Attendance Policy

Author:	**Mark Howes**
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Shaw Education Trust

Opening doors to the world through the power of learning

1. Who Is This Policy For?

This policy applies to all staff employed by the education establishments which form part of Shaw Education Trust (SET), Academy Councillors, Trustees, and any consultants undertaking work on behalf of the Trust.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility.

2. Policy Aims

Shaw Education Trust is committed to ensuring that every pupil receives a full-time education that maximises their opportunities for success. Good attendance is essential for pupils' academic achievement, wellbeing, safeguarding and long-term outcomes.

The Trust takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance. It is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils and all staff members to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually.

Shaw Education Trust aims to:

- Promote a culture where high attendance is the norm.
- Reduce levels of persistent and severe absence.
- Work in partnership with pupils, families, local authorities and other agencies to remove barriers to attendance.
- Ensure compliance with statutory obligations regarding attendance registers and pupil tracking.
- Use evidence-informed practice and DfE research to drive improvement.

Schools are expected to:

- Offer a clear vision for attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values.
- Communicate the link between attendance, attainment and safeguarding.
- Recognise attendance as a core school improvement priority.
- Appoint a Senior Attendance Champion within the Senior Leadership Team.
- Ensure attendance is appropriately resourced.



3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's statutory Working together to improve school attendance (August 2024).

It also reflects the following legislation:

The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 The Children Act 1989

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 The Sentencing Act 2020

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended

The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013

The Children and Young Persons Acts 1933 and 1963 The Equality Act 2010

4. The Importance of School Attendance

Regular school attendance is fundamental to:

- Academic achievement and attainment
- Safeguarding and pupil welfare
- Social development and peer relationships
- Establishing routine and responsibility
- Preventing knowledge gaps
- Community wellbeing

Research consistently shows that pupils attending above 95% are significantly more likely to achieve strong outcomes in English and Mathematics compared to those attending at or below 90%.

Every week counts.

5. Our Current Position

Trust-wide attendance has improved to **90.62% (2024/2025)**, reversing previous decline and demonstrating the positive impact of strengthened systems and leadership.

- Primary schools: 94.59%
- Secondary schools: 90.46%
- Special schools: 85.81%

Secondary schools have shown the most significant improvement (+1.69%). Primary attendance remains strong. Variation within the special sector reflects the complexity of need, with several schools demonstrating substantial recovery.

The Trust, alongside schools, will continue to focus on:

- The 5–15% absence group
- Persistent absence (below 90%)
- Severe absence (below 50%)
- Transition points (e.g. Year 6 to 7 and Year 7 to 8)

6. Attendance Improvement Strategy

Shaw Education Trust has adopted a structured, evidence-informed Attendance Improvement Strategy aligned with DfE guidance and the Trust Attendance Toolkit.

The strategy focuses on six priority areas.





6.1 Data and Targeted Support

Schools will:

- Analyse attendance data weekly.
- Use attendance banding to categorise risk levels.
- Identify trends and vulnerable cohorts early.
- Prioritise pupils within the 5–15% absence range.
- Conduct root cause analysis through structured conversations.
- Implement personalised Attendance Support Plans with review dates.
- Closely monitor key transition years.
- Share clear attendance dashboards with staff and Academy Councils.

Trust Education Directors will review attendance half-termly.

6.2 Culture: Belonging and High Expectations

Schools will:

- Promote belonging through strong pastoral systems.
- Celebrate excellent and improved attendance.
- Communicate clearly the impact of absence on attainment.
- Use a “curious, not furious” approach.
- Act early when attendance declines.
- Strengthen transition support.

Attendance will be framed as both an educational and safeguarding priority.

6.3 People: Leadership and Accountability

Each school must:

- Appoint a Senior Attendance Champion.



- Clearly define attendance roles and responsibilities.
- Provide staff training on attendance processes and parental engagement.
- Conduct quality assurance checks.
- Ensure Academy Council oversight.

Trust Level:

- Central Attendance Lead provides oversight and training.
- Attendance is a standing agenda item in Trust Quality Assurance visits.
- Best practice is shared across schools.

6.4 Processes and Systems

Schools will:

- Complete registers accurately and on time.
- Operate robust first-day response procedures.
- Contact families within the 'golden hour'.
- Use clear escalation pathways.
- Implement triage systems.
- Address persistent lateness proactively.
- Monitor alternative provision attendance daily.

6.5 Relationships and Family Engagement

Schools will:

- Build positive relationships with families.
- Hold attendance meetings at an early stage.
- Provide access to Early Help, SEND and pastoral support.
- Make reasonable adjustments where required.



- Track and celebrate improvements.

Where improvement is not secured, escalation will follow Trust and local authority procedures.

6.6 Communication

Schools will:

- Use varied and accessible communication methods.
- Avoid jargon and explain cumulative lost learning.
- Keep Academy Councils informed.
- Regularly communicate expectations to families.

7. Persistent and Severe Absence

- Persistent Absence: below 90%
- Severe Absence: below 50%

Schools must:

- Meet families promptly.
- Agree formal Attendance Support Plans.
- Consider multi-agency involvement.
- Escalate to legal intervention where necessary and proportionate.

Early intervention remains the priority.

8. Recording Attendance

Schools will comply fully with statutory regulations regarding attendance registers as set out in Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024).

Registers will:

- Be taken twice daily.
- Use only DfE-approved codes.
- Record amendments appropriately.

Robust first-day calling procedures will be in place.

Medical evidence may be requested where appropriate.

Persistent lateness may result in formal intervention.

9. Legal Sanctions

Schools may request penalty notices in line with local authority procedures where unauthorised absence meets statutory thresholds.

The decision to request legal intervention rests with the school in consultation with the Trust School Link and local authority.

10. Monitoring and Reporting

Attendance will be:

- Monitored weekly at school level.
- Reviewed half-termly by Trust Education Directors.
- Reported termly to Trustees and Academy Councils.
- Benchmarked against national and local data.

Attendance data will be accessed via Arbor and included in Trustee reporting.

The strategy will be reviewed annually.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

- Hold the Trust to account for attendance performance.
- Review Trust-wide attendance termly.

Trust CEO

- Ensure consistent implementation of this policy.
- Report attendance to Trustees.

Headteachers / Principals

- Lead attendance improvement within their schools.
- Maintain clear oversight of data.
- Ensure targeted support is delivered.

Academy Councils

- Monitor attendance performance.
- Hold school leaders to account.

Class Teachers

- Complete registers accurately and on time.
- Promote good attendance in daily practice.



Working together to inspire communities where every school is valued, every voice matters and every learner thrives.

Shaw Education Trust

Shaw Education Trust Head Office,
Kidsgrove Secondary School, Gloucester Road,
Kidsgrove, ST7 4DL

Email: info@shaw-education.org.uk
Call: 01782 948259
Visit: shaw-education.org.uk
LinkedIn: @ShawEducationTrust