



# **Greenholm Primary School Official Policy**

**Name of Policy:** Attendance Policy

**Date Reviewed:** October 2025



## **Greenholm Primary School - Attendance Policy**

### **Section 1 – Introduction and Statement of Intent**

At Greenholm Primary School, we believe that attendance is not simply a number on a register but a powerful indicator of a child's safety, wellbeing and future success. Every day in school matters. Research consistently shows that even small amounts of absence add up to lost learning, missed opportunities for friendship, and reduced life chances. That is why attendance is treated as a whole-school priority and sits firmly at the centre of our safeguarding practice.

This policy links to the statutory expectations of the Department for Education's guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*, the Education Act 1996, and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments. It is also shaped by Birmingham Local Authority's guidance and processes, as Greenholm works in close partnership with the LA to support children and families.

We are proud that Greenholm is currently working towards the **Wayne Harris Inclusive Attendance Framework Bronze Award**. The Framework emphasises that schools should approach attendance inclusively, focusing on building relationships, reducing barriers, and sharing responsibility across the whole school community. These principles are central to our practice. At Greenholm, improving attendance is about understanding need, intervening early, and developing solutions together.

Our policy is driven by the following commitments:

- **Attendance as safeguarding.** Unexplained or unusual absence will always be treated as a potential safeguarding concern until we are satisfied that a child is safe.
- **Support before enforcement.** We recognise that absence often reflects wider challenges. We aim to understand and address barriers first, offering help and working collaboratively. Enforcement measures are used only when support and partnership working have not secured improvement.
- **Inclusive recognition.** We celebrate effort, improvement and resilience rather than simply rewarding 100% attendance. This ensures that children with genuine medical conditions or additional needs are not disadvantaged.
- **Shared accountability.** Attendance is everyone's responsibility – from pupils and parents, to teachers, leaders, governors and external partners.
- **Evidence-informed practice.** Our approach is shaped by current research, national guidance, and the Inclusive Attendance Professional Development Model, which supports staff in embedding effective strategies.



At Greenholm, we want every child to feel part of our community and to know that their attendance supports our vision of helping all children to be happy, confident, motivated and ready for success. When children attend regularly, they can live out our values — being curious, resilient, respectful, kind and responsible — and make the most of every opportunity to enjoy, explore and learn.

## **Section 2 – The Inclusive Attendance Framework and Multi-Tiered System of Support**

Our approach to attendance at Greenholm is not a stand-alone initiative but part of a broader culture of inclusion, safeguarding, and high expectations. As referenced, we are guided by the Inclusive Attendance Framework, which provides us with a nationally recognised benchmark of excellence. The Framework emphasises three central ideas: that every child's attendance matters, that absence often signals wider barriers which can be removed, and that schools must take collective responsibility for solving attendance challenges.

This philosophy is embedded through the Inclusive Attendance Professional Development Model, which ensures all staff at Greenholm understand their role in attendance. Staff training draws on six structured modules, which together promote professional learning, evidence-based practice, and strong leadership. This helps us turn policy into practice, so that attendance is not the responsibility of one or two individuals, but a shared priority.

To make this actionable, we have adopted a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). This evidence-informed model allows us to respond proportionately to different levels of need, while ensuring that no child is overlooked. The MTSS is fully aligned with the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* guidance and sits at the heart of our day-to-day practice.

### **Our MTSS in Practice**

- **Tier 1 – Universal Approach**

A baseline approach that benefits all children and creates a strong culture of attendance. This includes:

- Teachers greeting children warmly at the classroom door each morning to ensure every child feels welcomed and noticed.
- Consistent routines for registration so attendance expectations are clear and predictable.
- Regular communication with parents to reinforce the importance of good attendance.
- A motivating and inclusive curriculum which makes children want to attend.
- Recognition systems which celebrate effort, resilience, and improvement, rather than just perfect attendance.



- **Tier 2 – Targeted Support and Early Help**

Tailored strategies for children whose attendance begins to fall, or where patterns of lateness are emerging. This may involve:

- Attendance Support Plans (ASPs) created with families.
- Early involvement of our Pastoral Team.
- Targeted wellbeing or mentoring support.
- Referral to Early Help where wider needs are identified.

- **Tier 3 – Intensive and Specialist Support**

For children with the most complex barriers to attendance. This may include:

- Direct involvement of the Senior Attendance Champion and/or Headteacher.
- Multi-agency meetings with the Local Authority and other services.
- Statutory intervention, including penalty notices or legal action, when all other routes have been exhausted.

This tiered model provides a clear, consistent framework for pupils, staff and families. It enables us to balance early, supportive intervention with our statutory safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that every child attends well.

### **Section 3 – Our Recognition-Based Approach**

At Greenholm, our approach to attendance is rooted in the principle of recognition rather than reward. We know that attendance can be influenced by health, family circumstances, wellbeing, and wider barriers. For this reason, we do not believe that systems which simply reward 100% attendance are inclusive or fair. Such approaches can unintentionally penalise children with medical conditions or additional needs, and may even place pressure on families to send unwell children into school.

Instead, we adopt a recognition-based approach which focuses on effort, improvement, and resilience. We want children to feel noticed and valued for the progress they make, not just for perfection. Research by organisations such as the DfE and Attendance Works shows that recognition of small steps is more effective in building sustainable habits than chasing unattainable targets. By celebrating improvement, we help children and families to see that every step forward matters.

Our recognition-based approach operates at both class and individual level:

- **Weekly Attendance Updates for Parents**

Parents receive clear weekly updates about attendance, ensuring transparency and providing opportunities to celebrate success as well as identify concerns early.



- **Weekly Phase Awards**

Each week, the class in every phase with the **best overall attendance**, the **best punctuality**, and the **most improved attendance** is celebrated. This approach ensures that every class has the chance to be recognised, not just those with consistently perfect attendance.

- **Well Done for Your Attendance** Recognition

Each week, children are identified by phase leads or the Attendance Lead for individual recognition. This may be for making significant improvement, overcoming barriers, or showing resilience. These children are celebrated with a personalised “Well Done for Your Attendance” message, ensuring that they feel seen and valued.

By structuring recognition in this way, we aim to foster intrinsic motivation. We show children that their effort is valued, that small improvements count, and that attending school regularly helps them to feel part of the Greenholm community.

## **Section 4 – The Importance of School Attendance**

We believe that school attendance is not just a statutory requirement but a fundamental part of safeguarding, learning, and community life. Every day a child attends school, they gain not only academic knowledge but also opportunities to build relationships, develop resilience, and participate in experiences that shape their future. We make it clear to our children and families that attendance is about more than a percentage figure: it is about the opportunities that are either gained or lost. Research shows that children who miss just a few days each half term can quickly fall behind, and gaps in knowledge accumulate over time. For this reason, we communicate attendance not only in percentages but also in terms of **days missed** so that parents can understand the tangible impact of absence.

Parents and carers also have a **legal responsibility** to ensure that their child attends school regularly. This is set out in the Education Act 1996 and reinforced through the Department for Education’s *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* guidance. We frame this responsibility positively: as a shared partnership where the school and families work together to give every child the best start in life.

## **Section 5 – Factors Influencing Attendance**

We recognise that children’s attendance is shaped by a wide range of factors. Some of these are within a family’s control, while others relate to external pressures, health needs, or circumstances that may be complex and challenging. At Greenholm, we do not approach absence with judgement or assumptions. Instead, we listen carefully, seek to understand the reasons behind absence, and work with families and partners to reduce barriers.



The following are the most common factors which may influence attendance, alongside the ways in which the school works to address them:

- **Health Issues**

Children may experience short-term illness, ongoing medical needs, or mental health difficulties which affect their ability to attend. At Greenholm we work closely with families, healthcare professionals, and our school Medical Lead (Mrs Singh) to ensure that children are supported to attend wherever possible. We encourage parents to make medical appointments outside of school hours where feasible, and we provide adjusted timetables where appropriate.

- **Family Circumstances**

At times, family illness, bereavement, housing difficulties or other pressures can impact children's ability to attend. Our Pastoral Team and Safeguarding Team provide practical and emotional support, signposting families to external services if needed.

- **Bullying or Safety Concerns**

A child who does not feel safe will struggle to attend school. Where concerns are raised, we act swiftly and robustly, ensuring that children feel secure and supported. Attendance concerns are always considered in the context of safeguarding.

- **Transport and Access**

Although Greenholm is well-connected, some families experience difficulties with travel or punctuality. We encourage families to develop consistent routines for drop-off and collection, and offer support where persistent transport issues are identified.

- **Socio-Economic Factors**

Financial pressures can impact attendance, for example where families struggle to provide uniforms, food, or other essentials. Greenholm offers targeted support, including access to uniform assistance, breakfast provision, and links with local charities.

- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Children with SEND may face barriers to attendance if they are not adequately supported. Our SENCO, Mrs Gardner, works closely with teachers, families, and external agencies to put appropriate adjustments in place, ensuring that children with additional needs are fully included.

- **Engagement and Motivation**

Children need to feel that school is meaningful and enjoyable. Our engaging curriculum, positive relationships, and enrichment opportunities all contribute to making Greenholm a place where children want to be.

- **Parental Involvement**

Research shows that parental engagement is one of the strongest predictors of school attendance. We maintain open and respectful communication with parents, providing weekly updates and half-termly reports on attendance to ensure that families are informed and supported.





By recognising these factors, we are able to take a balanced approach to attendance. Each case of absence is considered individually, with solutions tailored to the needs of the child and family. Our aim is not only to improve attendance statistics, but to remove barriers so that every child can thrive at Greenholm.

## **Section 6 – Supporting Attendance at Greenholm**

We take a proactive and supportive approach to attendance. We recognise that when barriers arise, families may need understanding, encouragement, and practical help rather than blame or sanction. For this reason, our first response to attendance concerns is always supportive, with the aim of identifying the root causes and putting in place strategies that enable children to attend consistently.

### **Key Elements of Our Supportive Approach**

- **Early Identification and Intervention**  
Attendance is monitored daily, with patterns of absence and lateness tracked closely. Staff identify early signs of concern, such as repeated Mondays or Fridays missed, frequent medical appointments, or patterns of lateness. Early intervention prevents small difficulties from becoming persistent absence.
- **Pastoral and Wellbeing Support**  
Our Pastoral Team works alongside children and families to address social, emotional, or wellbeing barriers that may be impacting attendance. This may include 1:1 mentoring, small group support, or signposting to external services, such as COMPASS Mental Health Support.
- **Tailored Support for SEND and Medical Needs**  
Where attendance is affected by additional needs, our SENCO (Mrs Gardner) and Medical Lead (Mrs Singh) work with families to develop flexible approaches. This may include reduced timetables for a short period (always reviewed regularly), additional support, or targeted health interventions.
- **Partnership with Parents**  
Parents are central to solving attendance issues. We maintain open lines of communication, inviting parents to meetings, encouraging them to share difficulties honestly, and working together to create Attendance Support Plans (ASPs). Parents receive weekly updates, and half-termly overviews expressed in days missed rather than percentages, helping them to understand the real-life impact of absence.
- **Positive Recognition**  
As described in Section 3, we recognise effort and improvement, not just perfection. This creates a culture where families feel supported, rather than judged, and where children see the value of their own progress.



- **Multi-Agency Collaboration**

Where barriers are complex, we work with Early Help, health professionals, social care, and the Local Authority. Our safeguarding team meets weekly, and attendance concerns are a standing item on the agenda, ensuring that risks are considered and acted upon swiftly.

By embedding support into our approach, we reinforce the principle that attendance is a shared responsibility.

## **Section 7 – Attendance and Punctuality Expectations at Greenholm**

We believe that clear, consistent expectations help children and families to understand the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.

### **School Day and Registration**

- The school day begins promptly at **8:45am**. Children are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to learn at this time.
- The registers open at **8:45am** and close at **9:00am**. Any child arriving after the register closes but before **9:30am** will receive a **L code**. Arrivals after **9:30am** will receive a **U code**, which is an unauthorised absence for the morning session.
- The school day finishes at **3:15pm** for Years 1–6 and at **3:10pm** for Reception.

### **Expectations for Pupils**

- Pupils are expected to attend school every day unless they are too unwell or an authorised absence has been agreed.
- Pupils should arrive on time, ready to begin lessons promptly and without disruption to the learning of others.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop habits of responsibility and independence in attending school and managing their routines.

### **Expectations for Parents and Carers**

- Parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Absences must be reported to the school on the first day by phoning the absence line. Staff can also be contacted by phone, email, or Class Dojo, and parents may request an in-person meeting if required.
- Parents are expected to work in partnership with the school to address any attendance difficulties, including attending meetings and supporting Attendance Support Plans where these are put in place.
- Even if a leave of absence cannot be authorised (for example, for holidays in term time), parents must still complete a **Leave of Absence form**. This is essential for safeguarding purposes, ensuring the school always has a clear record of a child's whereabouts.





### **Expectations for Staff**

- All staff play a role in promoting good attendance and punctuality. Teachers greet children warmly each morning, reinforcing the importance of being present and on time.
- Attendance is recorded accurately and promptly, in line with statutory requirements.
- Staff are proactive in raising concerns about patterns of absence or lateness and in supporting children who may be struggling to attend.

### **Celebrating Positive Attendance**

We communicate regularly with families about attendance:

- Weekly attendance updates for all parents.
- Half-termly overviews showing attendance in terms of **days missed**, which families find more meaningful than percentages. These overviews are framed positively – used both to say “well done” and to invite families to access additional support where needed.

By setting out clear expectations, we aim to ensure that every member of the school community understands their role in promoting attendance.

## **Section 8 – Roles and Responsibilities**

To work alongside the expectations for key groups, specific staff members and teams have areas of responsibility relevant to attendance:

### **Attendance Officer**

Our Attendance Officer, Chloe Dowan, has day-to-day responsibility for monitoring and supporting attendance. She will:

- Track daily attendance and punctuality, identifying concerns quickly.
- Make first-day phone calls to parents of absent pupils and follow up unexplained absences.
- Escalate concerns to the Pastoral or Safeguarding Team where necessary.
- Work with families to support Attendance Support Plans and liaise with external agencies as appropriate.
- Provide weekly attendance reports to leaders and half-termly data for governors.

### **Senior Attendance Champion**

Our Senior Attendance Champion is Mr Evans, Deputy Headteacher. He ensures that attendance remains a strategic priority by:

- Overseeing the implementation of the Attendance Policy.
- Monitoring patterns of persistent and severe absence.
- Leading attendance case reviews with staff and families.
- Ensuring attendance is considered as part of safeguarding discussions.
- Reporting regularly to the Headteacher and Governing Body.



### **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

The SLT sets the tone for attendance across the school. Their responsibilities include:

- Embedding attendance into school improvement planning.
- Ensuring staff are trained in effective attendance practice.
- Monitoring attendance data regularly, with a focus on vulnerable groups.
- Leading assemblies, newsletters, and parent meetings which reinforce the importance of attendance.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Safeguarding Team**

Our Safeguarding Team, led by Mr Evans (DSL) and supported by the wider safeguarding staff, meets weekly. Attendance concerns that may raise safeguarding issues are a standing agenda item. The team:

- Reviews cases of persistent or severe absence where safeguarding may be a factor.
- Decides when home visits are required, usually by the third day of unexplained absence or earlier if concerns are significant.
- Liaises with social care, Early Help, and other agencies where absence signals wider risks.

### **Governing Body**

The Governing Body plays a key role in strategic oversight. At Greenholm, attendance is reported to governors half-termly, and they are expected to:

- Monitor whole-school and group attendance data, challenging leaders where needed.
  - Ensure the Attendance Policy complies with statutory requirements.
  - Support leaders in holding families to account where attendance does not improve.
  - Champion attendance as part of the school's safeguarding duties.
- Our Safeguarding Link Governor, Phil Thompson, also provides additional scrutiny of attendance in the context of child protection and wellbeing.

## **Section 9 – Using Data to Target Improvement**

At Greenholm, we believe that effective use of data is essential to understanding patterns of attendance, identifying risk early, and targeting support where it is most needed. Data is not used to judge or label, but to inform decisions and to ensure that every child receives the right support at the right time.

Attendance data is reviewed daily, weekly, half-termly, and termly by staff at different levels of responsibility. This layered approach ensures that no concerns are overlooked and that leaders and governors have a clear picture of trends across the school.



### Whole-School Data

- The Attendance Team reviews whole-school attendance each week, looking at trends compared to national benchmarks.
- Termly reports are provided to governors, including analysis of attendance patterns, persistent absence, and punctuality.
- Successes are celebrated, and priorities for improvement are clearly identified.

### Group Analysis

We know that some groups of children may face additional barriers to attendance. We therefore monitor attendance carefully for:

- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Children with medical needs.
- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).
- Looked After Children (LAC) and children with a Social Worker.
- Pupils from different ethnic groups and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Analysis at this level helps us to identify inequalities and respond to them directly. For example, attendance for a particular year group or demographic group may indicate the need for additional pastoral support or curriculum adaptations.

### Individual Monitoring

Individual pupil attendance is monitored daily. Children at risk of becoming persistently absent (below 95%) are identified early, and proactive steps are taken to engage families. Those with attendance below 90% (Persistent Absence) or below 50% (Severe Absence) are prioritised for direct support and intervention.

### Reporting to Parents

Parents are kept informed through:

- **Weekly updates** showing class attendance and phase awards.
- **Half-termly personalised reports**, showing a child's attendance expressed in *days missed* rather than percentages, alongside a clear explanation of the impact on learning. Reports are framed positively – used both to celebrate success and to highlight where support may be needed.

### Data-Informed Action

Data is always linked to action. For example:

- A rise in lateness in a particular class may lead to targeted conversations with families.
- Patterns of absence on particular days may trigger a review of curriculum engagement.
- Repeated illness absences may result in support from the Medical Lead or a wellbeing plan.



By using data intelligently, we ensure that every child is noticed, every barrier is understood, and every family is supported.

## Section 10 – Strategy for Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence and severe absence have the most damaging impact on children's education and wellbeing. At Greenholm, we take these cases extremely seriously and put in place a clear, structured response which combines support, persistence, and – when necessary – statutory intervention.

### Definitions

- **Persistent Absence (PA):** attendance at or below 90%.
- **Severe Absence (SA):** attendance at or below 50%.
- **At Risk of Persistent Absence:** children whose attendance falls below 95% are monitored closely to prevent further decline.

### Our Approach

Our strategy is shaped by the principles of the *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* statutory guidance and Birmingham Local Authority's framework for attendance. It is based on the understanding that absence is often linked to wider barriers, and that the most effective intervention comes through early, sustained, and collaborative support.

### Key Actions

- **Early Identification**  
Pupils at risk of PA are identified as soon as their attendance begins to decline. Teachers, the Attendance Officer, and the Pastoral Team flag concerns quickly, so that conversations with families can happen before absence becomes entrenched.
- **Attendance Support Plans (ASPs)**  
Where a child is identified as at risk of PA, an ASP is drawn up with the family. This outlines agreed actions, support to be provided, and clear expectations for improvement. Plans are reviewed regularly with the family present.
- **Safeguarding Lens**  
All persistent or severe absence is considered in the context of safeguarding. Unexplained absence, patterns of non-attendance, or families not engaging with support are escalated to the Safeguarding Team. Attendance is a standing item at the weekly DSL meeting, ensuring risks are identified and acted upon.
- **Multi-Agency Support**  
For pupils with entrenched absence or complex needs, we work closely with Early Help, social care, health services, and the Local Authority. Multi-agency meetings ensure that families are supported holistically, and that barriers are addressed from every angle.



- **Leadership Involvement**

Direct involvement of the Senior Attendance Champion (Mr Evans) and/or the Headteacher (Mr Bird) is triggered for cases of severe absence, ensuring that the highest level of accountability and oversight is applied.

- **Escalation to Statutory Processes**

Where supportive interventions do not bring about improvement, we work with Birmingham Local Authority to initiate statutory measures. This may include penalty notices, parenting contracts, or, in exceptional cases, legal proceedings. These steps are taken in line with the national framework and only once all supportive avenues have been exhausted.

## **Section 11 – Penalty Notices and Legal Processes**

Our primary aim is always to support children and families to achieve good attendance through positive relationships and early help. However, where absence continues despite support, we have a duty to consider statutory processes. These are used as a last resort, when it becomes clear that the child's education and wellbeing are being significantly harmed by non-attendance, and when families are not engaging with the support on offer.

### **National Framework**

The Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)* guidance sets out a national framework for the use of penalty notices and legal action. This ensures consistency across schools and Local Authorities. The framework makes clear that:

- Penalty notices can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence, and where parents are judged capable of securing attendance but have failed to do so.
- Penalty notices are not intended as the first step, but as part of a graduated response after supportive measures have not succeeded.
- Before any penalty notice or prosecution is considered, schools and the Local Authority must demonstrate that appropriate support and engagement has been offered.

### **Birmingham Local Authority Approach**

At Greenholm, we work closely with Birmingham Local Authority to ensure our practice is consistent with local guidance. The LA may issue penalty notices in cases of:

- Unauthorised holidays taken during term time.
- Persistent lateness after registers have closed.
- Regular unauthorised absence where parents have not engaged with support.

The Local Authority may also consider Education Supervision Orders (ESO) or legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court where persistent absence continues. In such cases, parents can be fined up to £2,500 or face a custodial sentence. These measures are extremely serious and are only pursued when all other options have been exhausted.



## **Our School's Position**

At Greenholm:

- Parents are always asked to complete a Leave of Absence form if they plan to remove their child from school, even where the absence cannot be authorised. This is essential for safeguarding, ensuring that the school knows a child's whereabouts.
- Families are informed clearly when attendance is a concern, and when their child is at risk of penalty notices. This is done through meetings, written communication, and follow-up discussions.
- We see penalty notices as part of our safeguarding duty. Their purpose is to ensure that children attend school and do not miss out on education.

Our message to families is clear: enforcement is only ever considered after every supportive measure has been explored. We would always prefer to work with families to overcome barriers and secure improvement. However, we will not hesitate to act in the best interests of the child if attendance does not improve.

## **Section 12 – Removal from Roll and Elective Home Education (EHE)**

Greenholm follows the statutory guidance set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments regarding when a child may be removed from the school roll. Removal from roll will only be actioned in circumstances permitted by law.

### **Removal from Roll**

A child's name may be removed from the school roll if, for example:

- They are registered at another school.
- They have moved out of the area and will attend another school closer to their new home.
- Parents have chosen to educate their child at home.
- There has been extended non-attendance and the Local Authority has determined that removal from roll is appropriate.

In all cases, Greenholm ensures that:

- Parents are kept fully informed of the process.
- The Local Authority is notified immediately, in line with statutory requirements.
- Safeguarding checks are carried out, particularly in cases of unexplained absence.





### **Elective Home Education (EHE)**

Parents have the legal right to educate their child at home if they wish. However, we make clear to families that this is a significant responsibility. Should parents notify us of their intention to home educate:

- We inform Birmingham Local Authority immediately.
- The Local Authority will contact the family to assess the suitability of the proposed education.
- We offer an exit meeting with the family to ensure that their decision is fully informed and that they understand the responsibilities they are taking on.

Greenholm does not promote elective home education as an alternative to school attendance, particularly where attendance difficulties have been unresolved. Our priority is always for children to remain engaged in full-time education within a school setting, where they can benefit from peer interaction, safeguarding oversight, and a broad, balanced curriculum.

### **Safeguarding Considerations**

Any removal from roll is treated as a safeguarding matter. Before removal, the Safeguarding Team reviews the case to ensure that there are no unaddressed risks to the child's welfare. Where necessary, referrals are made to the Local Authority or other agencies.

## **Section 13 – Day-to-Day Processes for Managing Attendance**

Attendance at Greenholm is managed through clear, consistent day-to-day processes which ensure that children are safe, accounted for, and supported. These processes are designed with safeguarding at their core and are fully aligned with statutory requirements.

### **First Day Calling**

- Parents are expected to notify the school of their child's absence by phoning the absence line before 9:00am on the first day of absence.
- If no notification is received, the Attendance Officer (Chloe Dowan) will make a first-day call to parents or carers to establish the reason for absence.
- If contact cannot be made, the Attendance Officer will attempt to reach emergency contacts.
- Where absence remains unexplained by the third day, or sooner if there are contextual safeguarding concerns, a home visit may be made by the Safeguarding Team.
- All unexplained absences are treated as a potential safeguarding risk until a valid reason is established.



### **Ongoing Contact During Absence**

- If absence continues beyond three days, staff maintain regular contact with parents to check on the child's wellbeing and to discuss return-to-school planning.
- In cases of extended or repeated absence, the Attendance Officer and Pastoral Team may invite parents to a meeting to explore support needs.

### **Registration Times**

- The morning register opens at **8:45am** and closes at **9:00am**.
- Children arriving after **9:30am** will receive a **U code**, which is recorded as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.
- Afternoon registers are taken at the beginning of the afternoon session in each class.

### **End of the School Day**

- The school day ends at **3:15pm** for Years 1–6 and at **3:10pm** for Reception.
- Parents are expected to collect children promptly, and persistent lateness at collection is followed up as a pastoral and safeguarding concern, in line with the relevant policy

### **Communication with Families**

- Parents may contact the school regarding attendance via phone, email, or Class Dojo, and may request face-to-face meetings with staff if they wish.
- This flexible approach ensures that families can always reach us in a way that suits their circumstances.

These clear daily routines mean that attendance is monitored consistently, children's safety is prioritised, and families are supported to maintain regular communication with the school.

## **Section 14 – Coding of Attendance**

Attendance is recorded using the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory attendance codes. These codes provide a consistent national framework for monitoring attendance and ensure accuracy in data collection and reporting.

At Greenholm:

- Registers are taken twice daily: once at the start of the morning session, and once at the start of the afternoon session.
- Every half-day session is recorded as either present or absent.
- Where a child is absent, the absence must be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised using the appropriate code.



## Key Codes Used at Greenholm

- **/ \ (Present):** Child is present during registration.
- **L (Late before register closes):** Child arrives after registration opens but before it closes.
- **U (Late after register closes):** Child arrives after 9:30am. This is recorded as an unauthorised absence for the session.
- **I (Illness):** Authorised absence due to illness. Evidence may be requested where absences are frequent or prolonged.
- **M (Medical/Dental Appointment):** Authorised absence for unavoidable medical appointments. Parents are encouraged to arrange appointments outside school hours where possible.
- **R (Religious Observance):** Authorised absence for days exclusively set apart for religious observance.
- **C (Authorised Leave):** Exceptional circumstances where leave has been approved by the Headteacher.
- **G (Family Holiday Not Agreed):** Unauthorised absence for holidays taken without school approval.
- **O (Unauthorised Absence):** Absence not explained, or explanation not accepted by the school.
- **N (Reason Not Yet Provided):** Temporary code used until the reason for absence is confirmed. Must be resolved promptly.
- **E (Excluded):** Child is excluded but no alternative provision is in place.
- **B (Educated Off-Site):** Approved education activity off the school site (e.g., alternative provision).
- **D (Dual Registration):** Child is registered at another school and attending that provision.
- **V (Educational Visit/Trip):** Child is attending a school-approved visit or trip.
- **P (Sporting Activity):** Child is attending a supervised sporting activity approved by the school.
- **W (Work Experience):** Child is attending a school-arranged work experience placement.

## Special Circumstance Codes

The DfE has also introduced additional codes for specific situations, including:

- **C1/C2:** Authorised leave for part-time timetables in exceptional circumstances.
- **Y codes:** For circumstances where attendance is not possible, e.g., widespread travel disruption, site closure, criminal justice detention, or public health restrictions.



## **Section 15 – Requesting Absence, Leave, and Holidays**

We expect all children to attend school every day unless there are exceptional circumstances. Regular attendance is a key driver of academic success, wellbeing, and safeguarding.

### **Requesting Leave of Absence**

- Parents or carers must complete a Leave of Absence Request Form for any planned absence, regardless of whether it is likely to be authorised.
- This requirement is in place for safeguarding purposes — so that the school always knows a child's whereabouts and can ensure their safety.
- Leave of absence requests should be submitted in writing, using the official form, at least two weeks in advance wherever possible.

### **Authorisation of Absence**

- In line with the DfE's statutory guidance, Headteachers may only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.
- Each request is considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the individual circumstances and the child's current attendance record.
- Absence for family holidays, routine events, or convenience will not be authorised.

### **Unauthorised Holidays**

- If parents take their child out of school without authorisation, the absence will be coded as G (unauthorised holiday).
- This may result in a penalty notice being issued by Birmingham Local Authority, in line with the national framework.

### **Safeguarding and Welfare**

Even when absence cannot be authorised, requiring parents to complete a form ensures the school knows:

- The reason for the child's absence.
- The expected duration.
- That the child is safe and accounted for.

Where forms are not submitted, the absence will be followed up as a safeguarding concern in line with our first-day calling and home visit procedures.



### **Holiday Requests**

- Holidays during term time will not be authorised unless the circumstances are deemed truly exceptional.
- Parents will be notified of the decision in writing within five school days of submitting the request.
- Families are reminded of the significant negative impact of missed schooling on children's progress, friendships, and routines.

### **Section 16 – Definitions**

In order to monitor attendance effectively and intervene at the right time, We use nationally recognised definitions set out in the *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2024)* guidance. These definitions help ensure that both parents and staff understand when attendance levels become a serious concern.

#### **Persistent Absence (PA)**

- A child is identified as persistently absent when their attendance falls to 90% or below.
- This means that a child has missed the equivalent of one day every two weeks across the school year.
- At Greenholm, we monitor pupils closely to prevent them reaching this threshold. Families are contacted well before this point so that support can be put in place.

#### **At Risk of Persistent Absence**

- A child is considered at risk of PA if they are approaching the threshold and patterns of absence are emerging.
- At Greenholm, we identify children as at risk of PA after 10 days of absence (whether consecutive or spread across the term).
- Parents are informed in writing, and supportive meetings are offered to address barriers early.

#### **Severe Absence (SA)**

- Severe absence refers to pupils who are absent for 50% or more of school sessions.
- This is the equivalent of missing half the school year or more.
- Pupils in this category face significant risks to their education, social development, and wellbeing. They often require intensive, multi-agency **support**.

#### **Absence Types**

- Authorised Absence includes illness, unavoidable medical appointments, religious observance, or exceptional leave agreed by the Headteacher.
- Unauthorised Absence includes holidays not agreed, arriving after the register closes (U code), or absences where the reason is not accepted by the school.
- Unexplained Absence refers to cases where no reason has been provided. These are followed up immediately as a safeguarding concern.



## Section 17 – Policies Linked to Attendance

Attendance does not sit in isolation; it is part of a wider framework of policies and practices that ensure children at Greenholm are safe, supported, and able to thrive. This policy should therefore be read alongside the following:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** – outlines the school’s duties to protect children from harm, and how attendance concerns may be indicators of wider safeguarding issues.
- **Behaviour Policy** – establishes clear routines and expectations which contribute to a positive culture of attendance.
- **SEND Policy and Information Report** – sets out how children with additional needs are supported to access education consistently, with reasonable adjustments where necessary.
- **Pupil Premium Strategy** – demonstrates how funding is used to reduce barriers to attendance for disadvantaged pupils.
- **Inclusion Statement** – reflects Greenholm’s whole-school commitment to equity, belonging, and removing barriers to participation.

## Section 18 – Effective Interventions and Signposting

Greenholm’s approach to attendance is built on the principle of **support**. We believe that most barriers to attendance can be addressed when families and schools work together, supported by the right interventions at the right time.

### Internal Interventions

We provide a graduated range of in-school interventions, including:

- **Weekly Attendance Monitoring:** Children at risk of persistent absence are tracked closely, with updates shared with families.
- **Meetings with Parents/Carers:** Parents are invited to attendance meetings where concerns are identified early, and supportive strategies are agreed.
- **Pastoral and Mentoring Support:** Our Pastoral Team provides one-to-one mentoring, emotional check-ins, and small group interventions for children whose attendance is affected by wellbeing concerns.
- **SENCO and Medical Lead Support:** Where attendance barriers are linked to special educational needs or health conditions, Mrs Gardner (SENCO) and Mrs Singh (Medical Lead) ensure adjustments and care plans are in place.
- **Recognition-Based Rewards:** Phase leaders and the Attendance Officer nominate children each week for “Well Done for Attendance” certificates. This is rooted in research that shows celebrating effort and improvement is more effective than focusing on 100% attendance alone.





### External Support and Signposting

Where barriers extend beyond school, Greenholm works in partnership with external agencies. Families may be signposted or referred to:

- **Early Help Services** (Birmingham Children's Services) for coordinated multi-agency support.
- **School Health and Nursing Teams** for medical support and advice.
- **Local Authority Attendance Support Service** for guidance and escalation.
- **Community and Voluntary Sector Organisations** offering support with housing, finances, or wellbeing.
- **CAMHS and Mental Health Support Teams** for children experiencing anxiety, low mood, or other difficulties that impact attendance.

### Escalation and Follow-Up

- Attendance cases are reviewed regularly by the Attendance Officer and the DSL team.
- Where families engage, support plans are developed and reviewed, with clear targets and timeframes.
- Where families do not engage or where attendance does not improve, cases are escalated in line with Birmingham's Attendance and Penalty Notice Framework.

## Section 19 – Review and Monitoring

### Annual Review

- This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the Governing Body to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and alignment with Birmingham Local Authority's Attendance Framework.
- The review process will also consider feedback from staff, parents, and pupils, ensuring the policy reflects the lived reality of the Greenholm community.
- Any amendments will be communicated to staff and parents clearly and promptly.

### Continuous Improvement

- As part of our commitment to Wayne Harris's **Inclusive Attendance Framework**, Greenholm will continue to reflect on practice, engage in professional development, and refine strategies for attendance.



## **Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes in line with DfE Guidance (2024)**

Schools are required to use the national set of attendance codes to ensure consistency across the country. These codes are used in the register and on attendance records.

### **Present Codes**

- \*/\* – Present at registration.
- L – Late before the register has closed.

### **Authorised Absence Codes**

- I – Illness (not medical or dental appointment).
- M – Medical or dental appointment.
- R – Religious observance.
- C – Authorised leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.
- C1 / C2 – Part-time timetable (agreed in exceptional circumstances).
- S – Study leave (authorised for examinations).
- J – Interview for employment, school or college place.
- T – Traveller absence.
- E – Excluded (where no alternative provision is arranged).

### **Unauthorised Absence Codes**

- O – Other unauthorised absence.
- U – Arrived after registration closed (after 9:30am at Greenholm).
- G – Family holiday not authorised by the school.
- N – Reason not yet provided (must be resolved and changed to another code promptly).

### **Approved Educational Activity (Not Absence)**

- B – Educated off site (approved education activity).
- D – Dual registered at another school.
- V – Educational visit or trip.
- P – Sporting activity (supervised and approved by the school).
- W – Work experience.
- K – Education arranged by the Local Authority (not at school).

### **Not Required to Attend (Not Absence)**

- X – Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend.
- Y1 – Unable to attend due to transport not being available (statutory walking distance exceeded).
- Y2 – Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel.
- Y3 – Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
- Y4 – Unable to attend due to whole school closure (e.g. weather).
- Y5 – In criminal justice detention.
- Y6 – Following public health guidance or law.
- Y7 – Unable to attend due to any other unavoidable cause.
- Q – Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements provided by the Local Authority.
- Z – Pupil not yet on roll (for administrative purposes).



## Appendix 2 – Attendance Support Plan Templates

These templates are designed to be flexible and can be adapted depending on whether a pupil is at risk of Persistent Absence, already identified as Persistently Absent, or Severely Absent.

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### Template 1 – Early Intervention Attendance Support Plan

**Pupil Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Attendance %:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Plan:** At risk of Persistent Absence (below 95% or 10+ days absence).

**Barriers to Attendance (as identified by school and parents):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Agreed Actions:**

- School will: \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent(s)/Carer(s) will: \_\_\_\_\_
- Pupil will: \_\_\_\_\_

**Support in Place (school staff / external):**

- \_\_\_\_\_

**Review Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:**

Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Representative \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Template 2 – Targeted Attendance Support Plan

**Pupil Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Attendance %:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Plan:** Persistent Absence (attendance at 90% or below).

**Barriers to Attendance (as identified by school, family, and child):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Agreed Actions:**

- School will: \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent(s)/Carer(s) will: \_\_\_\_\_
- Pupil will: \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Support/Referrals (e.g. Early Help, Pastoral Team):**

- \_\_\_\_\_

**Review Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:**

Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Representative \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Template 3 – Intensive Attendance Support Plan

**Pupil Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Attendance %:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Plan:** Severe Absence (attendance below 50%).

**Complex Barriers Identified:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Multi-Agency Actions Agreed:**

- School will: \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent(s)/Carer(s) will: \_\_\_\_\_
- External Agency(ies) will: \_\_\_\_\_
- Pupil will: \_\_\_\_\_

**Named Lead Professional:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Review Frequency:** Weekly ☐ Fortnightly ☐ Other ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:**

Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher/DSL \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Other Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_