



**Gearies Primary  
School**

# Attendance Policy

Approved by	The Governing Body
Last Reviewed	October 2025
Next Review date	October 2026



## GEARIES PRIMARY SCHOOL

*We act in the best ways we can;  
to support each child become the  
best version of themselves*

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
  - Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
  - Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
  - Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure all staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The board of governors receive regular updates about school attendance at full board meetings.

### **3.2 The Co-Headteachers:**

The Co-Headteachers are responsible for:

- The 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary,
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
  - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Arranging calls and meeting with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Alex Dias and can be contacted via 0208 550 1803 or [admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk)

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Co-Headteachers
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Co-Headteachers when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Claire Walsh and can be contacted via 0208 550 1803 or [admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk)

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office within 10 minutes of each session starting. The Office staff will check registers at these times to ensure that they have been completed.

### **3.6 School Office staff**

School Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system. They will record all absence messages from the telephone system after the close of registers in the morning.
- Ensure that all messages from parents are recorded on the MIS system notes for each child so that the Class Teacher has up to date information on the day of absence.

### **3.7 Parents**

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child. If the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers if this is possible
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Co-Headteacher and Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

The school day timings are:

Key Stage	Session 1 timings	Session 2 timings
Nursery	8.30 to 11.30am	12.30 to 3.30pm
Reception	9.00 to 11:30 am	12:30 to 3:30pm
Key Stage One	9.00 to 11:30 am	12:30 to 3:30pm
Key Stage Two	8.50am to 12:30 pm	1:30pm to 3.20pm

The registers for all sessions will close within 10 minutes of the session commencing and arriving after these times will lead to pupils being classed as late.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff.

Parents/carers can telephone the school on 0208 550 1803 from 8:00am and leave a message on the absence line which will be picked up by the Office staff from 9:00am. Parents can also email school on [admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk) stating name, class and reason for absence.

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer for 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/carer will be notified of this in advance.

Upon returning from an absence please send a follow up email or note confirming the reason for absence.

## 4.3 Planned absence

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

Parents can telephone the school office on 0208 550 1803 or email [admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@geariesprimaryschool.co.uk) advising what time the appointment is and whether the child will be returning to school following the appointment. If you have an appointment card please show the Office Staff.

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.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. See section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

#### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may make further enquiries to ensure the safety of the child.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the education welfare officer.

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels at parent consultation meetings. This will also be reported in the child's annual report. If persistent absence is a problem, attendance percentages will be reported termly.

### 5. Authorised absence

#### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Co-Headteachers will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the discretion of the Co-Headteachers, including the length of time the pupil is authorized to be absent for.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via school office or website. The Co-Headteachers may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence

#### 5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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 parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance
- Examinations, although taking time off before exams for revision days will not be authorised.

- Exceptional circumstances (unavoidable absence)

### **5.3 Legal sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or a penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 per child within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorized absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days off school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

- Weekly attendance celebrations in assembly with the best class in each phase tracked each week.
- Half termly best class attendance prize. For 2025-26 the winning class will get a non-uniform day.
- The attendance officer to call the parents of any child not in school and log and monitor attendance for each family, liaising with the EWO fortnightly.
- The importance of good attendance remains strongly promoted throughout the school vision and in all communications.

## **7. Attendance monitoring**

Attendance is monitored every day and the parents/carers of any child not in school contacted to find out the reasons for absence. Overall attendance and levels of persistent absence are monitored (impact of interventions tracked) and interrogated as part of the school's self-evaluation and school improvement process, monitoring cycle and assessment process, including making the explicit links between attendance and achievement and tracking the attendance of specific groups.

### **7.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

### **7.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### **7.3 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teacher to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, in addition to sharing with school leaders and the Board of Governors school leaders
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### **7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Work with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to implement additional targeted support to assist in the identification of the sometimes-sensitive reasons for absence and look at ways to ensure school remains a place of safety and support for children living in difficult circumstances
- Implement sanctions, where necessary
- If all support implemented by the school, local authority and external partners have been provided but persistent serious unauthorised absence continues, it will likely constitute neglect. In which case the school will undertake a safeguarding investigation and make a referral to Children's Social Care as per our Safeguarding Policy and keeping in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Co-Headteachers. At every review, the policy will be approved by the board of governors.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour 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>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays