

Lea Nursery School

Headteacher: Linda Stay

Chair of Governors: David Maclsaac



Attendance Policy

Approved by Curriculum & Standard's Committee:	
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1. Aims

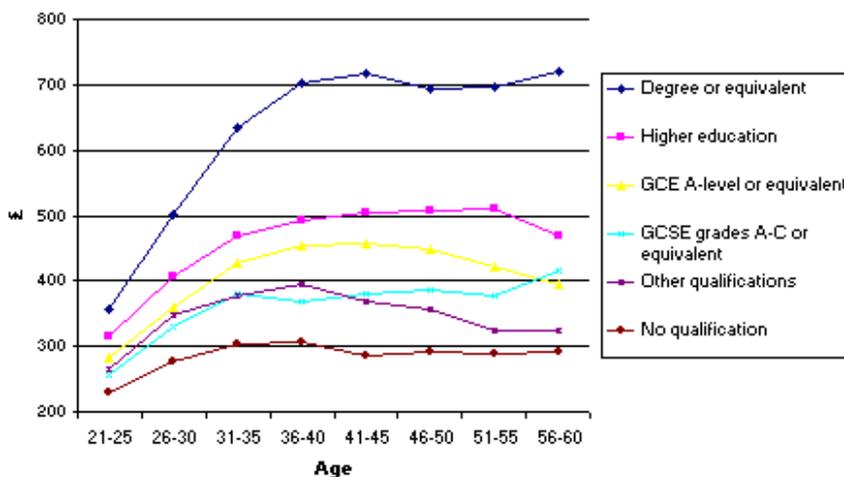
Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting parents to ensure their children attend regularly and arrive punctually

The importance of regular attendance should not be underestimated. We know that all parents want their child to grow up to be well-qualified, well-paid and successful. Regular attendance at school is associated with higher achievement.

Think about it, if a child misses a day of Nursery every week they have missed 20% of their learning time that week. It means over the course of a year they miss 38 days which is 7 ½ weeks! This is a lot of learning time lost. Missed opportunities to learn lead to a drop in achievement. The better a child achieves the more they are likely to earn higher wages. You'll see in the table below the weekly earnings of those with degrees and those with lesser qualifications.

Figure 1. Weekly earnings of full-time employees by highest educational qualification and age



2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [School Attendance Guidance – Updated August 2020](#)
- [Guidance - Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - Updated 4 April 2022](#)
- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

COVID Legislation Between 2019 & 2022

[Guidance - Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year / Updated 4 April 2022](#)

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of each session of each school day. (I.E. At the beginning of the morning and the afternoon session.) It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Morning pupils must arrive in school by **8:50am** on each school day. Afternoon pupils must arrive by **12:30pm** on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken as children arrive and will be kept open until **8:50am**. The register for the afternoon session will be taken as children arrive and will be kept open until **12:30pm**. It is important that parents/carers take their child to his/her keyworker to ensure that the child is marked present.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by **9am or 1pm** or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents can contact the school in the following ways:

- Phone the Nursery on **01753 536492**
- Text the Nursery on the following number **078 6003 4214**
- E-mail the Nursery using the address post@lea-nursery.slough.sch.uk

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents should notify their child's keyworker and or Reception staff if their child is going to be late or absent for a medical or dental appointment.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late will need to enter school via Reception. They will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

Persistent lateness will be followed up on.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

If the school is not notified of a child's absence then a text message will be sent. Parents are asked to reply via text, phone or e-mail to let us know why the child is away.

If no response is received from parents/carers and the child is absent for a second day then listed emergency contacts will be telephoned.

A home visit may be carried out if contact with parents or emergency contacts cannot be made.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance is reported to parents through parent's meetings when the child is a focus child, or alternatively as the need arises.

The Headteacher will talk to parents about attendance when persistent unauthorised absence is identified. If the same level of absence continues, a follow up letter will be sent.

The percentage of sessions attended is reflected on each child's report at the end of their time at Nursery. Parents and the receiving primary school receive a copy of this report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be exceptional circumstances.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

In exceptional circumstances, children are granted up to 10 days compassionate leave during term time per year. If a child is away for longer he/she may lose his/her Nursery place.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. While Nursery education is below compulsory school age, regular attendance from early on will support better academic achievement and will ensure children are ready for the demands of compulsory education.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

We have a graded award system and children are presented with a certificate at the end of each term. The awarded certificate follows a criteria based on attendance %. The certificates outline the following:

Attendance award!
Aim to be the best!
Gold = 95% to 100% Attendance
Silver = 90% to 94%
Bronze 1st Class = 80% to 89%
Bronze = 70% to 79%

Regular attendance has huge benefits linked to children's development and learning. Research shows that children who regularly attend nursery and Early Years Education have greatly increased chances of achieving high academic attainment levels at GCSE and beyond. This is in addition to them having developed deep and balanced social, emotional and physical skills which support good adult mental health.

The Department for Education require as standard 95% attendance.

Those children whose attendance is below 70% receive a how to gain an attendance award card to ensure they are not excluded and they and their families are positively encouraged to attend nursery regularly.

Families are also contacted by their keyworkers, Admin Officer and subsequently invited to a meeting with the Headteacher if attendance has not improved.

Keyworkers will raise attendance as an issue at parents meeting if this is appropriate. Parents are offered additional support through organisations such as FIRST if this is deemed by the family to be of use.

Positive improvements in attendance will be acknowledged and celebrated.

6. Attendance monitoring

Pupil absence is monitored on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days a term we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

The persistent absence threshold is 15%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 15%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

We compare our attendance regularly and share this with governors. The correlation between attendance and pupil progress is reported to governors.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

7.3 The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

The assistant headteacher:

Works to tackle persistent absence

The assistant headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

Advises the headteacher when it is necessary to meet with parents to discuss attendance issues.

Monitors attendance data at an individual pupil level and collates attendance data to report to governors.

7.4 Keyworkers

Keyworkers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

Keyworkers monitor attendance data at an individual pupil level and talk to parents about this.

Keyworkers report concerns about attendance to the headteacher

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. They may also make pastoral calls if a child has not attended a number of sessions and no reasons have been given.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend / COVID
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day