Policy:	Nursery Attendance Policy
Date of review:	January 2025
Date of next review:	January 2026
Lead professional:	Lauren Bowmer
Status:	Non-Statutory

Statement of Intent

Whitehill Community Academy seeks to ensure that all its nursery pupils attend their full entitled hours which will maximise the opportunities for each pupil to meet their full potential.

Whitehill Academy Nursery will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, where each member of the school community feels happy and secure.

All Academy staff will work together with pupils and their families to ensure pupils attend Nursery regularly and punctually.

The Academy will challenge the behaviour of pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

The Academy will ensure that all pupils and parents are provided with information, advice and support to help meet these objectives.

Aims

We will monitor attendance for Early Education Funded children on a weekly basis to ensure that children receive a beneficial level of early education to assist them in progressing towards the Early Learning Goals and follow the procedure below for any cases of non-attendance or erratic attendance.

Responsibilities of each academy

In this academy you can expect:

· All staff to have a responsibility towards improving attendance and punctuality.

We will make every attempt to ensure that eligible children attend as many sessions as funding has been received for, bearing in mind occasional sickness or holiday absences

· That we will have in place accurate attendance recording systems that will provide accurate information and inform tracking and monitoring systems. This data will be used to monitor individual patterns of attendance, patterns of attendance across the year, and implement strategies to improve attendance at any point during the academic year.

· All staff to implement this policy consistently.

· Leaders to have due regard towards the Equalities Act and, where appropriate or required, make reasonable adjustments for students with specific needs.

· We will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absences.

· We will work closely with parents/carers where we believe a student's attendance is a cause for concern.

· We will support students to improve their attendance and punctuality.

· We will promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality to students and their parents/carers throughout the year.

· We will support students in returning to the academy, following a period of extended absence.

We will monitor attendance for Early Education Funded children on a weekly basis to ensure that children receive a beneficial level of early education to assist them in progressing towards the Early Learning Goals and follow the procedure below for any cases of non-attendance or erratic attendance.

2. Responsibilities of parents/carers

. Parents in receipt of Early Education Funding are required to regularly attend Nursery to remain eligible for EEF funding.

. When your child begins their education with an academy in Trinity Multi-Academy Trust, we make clear our expectations to parents. These expectations are:
· To ensure your child attends the academy on each academy day and ready to learn.
· To ensure that your child attends the academy on time. This includes ensuring that any transport/drop off arrangements ensure they arrive on time.

· To be aware of term dates and avoid booking holidays during term time.

· To avoid keeping your child away from the academy for any reason other than illness, or other authorised reason.

· To inform the academy (by the start of the academy day) that your child is unable to attend, providing the reason for absence and when you expect them to return. Parents/carers are expected to contact the academy every day with an update.

· To provide information, when requested by the academy, about periods of extended or frequent absences.

An understanding that where your child's attendance or punctuality gives the academy cause for concern then we will explore ways in which we can improve these attendance/punctuality levels.

· Parents/carers should advise the academy of any changes to their contact details or those individuals they have nominated as alternative contacts.

Registration

. There is a statutory requirement to take a register twice a day; once for a morning session and once for the afternoon session. The times for these registers are contained in Appendix A.

. If students fail to register by these times, they will be considered as having an unauthorised absence, unless a satisfactory explanation is received.

. Students are registered during each period of the academy day.

. Each academy follows the Government guidance on attendance and absence codes. These can be viewed via: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance

Punctuality

. Students that arrive to their academy after the times shown in Appendix A are considered as 'Late'.
. Students will be required to sign in, (or parents confirm their arrival to Reception in primary settings).
. The Behaviour for Learning Policy provides details on the sanctions for late arrival to an academy. Parents can expect contact from the relevant academy to inform of any late detentions, or other sanctions.
. Repeated lateness will be dealt with the same way as absences. For persistent or frequent lateness, an academy will work with the local authority Education Welfare Team to improve punctuality. This may result in legal proceedings against parents.

Authorised/unauthorised absence

. This area of the policy explains what is considered to be authorised or unauthorised absence.

. Any absence that interrupts the continuity of student's learning, and only in exceptional circumstances will the academy agree a period of authorised leave. The Government publish the latest guidance and parental advice on school attendance on its website.

Authorised absence

· Authorised absence is where the academy has agreed the reason for the absence, and approved this. This approval can be in advance, or agreed after the absence, where a satisfactory reason has been given for the absence.
· Any requests should be made to the Principal and only a representative of the Principal can authorise absences.

· Absences may be authorised for reasons such as:
-Illness (1 or 2 days) - In some circumstances, medical evidence in the form of a doctor's appointment card or packaging from prescribed medication will be required to authorise any absence of 3 days or longer. The academy will determine when it is appropriate to request this information

Unauthorised absence

· Unauthorised absence is where the academy has not agreed the reason for the absence. Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as:
- Looking after unwell family members
- Days out, including exhibitions, sporting events etc.
- Birthdays
- Shopping trips

· Absences which have not been explained, or where the academy does not accept the explanation, will be treated as unauthorised.

· Where a student has 20 days or more of continuous unauthorised absence, the student will be taken off the academy's role

Family holidays. Parents/carers are advised not to take students out of the child's academy for holidays during term time.

Funding will be paid for a child that goes on holiday for a period of up to four funded weeks in any one LA designated Funding Period. If a child goes on holiday for a period of longer than four funded weeks, only four weeks will be funded and the Parent will be liable for any additional weeks. Any arrangements relating to holidays and absences should be made clear in the Provider's own attendance management policy and / or on the Parental Declaration form as appropriate. Providers who are open for more than 38 weeks / year may wish to consider offering additional funded sessions outside of the Funding Period to children who have taken holiday during the Funding Period but there is no obligation to do so. Providers should contact the LA to confirm any such arrangements. Where children take extended holidays and do not return to the setting on the expected return date, the Provider is entitled to terminate the place and notify the LA via the appropriate task. The LA will recoup funding for the remaining weeks allowing for a maximum four week notice period. If appropriate, the Provider is encouraged to offer the place to the next eligible child on their waiting list, provided they are not already receiving funding elsewhere. Providers are encouraged to remind Parents that the early education sessions prepare children for school.

If it becomes evident during weekly monitoring of attendance that a child is failing to attend all their requested Early Education funded sessions, we will follow the steps as listed below:

Non-attendance of a session

- Follow Calderdale Safeguarding Children First Day Calling Policy
- Discuss the reasons for absence with parents and carers.

Erratic / non-attendance for 2 weeks.

- Have an informal discussion with the child's parent / guardian to see if there are any problems which are preventing full attendance.

Erratic attendance/Non attendance for a further 2 weeks (4 weeks totalled).

- Request a formal parent / guardian meeting to discuss the implications of attendance levels on the child's progress and place availability.
- Offer a reduction in sessions funded as a possible solution.
- On a half termly basis a letter will be sent out detailing the hours missed and the monetary value this equates to.

Erratic attendance beyond 4 weeks.

Our setting will give due consideration to the needs of children and their families where we feel they will benefit from additional support. These families may be; transient families, children with SEND, children with no status, and vulnerable children. We will investigate and make an informed decision around the nature of the absences prior to withdrawing the funded place. Where our setting continues to make a funded place available to a child with an erratic pattern of attendance we will continue to support the family so that this will improve, and maintain records of all communications and decisions for Local Authority audit.

The nursery funded hours are a government benefit that parents are entitled to. This will be paid by the government directly to school. If you do not attend your contracted hours or are consistently late your funding can be withdrawn.

In compliance with;
Early education and childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities June 2018
Early Education Funding Provider Agreement April 2022 – March 2025 between the Borough Council of Calderdale and Providers.

Attendance management procedures

. If a student is absent at morning registration without any contact from their parent/carer, we will contact the parent/carer to establish the reason for absence.

. Each academy has a safeguarding responsibility to identify any students who are missing from education and we will contact those individuals named as contacts on a student's record to establish the whereabouts of the child.

. We will make contact by telephone call, email or text.

. Where we cannot make contact representatives of the particular academy will make a home visit. We will also make a home visit where there are continuous concerns about a student's attendance or punctuality. We follow the first day calling call.

. We will follow up any visits with a letter or email.

In all cases we will continue to contact and work with parents/carers to support them in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality.

Lateness

The school policy is to actively discourage lateness as it can seriously disrupt sessions. If a child is late and misses registration, a late mark will be recorded. Regular routines and attendance to Nursery helps support children to develop a secure routine and make progress.

Appendix A
Students must be in the academy building no later than: 8:30am

Students must be registered in their first lesson by: 8:40am
After this time students are considered late.

Compulsory/legal registration times in this academy are: 9.15am

You must notify the academy of an absence by: 8.30am by telephoning the school office on 01422 244471 or by email to (attendance@whitehillacademy.org).

Whitehill Community Academy

Dear Parent/ Carer of

This half term your child has missed _____ funded hours at Nursery. This equates to £_____ which you could be asked to pay back by Calderdale council.

We take attendance very seriously at Whitehill Nursery and we know that establishing regular routines for your child at an early age is extremely important. Good attendance will benefit both you and your child as they progress through their school life. Poor attendance will have a negative effect on their enjoyment and achievement in Nursery and beyond.

If you are struggling with attendance or need any support, please feel free to contact Miss Ackroyd or a member of the Nursery team.

We are always here to help.