



The Shared Learning Trust

THE VALE
ACADEMY

Attendance Policy

Policy Title:	Attendance Policy	Owner:	Tracey Allen
Review period:	2 years	Approval by:	Policy owner
Effective date:	1 st September 2023	Next review date:	1 st September 2025

Attendance Policy

Rationale

If students are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance are crucial.

The Academy will actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all students and encourage all students to improve their attendance.

Our Academy will give a high priority to conveying to parents/carers and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home – school links and communication systems that can be used whenever there is a concern about attendance so that these can be effectively identified and addressed.

We will do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students and strive to achieve our Academy target of 97%.

Strategies

The Academy will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law.
- All Form Tutors to accurately complete am registration.
- Complete class registers accurately for each lesson and pm registration.
- Stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence and follow up any unexplained absences.
- Display attendance rates around the Academy and reward good and improved attendance of all students.
- Promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence.
- Regularly evaluate attendance procedures.
- Work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that, if a student is absent, she/he will be missed and to recognise the needs of the individual student when planning re-integration following significant periods of absence.
- Parents/carers will be made aware of their responsibility to ensure their son/daughter leaves for school on time and provide explanation for absences. They will be discouraged from taking holidays in term time.
- Issue Penalty Notices to parents who refuse to support improvement in their child's attendance in line with the Local Authority Code of Conduct.

Procedures for communicating with Parents and Carers

Absence Letters:

- All parents/carers are encouraged to contact the Academy Attendance Officer (or reception) as early as possible on the first day of their child's absence.
- If no contact is made from the parents on the morning of the student's first day of

- absence, the Attendance Officer will send a message via Arbor.
- The Attendance Officer will also complete 2nd calling to parents/carers.
- If the student has not returned after 3 days or has not provided an authorisation note, the Attendance Officer will pursue the absence with parents/carers.
- If no response after 3 days, EWO will visit the family home.
- Procedures for pupils whose attendance falls are highlighted in Appendix A.
- Early intervention - Parents communicated with when attendance falls below 95%.
- Support - The Attendance Officer and the Safeguarding Lead will meet with parents to discuss issues.
- Fixed Penalty Notices – Can be issued if parents fail to support the improvement in their child's attendance.

Registration and Punctuality

Marking of Registers:

- Staff have a legal obligation to complete the register accurately.
- This will be completed in Arbor.
- All notes from students must be passed on quickly to the Attendance Officer.
- Tutors should check that notes have the name of student, tutor group and dates of absence.
- Tutors should follow up on all absences.
- Students who are late will be sanctioned in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- There are 2 registration periods a day which will be taken electronically at 8:45am and 1:15pm.

Morning Registration

Students, who arrive after 8:40am, should be given a late mark (L) – this counts as a “present” but shows that the student did not arrive on time.

Anybody arriving after 9:20am will be marked unauthorised absent (“U”) and will sign in with the Attendance Officer/Reception.

Roles and responsibilities

Class Teachers

- Teachers are the people who know the students best. They have the most contact with them and are usually aware of the outside influences. Their intervention is imperative if we are to improve attendance.
- Give attendance/punctuality a high profile.
- Monitor registration via printouts provided by the Attendance Officer
- Passing notes from parents/carers to the Attendance office to ensure that they are coded.
- In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 amended 1st September 2013, all requests for term-time leave may not be granted by the principal unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Where a student has sporadic days off or patterns of absence are identified; which causes a student's attendance to fall below 92% over a rolling 3 week period, a discussion will be required with the student, support offered and attendance monitored on a weekly basis.

- Any notes from phone calls home or absence notes should be passed to the Attendance Office promptly.

Attendance Officer

- Give attendance and punctuality a high profile.
- Posting out letters of concern (1 and 2).
- Working with students and families to raise profile of attendance.
- Make first day contact with parents/carers of students who are not in school and where the reason for absence is not known between 9:30 – 11:30am.
- Registering students who are late.
- Liaison with The Shared Learning Trust EWO and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Meeting with the Head of school to discuss whole school attendance, rewards and to follow up any concerns.
- Completing register totals on a weekly basis.
- Completing annual school returns to the Government.
- Producing reports on attendance for compliance.
- Daily and weekly lateness
- Maintaining attendance notice boards.
- Analysing attendance figures to provide useful information on attendance of individuals, groups and the whole Academy.
- Completing CME (Children Missing Education) Proformas.
- Track all Penalty Notices that have been issued.
- Request Penalty Notices to be issued by CBC

The Shared Learning Trust Education Welfare Officer

- Potential referrals can be discussed with EWO who will suggest the most appropriate course of action.
- Ensure Pre-referral letter is sent by the Academy.
- Attendance at CP conferences, Child in Need, Core Group, strategy, planning meetings and SLM's as necessary.
- Parents informed that their child is involved with the EWO.
- Meet Attendance Officer on a weekly basis to discuss attendance and highlight any concerns.
- Complete a register check on a 3 weekly basis.
- Meet with the CP Officer where concerns arise and complete referrals as appropriate
- Feed into EHA and Pre EHA
- Maintain an oversight of the penalty notices requested through the attendance officer and CBC.
- Liaise with the Local Authority EWS where legal proceedings have commenced.
- CME visits, casework and ad hoc home visits
- Completing CME Proformas and forward to the CME Co-ordinator.
- Advise school as to best practice and new regulations regarding attendance and child protection.
- Analysing attendance figures to provide useful information on attendance of individuals, groups and the whole Academy.
- Complete Monthly and Annual reports

- Provide attendance analysis reports where appropriate
- Complete the Irregular Attender Returns Form for each pupil who meets the Local Authority criteria and forward to the Local Authority EWS on a half termly basis as per the EWS code of conduct.

Principal/Assistant Head of School – Attendance

- Review attendance policy (in conjunction with the attendance officer and TSLT EWO) annually to ensure it is fit for purpose
- Line management of Attendance Officer
- Give attendance and punctuality a high profile.
- Meet with the Attendance Officer (2 Weekly)
- Hold staff to account regarding their statutory obligations for attendance.
- Ensure that individual students, form groups and houses are aware of their attendance.
- Liaise with/work alongside the EWO in producing an annual attendance action plan.
- Hold an overview of attendance at The Vale Academy, including the attendance of groups and interventions to improve academy attendance.
- Feedback to board of Trustees on the above
- Liaise with the safeguarding lead to ensure protocols adhere to the Keeping Children safe in Education statutory guidance (See Absconding Policy - Appendix C)

Phasing in of returning absentees

Where a student has been absent for an extended period, and if parents/carers and the child desire it, a phased return may be organised by the attendance officer, Special Educational Needs Coordinator, Safeguarding/Family Support Worker and other agencies where appropriate.

Term Time Leave

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 have been amended and came into force w.e.f. 1st September 2013. The amendments remove references to 'holiday' and extended leave of absence as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The Principal may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

It is the Head of school who will determine the number of school days a student can be away from school should the leave be granted. Requests for leave of absence should not normally be granted for the purposes of a 'holiday'. The law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on 'holiday' during term time. The Head of school has the discretion to authorise leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances.

All applications for leave of absence must be made in advance by the parent(s)/carer(s) that the pupil normally resides with and will need to meet the strict criteria (refer to the relevant proforma/request form). Unauthorised term-time leave will result in a penalty notice being issued for each parent per pupil.

Students whose parents/carers wish to take term-time leave should collect the request form for their parents/carers to complete. This is handed to the Attendance Officer who will add the attendance figures before it is passed to the Head of School for a decision.

Looked After Children

All Looked after Children will have the LAC Coordinator for support.

Where attendance issues arise with Looked after Children the Attendance Officer or EWO will liaise with the LAC coordinator to decide together how to proceed.

Religious Observance

The Academy will follow the guidelines set by the government and the CBC Access and Inclusion Service with regard to matters relating to religious observance and attendance.

School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities November (2016) state that:

“Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents’ religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.”

Bearing the above in mind the following will apply:

- In the all cases, e.g. Eid, (unless advised otherwise by the access and inclusion service) one day will be authorised and coded ‘R’.
- Any additional days will have to be requested in advance, and a reason for the request provided.
- The Academy will then decide whether the request is reasonable and should be granted.
- Any further agreed days will be coded ‘C’.
- Any further days that a student takes which have not been authorised by the Academy will be marked as unauthorised absences.
- The Academy will not generally authorise additional days retrospectively.
- Circumstances where the Academy will not authorise additional days include:
 - To go shopping prior to the religious observance day.
 - To prepare food etc for the day.
 - To ‘recover’ after festivities.
 - To pick up/drop off relatives at the airport.

As with all authorised absence, the Academy will, wherever possible, look at the individual circumstances and may consider the student’s attendance record when deciding whether to authorise additional days.