



Shawlands Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

REVIEWED EVERY 3 YEARS

Reviewed: Autumn 2025

Approved by the Governing Body on:

Signed.....

At Shawlands Primary School, we seek to ensure that all our children receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities to reach their full potential. Research shows there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Children who regularly attend school make much better progress both socially and academically. Regular attendance enables children to adapt better to routines, schoolwork and friendship groups. Therefore, those children will have a positive experience of learning and a more successful transition from primary to secondary and beyond to further education and training. Burton Road School aims to work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to strive towards every child reaching 97% attendance or above to ensure that each child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided. By working in partnership, we can ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance, for all students here at Shawlands

School Staff to Support Attendance

Shawlands strategic leader for attendance is Mrs Claire Athorn

Our attendance officer Ms Williamson

Please contact the school office on 01226 287177 on a day-to-day basis when your child is absent, or message via the School Gateway App.

All absences must be reported by 9.30am each day.

Procedure for Reporting Absence

- Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of absence and explain the reason for absence.
- Contact should be made by 9.30am
- If no reason for absence is received, the school will contact the parents either by telephone or Gateway Message.
- If parents/carers do not respond to contact from school, a telephone call will be made and/or a home visit carried out within 24-48 hours.
- If your child has a lengthy illness, then the school should be updated regularly every 2-3 days. Medical evidence must be provided.
- Persistent failure to make contact with the school may result in the school contacting the Education Welfare Officer.
- Where non-urgent medical appointments or routine check-ups are required all parents/carers are advised to arrange these out of school hours. Where this is not possible, then appointments should be made as near to the beginning or the end of the school day to ensure the least possible disruption to classes.
- The school should be notified in advance of all appointments and copies of appointment cards and letters should be provided in each instance.
- Although parents/carers are expected to inform school of the reason for absence, it is the school who makes the decision whether the absence is authorised or not. School will make a decision based on the information available. Parents/carers are encouraged to provide as much information as possible to assist the school in making this decision

To manage and promote regular attendance we will:

- Keep parents updated on overall and pupil attendance via letters home, social media, Gateway App and school website.
- Report to parents how their child is achieving in school and how their child's attendance is impacting on this via regular parents' evenings.

- Build positive relationships between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. The link between attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing will be discussed with parents.
- Utilise attendance data, to analyse patterns and trends, to target attendance and punctuality improvement across pupil cohorts or individual children, to reduce persistent or severe absence from school.
- Review the attendance policy annually and publish on our website.
- Account for and consider the specific needs of children and their families where there may be other barriers to attendance (medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities) and provide support to overcome these barriers. (e.g. Early Help or other wider partners)
- Support children back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Monitor individual children's attendance to: a) Celebrate good and improved school attendance, and reward this through certificates and events. B) Notify parents when we are worried about their child's attendance by following the procedure below:

What is our graduated approach to attendance?

- Attendance of 97% or above – attendance is good or excellent, no action is required.
- Attendance of 95% or below – parents/carers will be contacted by school and offered support with attendance.
- Attendance of 90% or below – a visit to the family home by the school's EWO and/or a meeting with the headteacher.
- If the poor attendance is due to holidays being taken during term time, then a fixed term penalty notice may be issued to both parents.

To manage and promote attendance Shawlands Primary School will:

Discuss attendance during regular school assemblies highlighting the importance of being in school and being punctual.

Incentives

- Classes with the highest attendance for a week are recognised on a weekly basis and awarded the School Attendance Trophy.
- Children are given Dojos for attending on time each day

Registration and Punctuality

Being on time and ready to learn is just as important as regular attendance and schools are duty bound to monitor and record how much time is lost to learning through late arrival at school.

All children that are late must report to the school office and the minutes late will be recorded.

Attendance records and late arrivals will be reported to parents on the child's annual report if this information is concerning, parents will be asked to come into school to explain their child's persistent late arrivals and to see if there is anything the school can do to support. The school office is responsible for collating attendance records in school and will notify the head teacher if there is any cause for concern.

Parents/carers can track attendance via the School Gateway App.

Any child who is late more than 3 times per half term, may be referred to the EWO for support with punctuality.

To support the regular attendance of their children, parents will:

- Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regards to Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.
- Understand their responsibility to keep Shawlands Primary School up to date with at least 2 emergency contact numbers as required by the Children Missing in Education requirements and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2024
- Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick to attend.
- Establish effective communication with the school to ensure that any issues or worries their children may have about coming to school, are swiftly addressed.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence and to keep the school informed regularly as to how their child is presenting and when they are likely to return.
- Provide any medical appointment cards, and wherever possible, make appointments outside of school hours.
- Attend any meetings called by the school and/or any partner agencies in order to discuss attendance.
- Ensure that their children arrive on time and are ready to learn.

Absence through ongoing illness.

Shawlands Primary School will monitor attendance of those children that are absent from school because of a short term or chronic illness, and will maintain close links with parents. Children are not expected to undertake school work if they absent due to illness. Teachers should not be asked to provide work for a child who is ill.

If a child's illness means they are absent for an extended period of time, we will work with parents/carers to provide as much education as the child's medical condition will allow in order to keep up the momentum of their learning.

Educational support, including the provision of work and materials, is provided for those children who are absent from school with medical conditions for more than 10 days. The teaching staff will liaise with medical advisors and home tuition providers, to ensure that children receive suitable work for their age and ability during any period of prolonged absence.

The reintegration of children in to school following a prolonged absence due to illness, is considered a high priority. The school consults parents about general concerns, medical issues and the timing and pace of return. Staff, including the class teacher, teaching assistants and home or hospital tutors, will meet to discuss a child's return to school. Friends and other children are encouraged to help the child settle back in to school and extra support is provided if deemed necessary, subject to the availability of resources.

Attendance Concerns

Pupil attendance is regularly reviewed by the Attendance Officer and Headteacher. If there is a frequent pattern of absence from school, the issue will be highlighted and a letter will be sent home. If there are concerns about continued absence or punctuality this will be escalated further to involve the Education Welfare Service.

Parents/carers whose child's attendance is below 95% will be notified each term.

The Education Welfare Officer meets the Headteacher on a regular basis to discuss attendance issues offering action, advice and support.

- The Education Welfare Officer will attend meetings arranged by the school to discuss with parents any concerns the School and the EWO may have regarding attendance.
- The EWO will receive referrals from the school to address matters of poor attendance by:
 - 1) Visiting parents' homes to undertake assessment of need, and to challenge and resolve matters of poor attendance.
 - 2) Involve other agencies where appropriate such as the School Nursing 0-19 Team.
 - 3) In situations where all previous strategies have failed to improve attendance, the EWO will enforce the law which may result in fines up to £2500 and/or a custodial sentence and/or Parenting Order.

Request for Leave of Absence during term time.

Shawlands Primary School have adopted the Local Authority Code of Conduct September 2023 in respect of leave of absence during term time. A copy of the Barnsley Code of Conduct can be found on the school website.

All parents who wish to take their child out of school for any reason (other than medical) should complete a leave of absence request form. If parents proceed with the absence in term time, each parent with 'parental responsibility' may receive a fixed penalty fine if the absence is for 5 days or more. Any fines should be paid within the timescales stated. From August 2024 these will be as follows:

- First offence - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be: £80 per parent, per child paid within 21 days. This increases to £160 per parent, per child if paid after day 21, until day 28. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.
- Second Offence (within 3 years) - the second time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.
- Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years) - the third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case may be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court under s.444 of the Education Act (1996) or other legal interventions considered. The Magistrates' Court can order fines up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Leave of Absence (Holidays) Penalty Notices can be requested by schools for leave of absence in term time for 5 or more days, these can be consecutive or non-consecutive.

Education Welfare Service.

Incidents of re-occurring unauthorised absence and parents who condone absences and keep their children off school unnecessarily, may be referred to the EWO and this may result in a fixed penalty fine being issued.

The Department for Education states that when a child's attendance falls below 90%, they are deemed as 'Persistent Absentees' and identified as a key priority for Local Authority intervention.

Unauthorised absences and fixed penalty notices

Penalty Notices can be requested by schools when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. In these circumstances a Notice to Improve may be sent by the Local Authority on behalf of the school, this will stipulate the support

that has already been implemented and the ongoing support that is available to the parent and child to improve school attendance. The Notice to Improve will also detail the expected improvements that must be made over a set time frame to prevent the Penalty Notice being issued.

Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and for this reason the school works in partnership with all agencies to keep children safe in education.

The following policies are linked to our Safeguarding Policy:-

- Attendance and Punctuality
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Health & Safety

We have adopted the following Local Authority policies:

- Children Missing in Education
- Elective Home Education
- Leave of Absence During Term Time

All these policies have been endorsed by our governing body in support of our school's attempts to improve both attendance and punctuality, in addition to keeping children safe in education.