

The Shotover Nursery Schools Federation

Attendance Policy

Chair of governors: *Paul Hayday*

Headteacher : *N Wilson*

Next date for review : February 2028

Reviewed on : February 2026

Principles

We believe good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them at school. Although we recognise that attending nursery is not statutory, we hope to work with parents and carers to develop good habits of punctuality and attendance in children. From the beginning of a child's learning journey at school, parents and carers are informed of the importance of good attendance and punctuality through information available in our admissions and home visit discussions with staff. Children learn and develop most between the ages of birth to five years - developing good habits now will benefit them through their entire school life and beyond. Consistency and routine is also very important for young children and greatly benefits their wellbeing.
Good attendance results in happy, settled children who make good progress.

Aims of the Policy

Our Attendance Policy aims to ensure open and honest conversations with parents/carers to promote the highest possible levels of regular attendance which helps to establish a foundation for all future learning. We aim to do this by re-enforcing positive messages with parents and carers, working collaboratively to identify and resolve barriers to attendance and raising awareness of the adverse effects to children of non-attendance.

Our Attendance Policy is based on the following principles:

1. All of our children have the right to access education and to achieve their maximum educational potential;

2. Good attendance is best secured when the school, parents/carers and any other partners work together to overcome barriers to attendance;

3. Our school community works together and communicates effectively to actively promote and support the fundamental importance of good attendance;

4. School monitoring and analysis of attendance swiftly identifies poor attendance, including pattern of non-attendance; and

5. Early identification leads to open and honest communication between all partners, with clear actions agreed to resolve attendance issues and achieve successful outcomes.

Procedures

Parents/carers are expected to bring their children to school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

If children are absent from school due to illness, parents/carers are asked to contact the school before their session starts. Parent/carers' explanations of children's absence will be recorded and passed to their key person..

If children are absent and school has not been informed, we will try to make contact with parents/carers via a telephone call/text/classdojo or email requesting contact with the school. We will also try any other contact on the form who has parental responsibility. All such attempts to communicate with parents/carers regarding their child's absence will be recorded. If children are known to Social Care, this service may be informed on the first day of a child's absence.
Although we recognise that attending nursery is not statutory, we hope to work with parents and carers to develop good habits of punctuality and attendance in children.
If the school has not had a response from parents/carers and the child remains absent for a second day, school will try to make contact with other adults identified on the school admission document. In circumstances where school feels the family is vulnerable, a member of the senior leadership team may make an unannounced visit to the family home in a further attempt to make contact. Social Care will also be informed.

In all cases where a child is absent for three days and we have not had contact from parents or carers, a member of the leadership team will make an unannounced home visit to be assured of the family's welfare.

The school will be proactive in its support of parents and carers to try to identify barriers to attendance and resolve any issues. This may include actions such as offering Early Help to support the family, involving other agencies or, where possible, offering alternative or extended sessions to ensure their children's attendance improves.

Attendance Monitoring
The headteacher and lead teachers, conduct regular monitoring of attendance for all children. Where there are attendance concerns, this is monitored daily. During this monitoring, if the school identifies poor attendance, including patterns of non-attendance, it will take the following actions to identify barriers and support parent/carer engagement in improving their child's attendance :

1) Have an initial conversation with parents/carers and the child's key person;

2) Send an initial letter to parents/carers, explaining the impact on children's learning and progress;

3) Invite parents/carers, to discuss their child's attendance

4) Send an invitation to meet with the headteacher, to discuss how to overcome the barriers to non-attendance.

During this process, children's attendance will be monitored more regularly and, where a child's attendance improves, this will be positively acknowledged with parents/carers.

Long-term unexplained absence

In the event of regular or long term absence due to circumstances other than illness the following procedure will be followed:

1. The key person discusses concerns with the Head teacher. The key person has informal discussion with the parents/carer and reports back to the Head.

2. In all cases of long term unexplained absence, the key person and Head teacher will consider whether the absence indicates a safeguarding risk. If safeguarding concerns are identified the school Safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed.

3. If a child is still regularly absent or has not returned to school: Headteacher writes to the parent/carer enclosing a copy of the policy and inviting them to come to school to discuss the matter

4. If the situation remains unresolved and the child is still frequently absent or has not returned then the Head will consult with the Chair of Governors and write to the parents/carer withdrawing the place. A copy of the letter is filed in the school office.

Authorised Absences
As a school, we are aware that there may be occasions where children's absence cannot be avoided, for example if they have to attend medical appointments or there is a family emergency. These such absences will be authorised.

We actively discourage parents/carers from taking children on family holidays during term times as this can impact negatively on their progress.

Responsibilities of the School:

To provide positive messages to parents/carers about the importance of good attendance.

To keep records of attendance which clearly distinguish between authorized and unauthorized absence, show lateness so that patterns may be addressed and provide accurate information on actual attendance to enable monitoring and evaluation of attendance rates.

To recognise that poor attendance and/or punctuality could be a safeguarding issue and to respond in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy & Procedures. For children already known to services, poor attendance indicates that the child is at increased risk.

Staff should inform the Head teacher if they have concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality.

The Head teacher or staff should inform the Children's Social Care Assessment team if poor attendance indicates that the child's welfare could be in jeopardy.

To share attendance figures with parents and carers and to target attendance where it has been an issue and set in place strategies to support improvement.

Parents / Carers Responsibilities

To bring and collect their children promptly

Nursery children are very likely to have some absences due to their own illness or illness of other members of their families. When absence due to illness lasts more than two days we ask parents/carers to contact the school so that staff are kept informed, and contact the school again at regular intervals if the illness is prolonged.

Attendance figures will be shared with staff and the Governing body termly.

This policy links to the Safeguarding policy