



Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School  
"Nurturing curiosity and inspiring imagination"

# Attendance Policy For Nursery Pupils

## DOCUMENT STATUS

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Approval

Governors' Curriculum Committee

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Annual review

# **Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School Attendance Policy**

## **Ethos**

At Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School, we believe that children who attend nursery regularly, arrive and are collected on time are more secure and better able to engage with the learning environment. The school views good attendance and punctuality as vitally important for the learning and well-being of children and ensures that children are 'school ready'.

There is a strong link between attendance and educational attainment. Research has concluded that children have little chance of catching up to their peers if their attendance is poor. This doesn't just impact on a child's early years' education but later on in their school careers they are likely to get further behind. This could result in future disengagement in school as they get older, including truancy, exclusions and, of course, fewer and lower educational qualifications.

It is therefore crucial that we all get it right from the start! The government aims for all children to have at least 96% attendance - that equates to just eight days off per year. We will endeavour to support parents in ensuring their children attend regularly and, in that way, we will have the best chance in enabling children reach their full potential.

## **Aims**

- To work in cooperation with parents to ensure that children attend nursery regularly and punctually
- To provide a safe, comforting routine, conducive to the children's learning and peace of mind

## **Responsibilities of Governors**

- To agree this policy and review it on a regular basis
- To monitor and support the implementation of this policy
- To monitor attendance rates termly
- To monitor strategies for encouraging good attendance

## **Responsibilities of the Headteacher**

- To ensure that staff are aware of this policy and implement it consistently
- To ensure that parents are aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding attendance
- To monitor attendance and punctuality termly
- To speak informally to parents/carers if a child's attendance is below the expected level of 85% or if poor punctuality seems to be having a significant effect upon the child's education.
- To write to parents if attendance remains low, or punctuality does not improve, after informal conversation

- To inform Warrington Borough Council's Duty and Assessment Team if poor attendance or punctuality indicates that the child's welfare could be in jeopardy
- To withdraw the child's place in extreme circumstances - but not if this could further endanger the welfare of the child
- To ensure strategies for encouraging good attendance are implemented

### **Responsibilities of Staff**

- To be familiar with and follow this policy at all times
- To monitor the attendance and punctuality of their key children and ensure a reason is obtained every time a child is absent from nursery
- To inform the headteacher if they have concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality
- To be aware that poor attendance and/or punctuality could be a safeguarding issue and to respond in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- To ensure that registers are accurately completed with late marks and reason codes for every absence
- To mark a child as being late if they arrive after 9.00 for the morning session or 12.45 for the afternoon session
- To provide positive messages to parents/carers about the importance of punctuality and good attendance

### **Responsibilities of Parents**

- Ensure that children are brought and collected by a responsible adult, over the age of 16
- To ensure that their children attend every session unless they are unwell
- To bring and collect their children promptly - please remember that it is very distressing for children to be left until last
- Bring children into the nursery classroom and ensure a member of staff is aware of their arrival
- To inform the nursery by telephone on the first day if a children are absent because of illness and again at regular intervals if the illness is prolonged
- Where possible, to inform the nursery in advance if their child is going to be absent and to give the reason for the absence - this can be done by telephone or letter
- To avoid making appointments for their children that occur during school time
- Ensure that the nursery is informed every time someone different will be collecting their child

### **Criteria for Success**

- Attendance targets are met
- Children are seen to want to come to nursery
- Parents demonstrate an understanding of the importance of regular and prompt attendance in promoting their children's learning

## **Associated Policies**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Missing and Uncollected Children
- Admissions



### **Authorised Absence**

This is absence for which the school gives approval, having received a satisfactory explanation and/or evidence from the parent(s). Examples include absences for:

- Illness
- Hospital appointments
- Other unavoidable causes

### **Unauthorised Absence**

This is absence for which the school does not give approval, having considered all the circumstances and any evidence/explanations provided by the parent(s). Examples include (but are not limited to) absences where the explanation given is that:

- A parent is ill
- Family holiday
- A parent wants company
- A parent gives in to a child who wants to stay at home
- It is the child's birthday
- A parent does not care whether the child attends school
- A parent has taken the child shopping
- A parent cannot control the child
- A parent has taken the child to the hairdresser
- Other trivial reasons

It must also be noted that an absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the parent(s) fail to give an explanation, even if their reasons would otherwise be considered valid.

## Appendix 2 – Sample Letter to All Parents



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### Attendance

All of the staff at Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School do their best to ensure your child is 'school ready'. We can do this more effectively if your child has good attendance at nursery.

There is a strong link between attendance and educational attainment. Research has concluded that children have little chance of catching up to their peers if their attendance is poor. This doesn't just impact on a child's early years' education but later on in their school careers they are likely to get further behind. This could result in future disengagement in school as they get older, including truancy, exclusions and, of course, fewer and lower educational qualifications.

It is therefore crucial that we all get it right from the start! The government aims for all children to have at least 96% attendance - that equates to just eight days off per year. So please try to get your child in nursery every day - and we can cope with minor coughs and colds! That way, we have the best chance of enabling your child to reach their full potential. If your child's attendance drops below this, we will invite you, in the first instance, to have a chat with your child's keyworker to see how best to support you in improving your child's attendance. If you need any support now, please talk to your child's keyworker.

Thank you

Jane Wilkie  
Headteacher

## Appendix 3 – Sample Letter to Targeted Parents



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Dear Parent/Carer

Your child's attendance has this half term has been:

We are looking at children's attendance and want to support you in ensuring your child has at least an **85% attendance** rate. In school, your child will be expected to have an attendance rate of 97%.

**Regular attendance at nursery has been shown to have a significant impact on children's achievement. Attendance at nursery establishes good habits from an early age and contributes to the development of a positive approach to school and education.**

We will monitor your child's attendance over the next few weeks. Please make every effort to ensure your child attends regularly. If you need support, please speak to your child's keyworker.

Yours sincerely

Jane Wilkie  
Headteacher

### Attendance Flowchart

