



Whole School Policy

Attendance Policy

Action	Policy to be reviewed annually		
	Committee	Date	Completed
Reviewed	Director of Pastoral Care	June 2023	✓
Updated	Director of Pastoral Care	Feb 2024	✓
Approved	Safeguarding Steering Committee		
Next Review	Director of Pastoral Care	June 2024	

The Law

This policy is drawn from Working together to improve school attendance, September 2022, The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for boarding, September 2022 and guidance from [Norfolk County Council](#).

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the "School Roll", and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met. Every entry in the school register must be preserved for a minimum period of three years since the date the entry was made.

The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very prescriptive reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session, and during the afternoon for all day pupils. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.

Boarding pupils are covered by the Boarding Standards: National Minimum Standards. Standard 20 places a legal requirement upon staff who have boarders in their charge to know their whereabouts at all times and the [missing pupil protocol](#) within the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on the website.

Policy Statement

For pupils to fully benefit from the educational opportunities provided by Gresham's it is vital that high levels of attendance and punctuality are sustained throughout the academic year. Gresham's has an expectation that all pupils will be striving for a culture of 100% attendance and 100% punctuality. Poor levels of attendance will negatively impact the personal, social and academic development of the pupil. It may also be an indicator of abuse or neglect or in itself may indicate that a child is at immediate risk of harm. Consequently, the attendance and registration arrangements set out in the document below are hugely important. The school however appreciates that some pupils have specific needs and there may be barriers to them achieving high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors to:

- Support pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance;
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences;
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by the following policies: Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti Bullying, Rewards, Behaviour and Discipline and SEND and Most Able. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Gresham's has a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve (where relevant) attendance. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and is therefore seen as everyone's responsibility in School. That it is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community.

Gresham's uses attendance data to identify any patterns of low attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

In the Senior School the HSM monitors attendance on a day-to-day basis, whilst a regular report is made to the Director of Pastoral Care/(DSL) to identify any pupil whose attendance is giving cause for concern. At the Prep-School it is the tutor that monitors their tutees on a day-to-day basis with the Attendance Officer and DSL meeting on a weekly basis to analyse this data. At the Pre-Prep school it is the class teacher who monitors this day to day attendance. This process allows the identification of any patterns of concern. If a pattern is identified, we will discuss the situation with the pupil and their parents to understand the barriers to attendance and to agree how all partners can work together to resolve them. Gresham's will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-School barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the School's control, Gresham's will work to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support. The School will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a Social Worker or is otherwise vulnerable. Support may include for example, an adjusted timetable, phased returns to School, involvement of Learning Support and individualised pastoral support.

All support will be regularly reviewed.

Key staff within Gresham's (all 3 sites) who have responsibility for Attendance:

Senior Attendance Lead (SS)	Lyndsay Fielding	lfielding@greshams.com
Attendance Officer (SS)	Molly Underwood	attendance@greshams.com
Named Governor for Attendance (Across all 3 sites)	Susan Rubin	via Victoria Hipperson (Clerk to Governors) vhippersen@greshams.com
Housemaster/mistress (SS)	Chris Cox (Tallis)	ccox@greshams.com
	Tom Burnett (Farfield)	tburnett@greshams.com
	Jamie Sharrock (Woodlands)	jsharrock@greshams.com
	JC Cowan (Howsons)	joecowan@greshams.com
	Emma Fern (Edinburgh)	efern@greshams.com
	Olivia Ravilious (Oakeley)	oravilious@greshams.com
	Vi Seldon (Queens)	vseldon@greshams.com
Senior Attendance Lead (PS)	Jemma Fenn	jfenn@greshams.com

Attendance Officer (PS)	Jamie Horsley	jhorsley@greshams.com
Senior Attendance Lead (PPS)	Sarah Hollingsworth	preprep@greshams.com
Attendance Officer (PPS)	Louise Down	preprep@greshams.com

The Governing Board at Gresham's recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the school engages and work effectively with the local authority Attendance Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

The Senior Management Team at Gresham's will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.

- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors and on a half-termly basis to the lead governor for attendance.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

All staff at Gresham's will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Ensure they do not pre-populate registers prior to the session unless this is pre-arranged (for valid reasons) with the attendance officer.

The Attendance Officer responsible for attendance will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data.
- Undertaking weekly attendance meetings with the Director of Pastoral Care (DSL) and other relevant staff members.
- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole school attendance.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Managing individual pupil casework files.
- Monitoring individual action plans for pupils causing concern
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from school without contact from parents.
- Implementing whole school initiatives such as awards and reward schemes.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

Gresham's requests that parents:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their Hsm, tutor, or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

Pupils with medical conditions or special education needs and disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who are on the SEND register. They have the same right to education as all other pupils. Gresham's works with parents and other agencies to make reasonable adjustments to support the child. Working with the pastoral team we will establish strategies to remove any in-school barriers. In exceptional circumstances a pupil may be given a temporary part-time timetable but always with a pathway for that to become full time. A part-time timetable will never be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

Attendance Rewards

Providing regular recognition for good and improved attendance sends a clear message that being in school every day is a priority. Here at Gresham's we celebrate good and improved attendance in a number of ways:

The School Day

The Senior School (SS), Prep School (PS) and Pre-Prep School (PPS) run a slightly different and age-appropriate schedule.

The Senior School Day

All pupils are expected to be in roll call in their Houses by 8:05am. The normal school day ends at 5.30pm from Monday to Friday after which day pupils may ask their housemaster/mistress to stay in houses until 7pm, 7.45pm or 8.30pm. They will then sign out. On a Saturday, pupils may leave by 3.30pm or after their fixture.

It should be anticipated and expected that pupils are actively involved in Games, drama and the rich variety of extra-curricular pursuits offered by the School. In some cases these will require additional and in some instances substantial time to be spent in excess of the above at School. Registers are taken for all of these activities via the SOCS system.

Pupils are registered in the morning and in the afternoon in House. They are also registered in lessons by their classroom teachers using SIMS

All pupils are cared for by a Housemaster/mistress and a team consisting of an Assistant Housemaster/mistress, Resident tutor and Matron. Together, they are responsible for pupils during term time, including ensuring that boarders and day pupils staying late are safely occupied outside normal school hours.

It is also required that Housemasters/mistresses will monitor attendance, and will refer to the Safeguarding team, or Senior Leadership team as appropriate, if there is any cause for concern in pattern or number of absences.

Requesting Absence

If a pupil is unwell the parent should contact the Housemaster/mistress (copy in the Attendance Officer: attendance@greshams.com) before 08:00 each and every day of absence. Requests for planned absences should be sent in writing to the Housemaster/mistress who will refer to the Deputy Head Pastoral if appropriate.

Leave of Absence

Term dates are published over a year in advance on the website in order that parents can arrange holidays and/or travel arrangements to/from School without disrupting a pupil's education. Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Any requests for a pupil to leave early or return late outside of these published dates will require the permission of the Deputy Head Pastoral (Mrs Lizzie Alexander).

The Prep School Day

All pupils are expected to be in School by 8:20am. The normal school day ends at the following times:

Monday	5.15pm (5.00pm for Years 3 and 4)
Tuesday	5.15pm (5.00pm for Years 3 and 4)
Wednesday	3.30pm or once games commitments have finished
Thursday	5.15pm (4.00pm for Years 3 and 4)
Friday	5.15pm (4.00pm for Years 3 and 4)
Saturday	(Years 5 to 8 only) once their games commitment has finished.*

**It should be anticipated and expected that pupils are actively involved in games, drama and the rich variety of extra-curricular pursuits offered by the School. In some cases these will require additional and in some instances substantial time to be spent in excess of the above at School.*

Pupils are registered, in the morning in Tutor Period and in P7 subject lesson in the afternoon.

Requesting Absence

If a day child is unable to attend school for any reason, parents are asked to telephone or email the School Office between 7.45 - 8.15am and leave a message. Requests for planned absences should be sent in writing to the Head of the Prep School.

The Pre-Prep School Day

All pupils are expected to be in class for registration at 08.55am.

The normal school days ends at 3.30pm for Nursery, Reception and Year1 and at 3.45pm for Year 2. The Pre-Prep week is Monday to Friday.

Requesting Absence

When the pupil is absent, the parent should contact the school by email or telephone before 9.00am on the first day of absence. Parents should contact the school prior to the day of absence if the absence is planned (e.g. dental appointment). Requests for planned absences should be sent in writing to the Head of the Pre-Prep School.

APPENDIX A

Registration Procedure and Protocols in the Senior School

Registration is carried out by Housemaster/mistress or nominated member of staff at 8.10am and 1.45pm AM registers will remain open until 8.30am and PM registers will remain open until 2pm. (Except on a Friday when registration will be rolling; open from 1.45pm until 2.15pm.) On a Saturday AM registers will take place at 8.10am and will remain open until 8.30am and PM registers will take place between 11am – 12.15pm and will remain open until 12.30pm.

A housemaster/mistress will leave a comment in SIMS if a code has been entered into the register to further assist the Attendance Officer.

Other staff taking pupils out of AM/PM registration for a trip, music lessons etc, must ensure that they inform the Attendance Officer of which pupils this will effect, so the correct code can be inputted into the system.

AM and PM Registration will be followed up by the Attendance Officer or a nominated deputy where pupils are shown as N. Under this system, an N is first entered when no reason has yet been provided for absence. This is later corrected (no later than 5 working days after the session) using the appropriate code. The N is not allowed to remain indefinitely.

The process followed by the Attendance Officer is as follows:

- Check Period 1 attendance
- Ring house staff
- Ring Health Centre (check if pupil has a MH Nurses appointment).
- Ring parents (Day Pupils).

*A pupil marked **N** is a serious concern; HSM and Attendance Officer will liaise to resolve or the missing pupil protocol may be used.*

Attendance

Period attendance has two functions:

- to confirm Registration is complete and accurate, and
- to inform academic and pastoral review processes.

It is the teacher's responsibility to confirm that lesson registration is accurate and complete.

It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure pupils in school are attending their lessons and for tutors to follow up.

Registers must be completed within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

In Period 1 or Period 6, if a pupil has been marked as an **N** in the preceding Registration slot, staff should send them to Reception, where they must sign in. This must be done immediately during the lesson.

Pupils who have been registered as absent – for whatever reason, except illness – in advance of the lesson should also have informed teachers of their absence. Pupils who fail to inform you of absences are subject to sanctions.

Attendance monitored weekly by Hsm. Using the attendance spreadsheet (produced by Attendance Officer) Hsm to continue to input comments as to the reason of absence. Any pupil with attendance below 95% is a concern and will require careful monitoring to ensure that they do not fall lower. Hsm to discuss these pupils at the Hsm Meeting.

Hsm to ensure conversation with pupil to make them aware.

NOTED on CPOMS (Attendance/Internal Monitoring)

Framework for monitoring attendance **SENIOR SCHOOL**

Attendance improves
no further action
required.

Noted on CPOMS as a
follow up action.

Attendance does not
improve/continues to
drop. Discuss at the
Welfare Meeting.

Attendance monitored weekly by Hsm. Attendance continues below 95% - Hsm speaks with the pupil directly and makes them aware of the concern they have.

Hsm identifies any patterns in attendance, re particular days/subjects using SIMS.

Subject teacher's opinions gathered by the tutor about the impact on academic work. This information to be forwarded to Hsm in order for them to contact parents to share the concern. Support offered to parents and pupil. Hsm to discuss these pupils at the Hsm Meeting.

Attendance improves to
above 95% no further
action required apart
from monitoring.

Attendance does not
improve/continues to
drop.

Attendance continues to be below 95% consistently for **3 weeks**.

This generates a letter from the DSL to parents, ensuring that the seriousness of poor attendance is explained. Support offered to parents and pupil.

NOTED on CPOMS (Attendance/95% persistent letter)

Attendance improves to
above 95% for 2 weeks,
no further action
required, part from
monitoring.

Attendance does not
improve for 2
weeks/continues to
drop

No improvement of attendance, parents invited in to attend a meeting with Hsm and DSL. Discussion about key reason for absence, discussion about what outcomes are wanted and how these will be achieved.

Letter sent to parents after the meeting with the points of the meeting.

Agreed timeframe with parents.

NOTED on CPOMS (Attendance/Parent meeting)

Agreed outcomes not achieved
and attendance remains below
95%.

Onward referral to Deputy
Head Pastoral/Headmaster.

Registration Procedure and Protocols in the Prep School

Morning & Afternoon Roll Call

- Roll call is taken electronically by Tutor during Tutor Period (am) and Teacher (pm) and information goes through to the office.
- Secretary identifies Unauthorised Absences and contacts parents, keeping the Head informed.
- Secretary makes any updates and completes by 9.15am and 2.15pm.
- A typed list of absentees is placed on a designated notice board and changes are made to this as necessary.

Lessons

- Teacher checks class at the beginning of the lesson.
- Teacher lets Prep Secretary know if a pupil is missing.
- If the pupil is located, Secretary informs teacher.
- If the pupil is not located, Secretary informs Deputy Head, Housemaster/mistress, and Matrons.
- If a pupil has gone home during the day, the typed absentees list is updated.

APPENDIX C

Registration procedure and Protocols in the Pre-Prep School

When a pupil is absent unexpectedly, the teacher will record the absence in the register or electronically and inform the School Office, the School Office will then try to contact a parent.

When the pupil is absent, the parent should contact the school by email or telephone before 9.00am on the first day of absence. Parents should contact the school prior to the day of absence if the absence is planned (e.g. dental appointment).

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a pupil, the teacher will take immediate action to notify the School Office who will contact the parent in order to find the whereabouts of the child.

APPENDIX D

Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

We expect pupils to attend school for 100% of the academic year.

You can support your child to have excellent attendance by taking these steps:

- Ensure your child arrives on time for school every day and is ready to learn. Pupils must be in school by 8.05am (Senior School) and 8.20 am (Prep School).
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.
- If your child appears to be only slightly ill, send them in to school. We have a Health Centre who will contact you if their condition deteriorates.
- Book any medical appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please book for as late in the afternoon as possible and inform the school of appointments in advance.
- If your child becomes reluctant to go to school or you need help, please contact the school immediately; we are more likely to be able to work together to solve any problems if we act early.

