



*Rebecca Cheetham Nursery  
and Children's Centre*

# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Compiled by: RC SLT using LA guidance

Amended: RC Senior Leadership Team

Date: January 2023

Ratified by governors: Yes

Governor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the attendance and punctuality expectations of all parents/carers when they enrol their child at Rebecca Cheetham Nursery.

We expect that all children will:

- attend nursery from the allocated start date
- attend all the scheduled sessions booked at nursery
- attend nursery on time.
- attend nursery appropriately, prepared for the day.

We expect all parents and carers to:

- encourage regular nursery attendance
- ensure that their child arrives punctually and prepared
- ensure nursery is contacted when the child is not attending
- contact the nursery on each day of an absence
- contact the nursery in the event of any lateness
- contact the nursery regarding any issue that may keep their child off school

We aim to help parents/carers avoid absences and lateness for their children by creating enjoyable, fun, safe, caring and exciting opportunities for all children who attend the nursery. These opportunities will encourage children to want to attend the nursery on all their scheduled sessions. In turn, we aim to create trusting and supportive relationships with all parents/carers so they feel secure in bringing their children to all their scheduled sessions.

Where more clarity on attendance and punctuality is needed this policy will identify the individual processes involved.

## 2. SCOPE

At Rebecca Cheetham we expect all parents/carers to bring their child to their scheduled sessions; agreed in their admissions contract (see Admissions Policy & Charging for Childcare Policy) to enable the nursery to run in a safe and successful way.

Whilst the legal requirement for attendance does not apply to children under 5, regular routines for young children support the settling in process and enhance their sense of security. They can also foster good habits for children's later life through to Primary School. Regular attendance is an excellent way for your child to get the best out of their nursery experience and is an important life skill.

At Rebecca Cheetham staff work hard to make the very best use of human resources. We work to precise 'child to adult ratios' to ensure Health & Safety regulations are followed and make sure your child has the most appropriate care and support for their specific age of development. These ratios are calculated upon registration at the start of your child's session. Once the register has been taken, staff are moved and allocated according to the numbers in the register, to provide the very best learning, play and development support across the nursery. With poor

attendance and punctuality we cannot do this. This has a negative impact on other children and is not acceptable.

For many families attendance at the nursery does not become an issue. Where attendance becomes an issue, the remainder of this policy sets out the procedures for parents/carers and the nursery related to attendance and punctuality.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Role of the Head Teacher and Governing Body

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is circulated and upheld by the staff and any training or support is in place for employees around attendance and punctuality.

The Governing Body is responsible for making final decisions about children who attend the nursery.

#### All Staff

All staff are responsible for ensuring they have read and understood this policy and are able to communicate it clearly to parents/carers. Staff are responsible for ensuring they keep up to date records of attendance and punctuality to support this policy.

### 4. PROCEDURES

#### Attendance:

- Nursery attendance is agreed by parents through the signing of the Home School Agreement
- The schedule for attendance is agreed in the Admissions Contract upon acceptance of a place at Rebecca Cheetham Nursery.
- Attendance times will be different according to the schedule agreed in the Home School Agreement. Session times are as follows;

Schedule for Attendance	Start time	End Time
Extended day – Full time	8.00am	6.00pm
Morning Session – Part time	8.45am	11.45am
Afternoon Session – Part time	12.45pm	3.45pm

- Top Ups to either the morning/afternoon sessions can be purchased to extend childcare to both AM and PM sessions; where this occurs the start time is above
- Registers in each session will be completed by the Nursery staff in each room
- We expect parents/carers to contact the nursery if a child is going to be late or is running late.

#### Non Attendance:

- Children who have not attended their scheduled session will be marked as absent
- No refund will be given for non attendance at fee paying sessions
- No carry over will be give for non attendance at fee paying sessions for any reason

- Erratic non attendance could affect government funding or grants for childcare
- Frequent non attendance could result in children losing their place at nursery
- Non attendance and no communication from the family as to the reason will result in a phone call to the parent/carer
- Children who have attendance below 85% will trigger the absence procedure

#### Communicating Non attendance:

- Parents/carers should call the school on the morning their child will not be attending to inform the school, giving a reason for the absence (sick/unwell are not deemed to be satisfactory reasons and further clarification will be needed)
- Parents should telephone the school daily should absence through illness extend to more than just one session.
- Such documentation could be presented to the LA or governors should non attendance at Nursery become a problem
- Regular non attendance that gives a cause for concern will be communicated to other agencies
- Parents/carers are requested to fill out an Absence Request form for known absences and offer evidence to compliment the request; eg. flight details / medical letter etc.

#### Monitoring Attendance:

- Rebecca Cheetham has a duty to report nursery attendance to governors
- Attendance numbers will be monitored daily, in the interests of child protection and to determine safe and appropriate ratios
- All attendance figures will be stored by the school to support tracking of children
- Other agencies may use attendance data to enable them to support families and children appropriately such as Child Protection
- All absences will be documented and all absences will be followed up should they reach a level that impacts on the child regardless of the reason given

#### Attendance Absence Procedures

Absence	Action
At every day of absence	Recorded in the Absence and Punctuality Communication Book and entered into SIMS
Once a child hits 80% at the end of a period of a month	A letter is given out detailing the attendance figure and that attendance needs to improve (Absence Letter 1)
During the following month, if attendance improves	A “well done” letter acknowledging the improved attendance. (Improvement Letter)
During the following month, if attendance doesn't improve	A second letter is sent to the family, informing them of the consequences of pupil absence and that if there is no improvement, a meeting with the head teacher. (Absence Letter 2)
During the following month, if attendance doesn't still hasn't improved	A letter detailing a meeting with the Head Teacher. (Absence Letter 3)
After the Head Teacher meeting, if attendance hasn't improved	Case passed to the Chair of Governors. Place at nursery is at risk. Social services referral.

If attendance still hasn't improved after discussion with Chair of Governors	Place at Rebecca Cheetham Nursery is withdrawn. (Place Withdrawal Letter)
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At any stage when attendance improves families should be praised and encouraged and the Improvement Letter provided to the family.

#### Punctuality (lateness):

- Nursery punctuality is agreed by parents through the signing of the Home School Agreement
- Start times will be different according to the schedule agreed in the contract. Session times are as follows;

Schedule for Attendance	Start time	End Time
Extended day – Full time	8.00am	6.00pm
Morning Session – Part time	8.45am	11.45am
Afternoon Session – Part time	12.45pm	4.00pm

- We define lateness as arriving within the 30 minutes after the designated start time of the session. See above.
- We encourage communication regarding lateness from parents/carers and the nursery.

#### Communicating Lateness:

- Parents/carers should call the school before their child's session start time to inform the school they will be late, giving a reason for the lateness and approximate time they expect to be at the Nursery
- All communications to and from parents about lateness will be documented in the Absence & Punctuality Communication Book

#### Late Collections:

- Late collections are charged at £25.00 per 15 minutes. See Charging for Childcare Policy for terms and conditions of charges and payments.
- Parents are advised to call the school if they are going to be late in collecting their child from Nursery giving a reason for their lateness and an approximate time of arrival
- Parents are late if they collect their child after the end times above.
- Late collections will be recorded in the Absence and Punctuality Communication Book and monitored in the interests of child protection
- Regular lateness at the end of a session that gives a cause for concern will be communicated to other agencies
- If a child has not been collected by the scheduled time (either 11.45am, 2.45pm or 3.45pm) and we haven't heard from the parents/carers, we will endeavour to contact the parents ourselves and people on the emergency list to attempt to ascertain what has happened. To ensure the child does not feel upset at not being picked up on time, we would allow the child to attend the extended day provision until such time, they have been collected. The late charge fee applies.

- If a child has not been collected by 6pm and we haven't heard from the parents/carers, we will endeavour to contact the parents ourselves and people on the emergency list to attempt to ascertain what has happened. Failing the child being picked up by 6.30pm, we will make contact with social services who will advise of the next steps.

#### Holidays:

- All holidays are not encouraged during Nursery term time. Parents/carers are advised to take holidays during the time when the Nursery is closed (see current term dates)
- Parents/carers need to complete an Absence Request form and provided relevant evidence of the holiday (eg. flight tickets/confirmation that details departure and arrival dates).
- Holiday leave is granted at the Headteacher's discretion and is not automatically authorised
- Holiday will not be granted where attendance is already a cause for concern
- No return after a holiday will result in a child losing their place at Nursery

#### Medical appointments:

- Parents/carers are advised to make medical appointments for their child outside of the Nursery session hours they have booked. (For fee paying parents we recognise that this will not always be possible.)
- Parents/carers will be asked to change appointments they have made during nursery hours to take them at a time outside their booked session
- All medical appointments taken during Nursery sessions booked by parents/carers will be recorded as an absence in the Absence and Punctuality Communication Book
- Parents/carers need to complete an Absence Request form and provided relevant evidence of the medical appointment (letter, prescription medication etc)

#### Sickness:

In the event that practitioners with first aid training, feel that a child is not well enough to be at nursery, we will telephone Parents/ Carers to come and collect them. This absence will be recorded on the register.

Some absences due to sickness will involve a child having longer off school. Where this occurs it will be recorded on the registers.

- Parents/carers are encouraged to keep in regular contact with the Nursery throughout such a time
- Longer, more serious sicknesses will involve changes to the timeline for Attendance Absence procedures listed above.
- Where sickness is prolonged the school will offer support to the family
- Reoccurring longer sickness periods may result in other agencies being involved in the interest of child protection
- Some longer, more severe sicknesses will involve a quarantine period due to the nature of the sickness. The school will advise parents/carers of the time frame for this (e.g. chickenpox)
- Longer sickness absences may involve a resettling in procedure (see Settling In Policy)

#### Family Emergencies:

- Consideration will be given to circumstances where a family emergency occurs involving a long absence where clear, open and timely communication is given by the parents/carers
- The Headteacher has the final decision

#### Changing Schools:

- Absences incurred if parents/carers remove their child from Nursery will be recorded and passed on to the next educational establishment
- Parents/carers are asked to wait to get a start date for their child's new setting before removing them to avoid unnecessary breaks in learning and play development for their child

#### 5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

All letter and templates for Attendance and Punctuality communication can be found within the school's Google Drive.

Admissions Policy

Charging for Childcare Policy

Settling In Policy

Current Term Dates

Attendance and Punctuality Guidelines for Parents

Child Protection Policy

#### 6. RELATED PROCEDURES

Admissions Procedures – ensuring parents/carers are clear on attendance and Punctuality expectations as soon as they enrol their child.

Procedures for involving outside agencies may be used in conjunction with parts of this policy.

#### 7. GLOSSARY

LA – Local Authority

#### 8. COPIES

Hard copies of this policy available to staff upon request. Hard copies are to be made available to parents/carers upon request. An electronic copy of this Policy will be kept on the school system alongside other policies.