



Birmingham Federation
Maintained Nursery Schools

Allens Croft Nursery School

Jakeman Nursery School

Shenley Fields Nursery School

Lillian De Lissa Nursery School

Newtown Nursery School

St Thomas Nursery School

Adderley Nursery School

Gracelands Nursery School

Highfield Nursery School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

Cluster:
Gracelands Nursery School
Jakeman Nursery School

Local Committee Approved: 08 December 2022

Full Governing Body Approved: 16 January 2023

Date Policy Adopted: 08 December 2022

Date for next renewal: Spring Term 2025

Chair of Governors: Sean Delaney

Executive Head Teacher: Samantha Richards

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Named Persons

Named persons for attendance monitoring at Gracelands Nursery School:

Gail Goldberg (DHT/DSL) and Jacqueline Cartwright (Office Admin Assistant)

Named Persons for attendance monitoring at Jakeman Nursery School:

Janine Maidment (Senior Nursery Manager/ DSL) and Vicky Brennan (Office Manager)

Introduction

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. Gracelands and Jakeman Nursery Schools 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.

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.

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: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities*' (Published May 2022, Applies from September 2022) and '*Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local*' (Published May 2022, Applies from September 2022).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf

Both guidance documents are used alongside statutory guidance documents on parental responsibility measures, children missing education, supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, suspensions and exclusions, alternative provision, and safeguarding.

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

Aims and Objectives

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.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Achieve a minimum of 90% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school
- 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
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility they hold for making sure their child attends school regularly and punctually
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development

- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school

Procedures

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

- To maintain appropriate registration processes
- To maintain 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 inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence
- 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 report attendance statistics to the Governing Body
- To ensure staff raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to senior leaders and/or the nominated person with responsibility for monitoring attendance

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- 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 offered by children and their parents/carers
- 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 correct attendance concerns

- Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings where necessary

Executive Head Teacher/ Head of School/ Nursery Manager is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Monitoring trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- 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 school's Governing Body.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence
- Following up attendance trigger concerns on My Concern

Administration Staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to the attendance monitoring procedure at all times
- 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 offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the Executive Head Teacher/ Head of School/ Senior Nursery Manager
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance
- Logging attendance triggers on My Concern

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. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence, ensure evidence from the doctor or dentist (appointment card/ letter) is gathered
- 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 problems can be identified and dealt with

Definitions:

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason 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.

Unauthorised Absence

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

Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Registration

All the school doors open at 8.30am and 9:00am for morning sessions and at 12:15 (Gracelands) 12:30pm (Jakeman) for afternoon sessions.

Each key person has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. The attendance register must be completed by the key person by 9.30am and 1:00pm (attendance code / and \ for pupils who are present). Where paper registers are completed, these must be returned to the school office.

All attendance records are documented using SIMS, 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 will be marked as late in the attendance record. Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil **(attendance code L)**.

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than this will have the absence recorded as a medical absence **(attendance code M)**.

Persistent Lateness

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, especially at the start of the school day. Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently 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% each year will, over their time at nursery school, have missed a great deal of learning opportunities.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness, parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support

and advice to address these issues. We recognise, however, that some flexibility is required as families are often charged with dropping off several children at the same time to more than one school or setting.

Absences

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 SIMS. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for their child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Executive Head Teacher/ Head of School/ Nursery Manager has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (**attendance Code O**).

First Day Contact

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

Illness

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will follow the absence procure and arrange a home visit during the period of absence.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the EEE Funding Team (4 weeks or more).

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from parents/carers for the school to make their own enquiries.

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

With effect from September 2013, the government abolished the right of Head Teachers to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if special circumstances exist. Instead, Head Teachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist. Within our Nursery Schools, it must also be recognised that children's attendance (pre 5th birthday) is not statutory and cannot be enforced in the same way as primary and secondary school providers.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least 90%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their early education. It is the responsibility of the Executive Head Teacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. Initially concerns about attendance are raised with parents. There will be opportunities for the parent/ carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time, then the school has a responsibility to share this information with the EEE funding team (4 weeks or more).

Covid-19 related absence

All children who normally access childcare are strongly encouraged to attend so that they can gain the learning and wellbeing benefits of early education.

- Children will be unable to attend in line with public health advice if have Covid-19 symptoms or a have a positive test result themselves.
- Where rates of disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, may be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore may be temporarily unable to attend.
- Specialists in paediatric medicine have reviewed the latest evidence on the level of risk posed to children and young people from coronavirus (COVID-19). The latest evidence indicates that the risk of serious illness for most children and young people is low.

If parents or carers of children with significant risk factors are concerned, we will discuss parents/carers concerns and provide reassurance of the measures we are putting in place to reduce the risk. (Schools Risk Assessment)

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

Appendix 1: Absence procedure

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

Day 1:

- Key workers to inform the office of absence
- School office to log absence on monitoring sheets
- School office to then check if we have had a call in from parents/ carers informing us of their child's absence
- Office will then send a text out to parents/ carers asking them to call the office (JNS)
- Office staff will then contact parents/ carers by phone
- Any calls will be logged on absence monitoring sheets
- Where a child is on 'high alert' due to safeguarding concerns - DSL to inform professionals involved

Day 2:

- Office to repeat day 1

Day 3:

- Office to repeat day 2. If no contact is made with the family then this will be logged on My Concern. This will then trigger an alert to a DSL.

Day 4:

- Office to repeat day 3 if no contact is made with the family.
- Update the log on My Concern. This will trigger an alert to a DSL.

Day 5:

- Office to repeat day 3
- A log on my concern clearly stating this is the 5th day of absence
- If no contact can made with the family, a home visit will 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 day
- Office/DSL to update My Concern following a home visit
- DSL safeguarding panel meeting takes place to discuss risk and action

Second week of absence with no contact with the family

Day 6:

- Repeat day 3
- Office/DSL to repeat a home visit if no contact is made with the family
- Office/DSL to log update on My Concern
- DSL to continue to share information with other professionals involved with the child and family

Day 7:

- Repeat day 3
- Office/DSL to repeat a home visit if no contact is made with the family
- Office/DSL to log update on my concern

Day 8 and 9:

- Office to continue to contact all named people on the registration form
- Office to update My Concern which will trigger alert to a DSL

Day 10:

- DSL to contact and report the child as 'Missing in Education'. Refer to BCC process for reporting children 0-5 years as missing in education (EEE funded children).

Appendix 2: Contact details

To report child as 'Missing in Education', contact Edwina Langley at:

Edwina.langley@birmingham.gov.uk-Localauthorityoficer

Contact number: 0121-675-4996/1943

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

CASS- 0121 303 1888