

# Garretts Green Nursery School & Enhanced Provision



## Attendance Policy

*At Garretts Green Nursery School & Enhanced Provision we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at, Garretts Green Nursery School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.*

*'Children have the right to Education.'*

### *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child links...*

**Article 2** (non-discrimination) *The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.*

**Article 3** (best interests of the child) *The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.*

**Article 15** (freedom of association) *Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.*

**Article 28** (right to education) *Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.*

**Article 29** (goals of education) *Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.*

**Date of Review:**

**Signed:**

**Name/Position:**

## Introduction

**At Garretts Green Nursery School and Enhanced Provision, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring and safe environment for all our children. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Garretts Green Nursery School and Enhanced Provision**

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Our attendance values are:

BELONGING

CONNECTEDNESS

CURIOSITY

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Garretts Green Nursery School and Enhanced Provision fully recognise their responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time; therefore, having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

We will work with families to identify the barriers to achieving and maintaining excellent attendance and offer the right service at the right time to try to resolve any difficulties.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations, and Guidance from the Department for Education '*Working together to improve school attendance: Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities*' (August 2024) and '*Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance: Statutory Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local*' (August 2024).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working\\_together\\_to\\_improve\\_school\\_attendance\\_-\\_August\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf301e253aee7aafdbdfea/Summary\\_table\\_of\\_responsibilities\\_for\\_school\\_attendance\\_-\\_August\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf301e253aee7aafdbdfea/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf)

Although parents/ carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Head Teacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils and their parents/carers are encouraged and supported to develop good school attendance habits.

The Attendance Team will monitor attendance and use attendance data to identify any patterns of concern, whilst also celebrating success and improvement with regards to nursery attendance. Attendance concerns will be raised with parents if reasons are not known by the nursery school. Where we have concerns, or lack of engagement from families to improve attendance, we will follow the schools escalated approach to improving attendance. The schools escalated approach is child-centred and prioritises support and developing strong working relationships with families. We will use the Early Help process to provide and consider how we can work with families to enable your child to access their right to education.

Throughout the school year, the Head teacher will report on the overall attendance figures for children groups, this will be closely monitored and reported to the Governing Body.

### Aims

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

#### **To support good attendance and safeguarding, we aim to:**

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Implement procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Achieve a minimum of 90% attendance for all children, with the exception of those with chronic health issues.
- Ensure the school is welcoming, promoting a warm and positive atmosphere, where every child feels a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to nursery aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and other services so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and consistently apply support where required.
- Recognise the role of all staff in promoting good attendance and supporting improved attendance.
- Ensure the accurate recording of attendance is complete by each group leader, every session.
- Notify the Local Authority of Children Missing in Education.
- Equip children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintain effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Support children and families who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing or may prevent good attendance.

Our whole school approach to supporting attendance



### **5 Foundations Of Effective Attendance Practice**



**Foundation 1**  
**Whole School Thinking**  
**Culture & Climate**



**Foundation 2**  
**Supportive Policies,**  
**Systems and Processes**



**Foundation 3**  
**Professional Learning**  
**Staff Development**



**Foundation 4**  
**Implement Targeted**  
**Programmes And Intervention**



**Foundation 5**  
**Connect Appropriately With**  
**Approaches To**  
**Behaviour Management**

Securing good attendance cannot be achieved in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve working closely with a range of staff within the school. The Attendance Team will work alongside the Key Workers (classroom practitioners) and Head Teacher to facilitate a whole school approach.

Garretts Green Nursery School and Enhanced Provision will adopt the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice framework; this is modelled on the work of Professor Katherine Weare. The emphasis is on developing a school culture and climate which builds a sense of connectedness and belonging to ensure all children can attend school and thrive. The approach ensures we prioritise building solid working relationships with children, and parents.

We will take an escalated approach to monitoring attendance and addressing attendance concerns. We will: *have high expectations, monitor, listen & understand, initiate support and formalise support* to help improve a child's attendance. The staged approach we follow ensures we identify triggers early that can lead to poor attendance issues.

#### 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice

The main aim of the framework is to ensure the school promotes a culture of good attendance and celebrates success. Ultimately, the framework will ensure there is a culture of feeling safe and school is a place where not only children want to be, but also where parents feel safe in leaving their child/ren.

The 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice model promotes, and supports, a whole school approach to emotional well-being; ensuring SEMH support remains a key driver in improving attendance for all.

Each year the school will use the 5 Foundations self-assessment tool to understand what works well and identify what we need to do even better.

## Procedures

### **Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:**

- To maintain appropriate registration processes and relevant attendance data.
- To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- To work with parents to improve individual pupils' attendance and punctuality.
- To refer to other services for any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- To ensure staff raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Attendance Team.

## Definitions

### **Authorised Absence (code C)**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason (directly linked to the child) and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Examples may include:

- Absence for sickness (see NHS 'Too Ill for School guidance' for illnesses that require time off school and those that don't).
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, with prior notice where possible.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- Absence due to family emergency.
- Occasional holiday due to exceptional circumstances, which have been pre-agreed with the school.  
*Please note, this is not the case for children aged 5 and over at primary school / secondary school.*

### **Unauthorised Absence (code N)**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the authorisation of the school.

Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason.

Examples may include:

- Children kept off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Absences not properly explained.
- Absences that the school deem avoidable.
- Holidays in term-time that have not been agreed with the school.

### **Expected attendance**

Child is expected at nursery for any session in accordance to their allocated place. E.g. If the child has a 15 hour morning place, the child is expected to attend 5 mornings of 3 hours per week.

### **Non-expected attendance (code X)**

Child is not expected to attend for sessions outside of their allocated place. E.g. If the child has a 15 hour morning place, the child is NOT expected to attend in the afternoons. The X code indicates non-expected attendance and does not impact on the child's attendance monitoring.

### Registration

The school door will open at 8.55am for morning sessions and at 12.25pm for afternoon sessions.

The attendance register must be completed by the key person by 9.30am and 1:00pm. Where paper registers are completed, the key worker will call the office for electronic recording and follow up actions.

All attendance records are documented using Arbor, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

### Lateness

Any pupil who comes into school late (20 minutes after expected arrival time) will be marked as late in the attendance record (**attendance code L**).

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (**attendance code M**).

Children who attend nursery late, miss out on important aspects of their nursery session, such as: building friendships, registration routine, and adult-led taught group sessions.

### Persistent Lateness and Persistent Absence

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, and soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently (persistently absent) develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% will, over their time at nursery school, have missed a great deal of learning opportunities – almost 20 hours of learning time across the year for part time children.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness or absence, parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support/advice to address these issues. We recognise, however, that some flexibility is required as families often need to drop off several children at the same time to more than one school or setting. We will work in unison with you, taking into account the best interests of the child/children.

Garretts Green Nursery School and Enhanced Provision expect attendance of at least 90%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their early education. When children attend primary school, it is expected that they have attendance of at least 96%.

### Absence reporting to school

Parents/ carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence, it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences on Arbor. The detailed information given about absence is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

### First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, we will proceed with the first day contact process. Office staff check the registers at 9.30am and 1:00pm on a daily basis, to identify pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware as to why a child is absent and we will contact the parent to ascertain the reason.

### Longer term Illness

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for longer than a week, the school will follow the absence procedure and arrange a home visit where required during the period of absence (see Appendix 1: absence procedure). This is a door-stop visit to check on the welfare of the child.

### Medical Appointments

As far as possible, parents/carers should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, parents/carers should inform school in advance of the appointment date/time. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they must be signed out by a designated parent/ carer at the school office. **(attendance code M)**.

### Term Time Leave / Holiday Request

Garretts Green Nursery School and Enhanced Provision require parents/carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed, as far as possible. Leave booked in term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers must make a written request (form available from school office) for authorised absence to be considered by the Head Teacher. Term time leave / holiday will not be authorised if no prior request is received. It is important that school know the scheduled return date for safeguarding purposes.

### Religious Observances

Parents and carers must inform the school in advance if their child requires absence for religious observance. The school will authorise up to two days of absence for Eid, recognising that the celebration may fall over two days.

### Legal Sanctions

Education attendance for children under 5 is non-statutory. There are no circumstances in which Garretts Green Nursery School and Enhanced Provision can use legal sanctions (fines) to address the issue of non-attendance. Legal sanctions cannot be issued unless the child is in the school term after their fifth birthday.

Whilst we do not issue legal sanctions, we still monitor attendance rigorously, expect good attendance and work to improve low attendance because of the benefits to children. Parents taking up a funded place for their child, must do so with the intentions of bringing them to nursery for as many of their allocated sessions as possible.

### Children at home

If needed or appropriate, we will direct parents to:

- The [Hungry Little Minds](#) campaign. It features tips and practical activities that parents can do at home with children to support their early learning. There are many simple ways to help children learn and it does not have to be formal. Having everyday conversations, make-believe play and reading together all make a big difference to children's development.
- BBC's [Tiny Happy People](#) and the [National Literacy Trust's Family Zone](#) for more ideas and content
- [50 things to do before you're five](#) app

#### Children leaving our nursery schools

The majority of children that leave our nursery schools, do so to attend Reception class, the September after they turn 4.

Children attending Garretts Green Nursery School and Enhanced Provision School are not of statutory school age; however, where a parent/carer removes their child from our role and chooses not to enrol their child at another Early Years setting, we have a responsibility to report and refer to the Local Authority.

Where a parent/carer removes their child from our role to enrol them at an alternative setting, we have a responsibility to find out the name of the new setting and an expected start date, and pass on information as appropriate.

## Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. All members of school staff are responsible for following procedures as set out in this policy.

The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

### **Teachers and nursery practitioners are responsible for:**

- Provide a good example by always being punctual and meeting children at the door – providing a welcoming environment.
- Build a welcoming atmosphere in the classroom.
- Provide support as necessary when children return after an absence.
- Keeping an accurate record and overview of class and individual attendance.
- Communicating sensitively, yet effectively with parents/carers regarding attendance.
- Looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children or parents/carers for children in their key group.
- Informing the attendance team where there are attendance related concerns.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to improve attendance concerns.
- Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings where necessary.
- Celebrate positive attendance patterns with children and parents/carers, particularly improved attendance/punctuality.

### **Administration Staff are responsible for:**

- Presenting with a warm greeting for children and families entering school each day.
- Adhering to the attendance monitoring procedure.
- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Ensuring the Absence/Late Book is completed.
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance and reporting concerns to the Attendance Lead.
- Logging attendance triggers on My Concern and updating as necessary.
- Monitor individual session absence data to inform the escalated approach records.

### **Attendance Team (Anisa, Alison & Helen) is responsible for:**

- Overall monitoring of school attendance.
- Monitoring trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Maintain swift action and effective communication with parents/carers with regards to low attendance, using the escalated approach data.
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance (raising concerns or highlighting improvements) .

- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence, including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the Head Teacher.
- Liaising with Inclusion Manager and/or other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Following up attendance trigger concerns on My Concern.
- Organising attendance/safeguarding home visits according the policy procedure.

**Head Teacher is responsible for:**

- Oversight of attendance trigger concerns on My Concern.
- Oversight of attendance concerns leading to home visits.
- Oversight of attendance concerns leading to any escalated approach action.
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the Governing Body.
- Reviewing this policy and its effectiveness's
- Supporting all staff in the school to effectively fulfil responsibilities as set out in this policy.

**Parents/ Carers are responsible for:**

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually, unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time.
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised and children are entitled to their full educational offer.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that difficulties can be identified and supported.

*\*At age 2-5 years, children are not responsible for their education attendance.*

Our policy applies to all children registered at these schools and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered as well as on each school's website.

**Procedure to be followed when a child is absent from school:**

Procedure to follow when no contact with parents / carers	Procedure to follow when in daily or regular contact with parents / carers
<p><b>Day 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key workers to inform the office of absence.</li> <li>• School office to log absence on monitoring sheets.</li> <li>• School office to check if we have had a call in from parents/ carers informing us of their child’s absence reason.</li> <li>• If no call received, office staff to contact parents/ carers by phone.</li> <li>• Call detail to be logged on absence monitoring sheets.</li> <li>• Where a child is on ‘high alert’ due to safeguarding concerns, DSL to inform professionals involved.</li> </ul> <p><b>Day 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office to repeat day 1.</li> </ul> <p><b>Day 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office to repeat day 2. If no contact is made with the family, this is to be logged on My Concern. This will trigger an alert to a DSL.</li> <li>• Risk assessed by DSL as to whether home visit is required at this point.</li> </ul> <p><b>Day 4:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office to repeat day 3. If no contact is made with the family, this is to be logged on My Concern. This will trigger a further alert to a DSL.</li> <li>• Risk assessed by DSL as to whether home visit is required at this point.</li> </ul> <p><b>Day 5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office to repeat day 4.</li> <li>• A log on my concern clearly stating this is the 5<sup>th</sup> day of absence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Day 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key workers to inform the office of absence.</li> <li>• School office to log absence on monitoring sheets.</li> <li>• School office to check if we have had a call in from parents/ carers informing us of their child’s absence reason.</li> <li>• If no call received, office staff to contact parents/ carers by phone.</li> <li>• Call detail to be logged on absence monitoring sheets.</li> <li>• Where a child is on ‘high alert’ due to safeguarding concerns, DSL to inform professionals involved.</li> </ul> <p><b>Day 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office to repeat day 1.</li> </ul> <p><b>Days 3-8:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office to repeat day 1.</li> <li>• Log third day of absence on My Concern. This will trigger an alert to a DSL.</li> <li>• Update My Concern log daily with detail from contact with parents / carers.</li> <li>• Risk assessed by DSL as to whether home visit is required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Day 6:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Log second week of absence on My Concern. This will trigger an alert to a DSL.</li> </ul> <p><b>Day 9:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As days 1-8.</li> <li>• Inform parents / carers that we will visit the children at home on day 10 of absence.</li> </ul>

- **A home visit to be carried out** by a DSL and one other member of staff (*unless decision was made to carry out home visit on day 3 or day 4 and contact has been made with parents and child*).
- If contact is made with parents/ carers but the child is not physically seen (they are out/at a relatives/at the doctor/sleeping etc.), a follow up home visit must be arranged and carried out the following day.
- Office/DSL to update My Concern following a home visit.
- If no contact is made at all, contact CASS (Tel: 0121 675 1888.)
- DSL safeguarding decision meeting takes place to discuss risk and action.

**Days 6-10:**

- Repeat days 1-5.
- 10 days absent from school with no contact, DSL to report the child as 'Missing in Education'. Refer to BCC process for reporting children 0-5 years as missing in education.

**Day 10:**

- Regardless of daily or regular contact with parents / carers, **a home visit to be carried out** by a DSL and one other member of staff.
- If contact is made with parents/ carers but the child is not physically seen (they are out/at a relatives/at the doctor/sleeping etc.), a follow up home visit must be arranged and carried out the following working day.
- Record home visit detail on My Concern.
- Follow up home visit from Day 10 if child was not seen.
- If child still not seen, DSL to contact CASS (Tel: 0121 675 1888).

**Any further consecutive absence:**

- Repeat days 1-10.

## Appendix 2: Contact details

To report child as 'Missing in Education', contact Edwina Langley at: [Edwina.langley@birmingham.gov.uk-Localauthorityoficer](mailto:Edwina.langley@birmingham.gov.uk-Localauthorityoficer)

Contact number: 0121-675-4996/1943

EEE Funding - Early Years' Service Duty Line - 0121 675 4996/1943

CASS - 0121 303 1888

## Appendix 3: Attendance reporting structure

- Key Person
- Administration Assistant / Office Manager
- DSL / Head Teacher
- Children's Advice and Support Services (CASS)
- We also reserve the right to request a 'Safe and Well' check from the police