Connected Futures Partnership

Dorothy Gardner Nursery School

Mary Paterson Nursery School

Tachbrook Nursery School

Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Connected Futures Partnership	**Date:**	January 2026
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Attendance Policy

1. Aims

At Mary Paterson Nursery School, Dorothy Gardner Nursery School and Tachbrook Nursery School, we are committed to promoting strong attendance and positive routines from the earliest stages of a child's educational journey.

Although nursery provision is non-statutory and children are below compulsory school age, regular attendance is fundamental to children's:

- emotional wellbeing
- attachment and relationships
- communication and language development
- social development
- regulation and confidence
- readiness for school and lifelong learning

We believe that children learn best when they attend regularly, arrive on time and feel secure within consistent daily routines. Through strong relationships with families, we aim to establish positive habits and attitudes towards education from the very beginning.

Our approach is supportive, relational and rooted in partnership with families. We recognise that attendance can be influenced by a range of wider contextual factors including:

- family circumstances
- housing or financial pressures
- medical needs
- SEND
- cultural and community factors
- travel arrangements and extended family networks

We therefore work proactively with families to identify barriers early and provide support wherever possible.

Our aims are to:

- promote high expectations for attendance and punctuality
- support children to access their full entitlement to high-quality early education
- foster positive attitudes towards learning and school routines
- identify attendance concerns early
- work collaboratively with families to reduce absence
- ensure safeguarding systems are robust and responsive
- support vulnerable children and families effectively

We aim for the vast majority of children to achieve attendance of 95% or above across the academic year.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Equality Act 2010
- EYFS Statutory Framework

As maintained nursery schools, compulsory school attendance legislation does not apply in the same way as statutory school-age provision. Our approach therefore focuses on:

- safeguarding
- early intervention
- family support
- promoting positive routines and engagement

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Governing Board

The Governing Board will:

- promote a culture of high attendance
- monitor attendance trends and vulnerable groups
- hold leaders to account for attendance systems and procedures
- ensure safeguarding oversight
- review attendance information termly

A named governor will oversee attendance.

3.2 Head of School / Head of School

The Head of School will:

- ensure this policy is implemented consistently
- ensure parents understand attendance expectations
- monitor attendance patterns and punctuality
- report attendance information to governors
- oversee support plans and interventions where concerns arise
- ensure safeguarding follow-up for unexplained absence
- ensure attendance information is shared appropriately with safeguarding teams

3.3 Safeguarding and Pastoral Leads

Safeguarding and Pastoral staff will:

- undertake first-day contact procedures

- follow up unexplained absences
- record concerns on safeguarding systems
- support families where attendance concerns emerge
- implement attendance support strategies
- escalate safeguarding concerns where appropriate
- contribute to multi-agency planning where needed

3.4 Staff Responsibilities

All staff will:

- record attendance accurately and promptly
- promote positive attendance and routines
- raise concerns through safeguarding systems
- build positive relationships with children and families
- support children with transitions and emotional regulation linked to attendance

3.5 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- ensure children attend regularly and arrive on time
- notify the nursery on the first day of absence
- provide up-to-date contact information
- engage positively with support offered by the nursery
- establish consistent routines to support attendance and punctuality
- inform the nursery of planned absence in advance

4. Recording Attendance

The nursery maintains an electronic attendance register for all children.

Registers are completed at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session and are checked daily.

Attendance codes are used in line with national guidance.

Late arrivals are recorded and monitored.

Where children arrive after the register closes, this is recorded accordingly.

5. First-Day Contact Procedures

The nursery operates first-day contact procedures for all unexplained absences.

Where a child is absent and no reason has been provided:

- parents/carers will be contacted

- emergency contacts may be contacted if required
- safeguarding staff will review concerns
- welfare checks may be considered where appropriate

Persistent unexplained absence or inability to contact families may result in safeguarding referrals in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

6. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Absence may be authorised for:

- illness
- medical appointments
- religious observance
- exceptional circumstances agreed by the Head of School

Although attendance is non-statutory, unnecessary absence is strongly discouraged.

We recognise that some families may request leave during term time due to family or cultural circumstances. Requests should be made in advance through the nursery's leave request procedures.

The nursery will consider:

- the child's attendance history
- safeguarding considerations
- the impact on the child's development and routines
- individual family circumstances

7. Promoting Positive Attendance

The nursery promotes positive attendance through:

- strong relationships with families
- induction and transition support
- home visits where appropriate
- family workshops
- newsletters and attendance information
- attendance monitoring meetings
- safeguarding reviews
- support plans
- close partnership working with Family Hubs and external agencies

We believe that establishing positive attendance habits early supports children throughout their future education.

8. Supporting Children and Families

Attendance concerns are reviewed regularly by senior leaders and safeguarding staff.

Support may include:

- informal discussions with families
- attendance support meetings
- personalised transition arrangements
- emotional wellbeing support
- family support worker involvement
- referrals to external agencies
- multi-agency meetings

We recognise that attendance difficulties are often linked to wider family circumstances and seek to work supportively and collaboratively with families.

9. Punctuality

Punctuality is important in helping children settle successfully into nursery routines.

Late arrival can:

- disrupt learning
- affect emotional regulation
- impact transitions and routines
- make it harder for children to settle confidently

Children arriving late must report through Reception and be signed in.

Persistent lateness will be monitored and discussed with families.

10. Safeguarding

Attendance is a safeguarding priority.

Repeated absence, prolonged absence or patterns of irregular attendance may indicate safeguarding concerns.

Attendance information is reviewed regularly through safeguarding systems and may be discussed with:

- social care
- early help services
- health professionals
- external agencies

All concerns are managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

11. Monitoring Attendance

Attendance is monitored:

- weekly

- half-termly
- termly

Leaders analyse attendance patterns including vulnerable groups such as:

- children with SEND
- children known to social care
- disadvantaged children
- children experiencing trauma or instability

Attendance information is reported termly to governors.

12. Nursery Procedures and Expectations

- Registers are completed daily.
- Session times are shared with parents at admission.
- Children arriving late must sign in through Reception.
- Parents should notify the nursery as early as possible regarding absence.
- Medical appointments should, where possible, be arranged outside nursery hours.
- Religious observance requests should be discussed in advance.
- Families requesting leave should complete a leave request form.

13. Extended Leave

Where extended leave is requested, the nursery will consider:

- safeguarding implications
- attendance history
- the child's needs
- availability of places

If a child does not return following extended absence and contact cannot be established, the nursery may review whether the place can continue to be held.

14. Equality and Inclusion

The nursery is committed to ensuring that attendance procedures are fair, inclusive and responsive to individual need.

Reasonable adjustments and additional support will be considered for children and families experiencing:

- SEND
- disability
- medical needs
- trauma
- family crisis

- exceptional circumstances

15. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- EYFS Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Appendix 1

Is my child well enough to be in Nursery School?

Introduction

Many parents are unsure whether or not to send their child into Nursery if they do not seem to be feeling entirely well. Generally, if you are unsure, then we would advise bringing your child into Nursery and letting us know to keep a special eye on them. Staff are very good at spotting when a child does not seem right and we can call you and ask you to collect them.

The guide below is based on Public Health Agency guidance for parents on when a child should or should not be in Nursery and we hope that it will provide some additional Information and reassurance for you.

Fine to be in Nursery

Cold Sores - Your child does not need to be off Nursery. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore.

Conjunctivitis - Your child does not need to be off Nursery. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage the child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

Coughs and Colds - It is fine to send your child into Nursery if they have a mild cough or cold. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease - Please get this confirmed by a GP. If your child has this but seems well enough to be in Nursery then there Is no reason to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Head Lice - There is no need for your child to miss Nursery if they have head lice and their hair has been treated. Please also inform their Key Worker (this Is very common at nursery age so don't be embarrassed).

Ringworm - If your child has ringworm then it is fine for them to go to Nursery **once** they have started treatment. You are advised to consult with your GP.

Slapped Cheek Syndrome - You don't need to keep your child at home syndrome because once the rash appears they are no longer infectious. If you suspect your child has this you should take them to the GP and let the Nursery know if diagnosis is confirmed.

Threadworms - You don't need to keep your child at home. Treatment is recommended for your child and household contacts.

Tonsillitis - You don't need to keep your child at home if they have tonsillitis. Most cases are due to viruses and do not need an antibiotic.

Better to stay at home

Chickenpox - If your child has chickenpox then keep them off Nursery until all spots have crusted over, which is

usually for about five days.

Covid - Please keep your child at home until they are showing signs of feeling well.

Ear Infection - If you child has an ear Infection and a high temperature or severe earache, then keep them at home until the temperature returns to normal and they are feeling better.

Impetigo - If you child has Impetigo then they will need antibiotic treatment from their GP. Keep them off until all the sores have crusted over and healed or for **48 hours** after starting antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly.

Measles - If your child has measles, they should stay off Nursery for the entire infectious period (4 days before the rash first appears and for at least 4 full days from when the rash first appears where the date the rash appears is day 0). Your child can go back to Nursery once they feel well and following the completion of the 4 day period after the rash first appears.

If your child is unvaccinated against measles and is a close contact of a measles case (for instance a sibling), the health protection team may advise that your child should remain off Nursery for a number of days to reduce the spread of measles. The number of days will vary on the circumstances.

The best way to protect your child from measles and ensure they can continue to attend school is to ensure they have both doses of the MMR vaccine.

Scarlet Fever - Your child will need antibiotics from the GP if they have scarlet fever. Once treatment has started

they can return to Nursery after 24 hours.

Vomiting and Diarrhoea - Keep your child off Nursery for 48 hours after this has stopped being unwell