises HT regarding legal interventions • Lead for work with external professionals e.g. link EWO • Reports attendance termly to Governors/ASET	• Provide early help and family support • Support pupils with emotional barriers to attendance • Support reintegration after long periods of absence • Writes attendance improvement plans • Work closely with families to remove barriers • Conducts home visits, as needed • Links attendance with safeguarding	• First point of contact for daily absence reporting. • Record absence messages and update Arbor • Ensure registers are completed with no N marks • Use the correct DfE attendance codes • Make first day contact calls and follow-up emails • Meet and greet late arrivals • Prepare attendance letters and documentation • Maintains accurate records ahead of census • Supports communication with families regarding attendance	• Complete registers accurately and on time (AM and PM) • Monitor class and individual attendance patterns • Raise concerns promptly with the Senior Attendance Champion or Safeguarding Leads • Discuss attendance at Parents' Evening • Promote high expectations for attendance and punctuality • Provide background information for referrals • Role model punctuality and attendance