



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction



Basnett Street Nursery School is a successful and outstanding school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. We recognise the importance of establishing regular patterns of attendance for young children if they are to benefit fully from their school career.

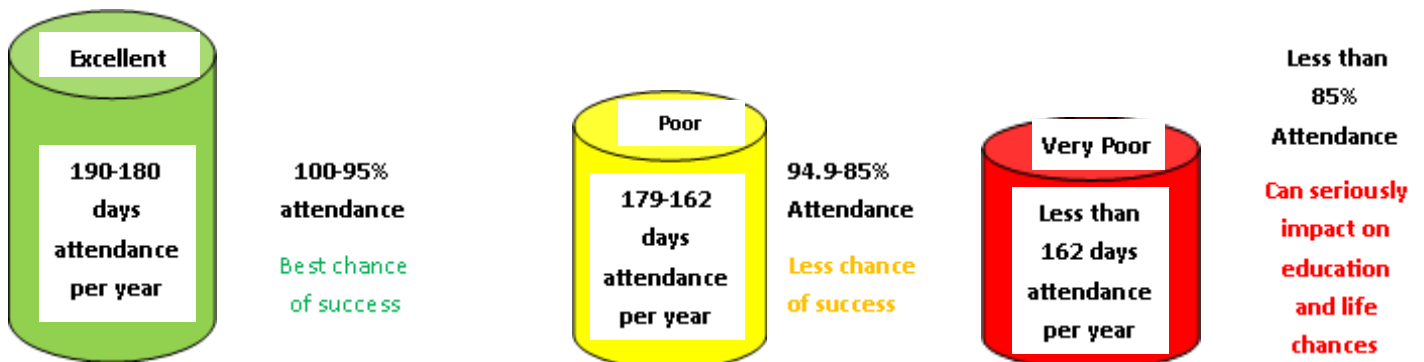
For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important

Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil’s absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same group. Whilst acknowledging that nursery education is non-statutory, we recognise the part that regular and punctual attendance plays in keeping children safe and enabling them to enjoy and achieve.

Good Attendance Means...

Being in school at least 95% of the time **OR** being in school between 180 and 190 days each year 190-180 days attendance per year



Anything less than 100% attendance means that your child is missing out on their education. There are only 190 school days each year. That leaves 175 days not at school for shopping and holidays.

Promoting Regular Attendance



Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, children and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Parents and carers given information regarding attendance and punctuality through the School Handbook, Induction Procedures and Newsletters.
- Report to you termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying group achievements on the parents and entrance noticeboard.
- Reward good or improving attendance through group and individual certificates.
- Carry out transition work with children moving between nursery and reception.
- Run special events when parents, children and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for everyone associated with school, including parents, children, staff and governors.
- Set targets to improve individual children and whole-school attendance.

Understanding types of Absence



Any absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons sessions away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the school or Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school after the register has closed
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- holidays that exceed the amount agreed by the Headteacher

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend school it is better to speak to school to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Absence Procedures



If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, either by phone or you can call into school and report to reception

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with your child's keyworker and/or Headteacher if absences persist.

Telephone Numbers



There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

In-School Strategies to Improve Attendance/Punctuality



Staff work very closely with parents on attendance. Attendance is monitored closely and we are continually striving to improve attendance. At present we have a parent's notice board that weekly attendance scores are displayed and each key worker group gets a star if they achieve 100% attendance. An attendance policy helps to identify any attendance problems. Regular monitoring of attendance ensures that staff work with the parents of children with low attendance. Extended holidays are discouraged. If a family decides to take an extended holiday abroad (in excess of 2 weeks) during term time then the place is forfeited.

Staff will try to work closely with parents to get to the root cause of the poor attendance and support wherever possible, e.g. family support may be needed for parents struggling with different issues, advice on behaviour management may be needed from staff if a child is displaying inappropriate behaviour towards parent due to separation anxiety etc. First day calling on any unexplained absence is undertaken by key workers. The School Bursar monitors attendance closely, and highlight to the Headteacher any low attenders that need to be followed up.

Strategies uses are:

1. Termly certificates are given out to individual children for 100% attendance
2. An attendance board in the Nursery entrance emphasise the importance to parents' and weekly attendance figures are also displayed on our school Facebook page.

Importantly, the aim of these strategies is to emphasise the importance of attendance to parents, but not to single out children as they are unable to influence their own attendance.

Lateness



How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8.45am/12.40pm** and we expect your child to be in their group at that time.

Registers are marked by **9.00am/12.55pm** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher and/or your child's keyworker to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Holidays in Term Time



Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by trying not to take children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

If you do decide to take your child on holiday during term-time a holiday request form will need to be completed in order to let the school know the planned dates. This is not an authorised absence but we will keep your child's place open for 2 weeks if the child does not return within 2 weeks, your child's name will be removed from the register and the place be given to a child on the waiting list.

Religious Absence



The school will authorise one day 'leave' (i.e. the day set aside by the Religious Body of which the parent is a member) per religious festival, e.g. Eid, **but no more than 3 days in any one academic year.**

Roles and Responsibilities for Attendance Matters in this School



Parents:

- Ensure children attend regularly and punctually
- Contact school on 1st day of absence
- Avoid holidays in term time wherever possible and complete holiday request forms, clearly stating dates in advance
- Attendance at meetings in school

Headteacher / School Business Support Officer :

- First day response: Contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided. Children on the Child Protection register and children in need will always be contacted on the first day of absence.
- Un-notified or any persistent absences will be followed up by a call or a text message
- Following an agreed system of recording the attendance registers accurately.
- Regularly identify and monitor child, group and whole school attendance and punctuality levels, particularly that of vulnerable groups
- Regularly communicate child attendance and punctuality levels to parents
- Involve other agencies if difficulties arise for additional support, as appropriate.
- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters
- Ensure adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities
- Monitor attendance regularly
- Arrange meetings with parents where attendance is poor.

All School Staff:

- Provide a welcoming and positive atmosphere for valued children and provide a safe learning environment
- Ensure an appropriate and responsive curriculum
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- To see children's' attendance as the responsibility of **all** school staff
- Ensure all staff are aware of the school's policy and to deal consistently with absence and punctuality.
- Participate in training regarding school systems and procedures

Governors:

- Adopt the whole-school policy and review regularly
- Monitor the consistent implementation of the attendance policy
- Set aspirational targets for improving the school's attendance figures

School Targets, Projects and Special Initiatives



The school has targets to improve attendance and as parents have an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is **90%**, we will keep you regularly informed about this, and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe in supporting all children to achieve their full potential.

Throughout, the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in a newsletter and we ask for your full support.

Consultation, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body, Headteacher and all staff have been involved in the writing of this policy and will monitor and evaluate it annually.