

Attendance policy

Central Bristol Nursery Schools Federation



Approved by:	Governing board	Date: 30.6.22
Last reviewed on:	11.7.22 30.08.23 - updated to align policy for schools in Central Bristol Nursery School Federation 11.09.2025 - reviewed and updated to reflect changes in software used to communicate with parents	
Next review due by:	11.09.2028	

1. Rationale

Whilst it is not a legal requirement for children under 5 to attend nursery, we do know that regular attendance and punctuality is important because:

- Regular routines for young children support the settling-in process and enhance their well-being and their sense of security.
- Regular routines can also foster good habits for children's later life.
- Establishing good habits from the start helps children to settle more quickly into new settings and routines.
- Poor attendance and punctuality, can affect achievement at nursery
- Research shows that children with poor attendance are at a disadvantage later in life. They often
 - find it harder to make and maintain friendships
 - are less likely to gain good qualifications
 - earn lower wages
 - have a higher chance of being unemployed
 - have low self-esteem

2. Aims

2.1 To have high attendance and punctuality

Our attendance target is 87%

2.2 Creating a culture where good attendance and punctuality is valued

- We aim to ensure all parents are aware of our attendance and punctuality expectations. We aim to do this through:
- Our home school agreement.that can be found in the schools' parent handbook
- Regular feedback to and contact with parents on an individual basis making a clear link between attendance, punctuality and outcomes for their child.
- Effective feedback and monitoring procedures – see below.

2.3 Safeguarding and Child Protection

Our procedures include links to our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. See sections Reporting Concerns and Children Missing Education. We will ensure that these are followed.

3. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 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.

2.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils including where relevant monitoring the role of the DSL.

2.2 The DSL

- Following up un-reported absence in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Following up un-reported absence with parents/carers where we have Safeguarding and/or Child Protection concerns.

2.3 Class teachers/room leaders

- Class teachers/room leaders are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.
- Raise concerns with parents regarding punctuality and attendance, explaining the impact this may have on their child's well-being and education.

Following up un-reported absence and reporting safeguarding concerns due to longer absences to the DSL.

2.4 Administrative staff

School administrative staff are responsible for:

- Completing late registers and keeping a record of children who leave before the end of the session.
- Receiving calls and emails about absence and recording it on the school system.
- Following up un-reported absence and reporting safeguarding concerns due to longer absences to the DSL. The DSL will be informed of all absences of 5 days or longer.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive at school by the beginning of their session time. The register will be kept open for half an hour. After which they will be marked as late.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence before the session time begins or as soon as practically possible

Parents should send a message through MCAS, email or ring the school office and leave a message.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

We strongly encourage parents/carers to arrive punctually. We know that this is beneficial for children's school-readiness. If children arrive late, they miss their key group session, and this will impact on their attainment.

A pupil who arrives late will be marked late in the register.

Where lateness is persistent this will be followed up by the key worker or class teacher in the first instance and if necessary, the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding lead.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, or no explanation is given for non-attendance the school will either:

- (i) Email asking the parent to ring or email the office to inform us why their child is absent.
- (ii) Ring the parent/carer to ascertain whether they are safe and well.

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use
- Ensure safeguarding and child protection procedures are followed.

4.6 Reporting to parents

- Parents have access to their child's attendance record on Brom com – My Child at School.
- Key workers/teachers report to parents on attendance and punctuality at parent meetings.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

Other absences will be granted by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. Parents are required to complete a holiday or absence form. This is available on our website or by email or hard copy from the school office.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Home school agreement
- Following up on every non-attendance – see Appendix 2
- Awareness raising sessions and information through parent hub.
- Offering support or e.g. pairing up parents where they live close by and could help with dropping them off and picking them up on time.
- Key workers and teachers talk in a constructive way about the effect of poor attendance and/or punctuality on their child's experience at nursery.

7. Attendance monitoring

We monitor pupil absences daily.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to send a message via MCAS, email or ring the school in the morning and leave an answerphone message if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy, including specific links to travel to countries with higher prevalence of FGM.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	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
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

Appendix 2

