Name of Policy:	**Attendance and Absence (for the whole school including EYFS)**
GHS Policy Number:	4
ISI Regulation:	Welfare, health and safety of pupils (Part 3)
Linked Policies:	Admissions Missing and Uncollected Child Procedure Safeguarding (including Children Missing in Education) Data Protection Data Retention and Destruction
Reviewed by:	Richard Lock, Head, Boys' School Emma Studd, Head, Girls' School Venetia Banbury, Head, Early Years, Nicola Cornish, Deputy Head Kate O'Sullivan, Assistant Head (Pastoral) and DSL (SAC) Alexia Roe, Bursar Anna Chambers, Registrar Alice Sewell, Registrar Becks Williams, Girls' School Secretary Christian Warland, Proprietor
Date of review:	July 2025
Date of next review:	July 2026

This policy is written with due regard to Working together to improve school attendance (August 2024)

Key School contacts

Senior attendance champion [(including EYFS provision)]	Email: kosullivan@gardenhouseschool.co.uk Telephone number: 020 7736 6652
Key staff / contacts	Email: rwilliams@gardenhouseschool.co.uk Telephone: 020 7736 6652

Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

The Proprietor recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School, referred to in this policy as the SAC.

To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Kate O'Sullivan - SAC	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	Kate O'Sullivan - SAC	As required, and at least termly
Analysing attendance and absence data	Kate O'Sullivan - SAC	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	Kate O'Sullivan - SAC	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Christian Warland and Sophie Strafford	Annually

Attendance

Every pupil is accounted for on an **Attendance Register**. The name of the pupil is included on the school register from the first day that the pupil attends the school. If a child is deleted from the register, the local authority (RBKC) is informed accordingly by the Registrars or DSL.

The Attendance register is completed at the start of each morning session and at the start of each afternoon session. It shows whether a pupil is:

- present
- absent
- attending an approved educational activity outside school
- unable to attend through exceptional circumstances
- taking authorised absence
- taking unauthorised absence
- 'N' for no reason is used for a short amount of time only. The reason for this is always followed up. The Register is computerised and a backup copy is made daily.

Our morning register opens at 8:15am each day and closes at 8:45am, (9.00am in Kindergarten). Our school doors close at 8:30am. If a child arrives between 8:30-8:45am they will be recorded as 'Late.' Any child who arrives in school after 8:45am will be recorded as 'U' (arrived in school after registration closed.) This is recorded as an unauthorised attendance for this session. A pupil is recorded as 'N' if their reason for absence is not yet established. The afternoon register will be completed at 1.00pm. Whenever an absence code is changed, for any reason, this will be documented electronically beside the child's name in the register.

For further information on codes and their definitions, please see Appendix 2.

Absence

All pupils are expected to begin and end term on the published dates. The school publishes term dates at least a year in advance, and family holidays should be arranged to coincide with the school holidays so that the children do not return to school with jet lag.

Routine medical treatment (e.g. an appointment at the orthodontist), should, wherever possible, be arranged out of school time.

It is a legal requirement that parents must seek permission from the relevant Head in writing prior to a planned absence. Authorisation of this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and at the Head's discretion. Consideration of a child's attendance will be taken into account.

A Request for Absence Form must be completed, copies of which can be obtained from the school office (*Appendix 1*). Class teachers should always be informed when a request for authorised absence is made.

Authorised absence will not be granted for extended family holidays, unless under very special circumstances. Permission may not be granted if the Heads are not given enough time to consider the request. In relation to this, homework cannot always be available at the time of departure. Teachers work to the term dates and plan their distribution of homework accordingly, so it will not always be possible to deal with such requests at short notice. Additionally, to this, the School cannot grant requests for pupils whose attendance falls below local authority guidelines.

The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

- holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head
- the reason for absence has not been provided;
- a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
- a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

The School has statutory reporting obligations. If a pupil fails to regularly attend, their absence is unauthorised. The School must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.

If a child's absence falls below 90%, a letter will be sent to the parents, informing them of our concerns. If our concerns continue following this letter, we will meet parents. If at the end of term the child's attendance remains below 90%, the School will decide whether to contact the Education Welfare Office (EWO) at the local authority who may choose to investigate this further. These details would be discussed with the family prior to a phone call with the EWO.

Additional needs

The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

It will also work with Parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupils education, health and care plan is accessed.

Suitable strategies and support will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.

Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with Parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

Appendix 1

REQUEST FOR ABSENCE

Name of Child: _____ Class: _____

Signature of Head: _____

DATES REQUESTED FOR ABSENCE	
REASON FOR ABSENCE	
SIGNATURE OF PARENT	

Date form completed:

Please note that this form will be kept on file with your child's records

Appendix 2

Attendance and Absence Codes

Code		Extra Information
/ \	**Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session**	
L	**Late arrival before the register is closed**	*Use code U after register is closed.*
K	**Attending education provision arranged by the local authority**	*A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead. Schools must also record the nature of the provision (regulation 10(5)), examples are:* *• attending courses at college;* *• attending unregistered alternative provision such as, home tutoring.*
V	**Attending an educational visit or trip**	
P	**Participating in a sporting activity**	
W	**Attending work experience**	
B	**Attending any other approved educational activity**	*The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity (regulation 10(5)), examples are:* *• attending taster days at other schools;* *• attending courses at college;* *• attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school.*
D	**Dual registered at another school**	*The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered*
C1	**Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.**	
M	**Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment**	*Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours.* *If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session*
J1	**Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution**	*Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment*
S	**Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination**	*Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination*
X	**Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school**	
C2	**Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable**	

C	**Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance**	*All schools are able to grant a leave of absence at their discretion. Leave must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.*
T	**Parent travelling for occupational purposes**	*Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes*
R	**Religious observance**	*Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance*
I	**Illness (not medical or dental appointment)**	*Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence*
E	**Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made**	
Q	**Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements**	
Y1	**Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available**	*The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available.*
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 the whole school site being unexpectedly closed**	
Y5	**Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention**	
Y6	**Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law**	
Y7	**Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.**	*An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school. 388. This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent.* *Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause.*
G	**Holiday not granted by the school**	*The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday.* *A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.*
N	**Reason for absence not yet established**	
O	**Absent in other or unknown circumstances**	*Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be*

		recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.
U	**Arrived in school after registration closed**	
Z	**Prospective pupil not on admission register**	*To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.*
#	**Planned whole school closure**	*Days between terms;* *• half terms;* *• occasional days (for example, bank holidays);* *• weekends (where it is required by the management information system);* *• up to 5 non-educational days;* *• use of the whole school as a polling station.*