

Bedford Nursery Schools Federation



Attendance Policy

Written in: November 2022

Approved by Governors in: September 2024

Next reviewed date: September 2025

Introduction

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation, we believe that good attendance is important so that children become settled and have the opportunity to access high quality early years education and care to support their learning and development. Although we recognise that attending nursery is non-statutory, we also recognise the value of working together with parents and carers to establish good routines and positive patterns of attendance which will help their children throughout their schooling and adult life. From the very beginning, we inform parents about the importance of good attendance and punctuality at our New Parents Meeting. We also highlight the crucial learning and development that takes place between birth and 5 years. Developing good habits and consistent routines, with exposure to rich learning experiences through regular attendance enables children to become happy, settled, confident learners who make good progress.

Aim of the Attendance Policy

The aim of the Attendance Policy is for staff to work in partnership with parents and carers to promote the highest levels of regular attendance to lay the foundation for future learning. We do this by sharing positive messages about the impact of good attendance, and being open and available for parents to talk through any concerns about their child's attendance. We take into account individual circumstances and work collaboratively to resolve barriers to attendance, sharing the adverse effects that non-attendance can have on a child's learning and development.

Principles

Our Attendance Policy is based on the following principles:

There is an expectation of parents to ensure that their child attends Nursery School for all their sessions. .

All children have an entitlement to education and to achieve their learning potential.

BNSF actively promotes and supports the importance of good attendance with parents/carers and children.

Good attendance supports children's learning and development so that they are better prepared for their move to into Primary School.

BNSF works together with parents/carers and partner agencies to overcome barriers to attendance with the child at the centre of this.

Early identification through monitoring attendance supports open and honest communication with parents and carers so that issues can be resolved and actions agreed to achieve successful outcomes.

Procedures

Parents are expected to bring their child to Nursery School, on time, for their allocated sessions unless there is a reason for absence.

Lateness

Timings of the day include a flexible drop off and collection so that parents can speak with their child's Key Person to share information. They also allow parents to drop off and collect siblings from neighbouring Primary Schools. They provide time for parents to drop off and pick up so that their child is not late. It is important to be on time; being late can cause children to become unsettled and upset.

	Drop off	Pick up
Morning	9am – 9:15am	11:45-12noon
Afternoon	12:30-12:45pm	3:15pm-3:30pm

If a parent is regularly late when dropping off their child, we will need to have a conversation to work out an agreed plan to prevent this pattern continuing. Late charges apply at pick up times. Parents are asked to contact the school office if they are going to be late – Peter Pan 01234 350864; Cherry Trees 01234 354788.

Illness

If children are absent from Nursery School due to illness, they need to stay at home until they are better. Parents are asked to contact the school office by phone or email each day (Peter Pan 01234 350864 or peterpan@bedfordnurseryschools.com; Cherry Trees 01234 354788 or cherrytrees@bedfordnurseryschools.com) if their child is ill and will be missing Nursery School. We will record the reason for absence and ask parents to keep the school office informed daily throughout their child’s period of absence.

Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from the Nursery School for 2 days after their symptoms have gone. Parents must follow advice from the nursery school or the NHS/Public Health when there is prevalence of an infectious disease, including Covid-19. You can find useful information about school absence and illnesses on the NHS Live Well website.

Other Absences

If your child is going to be absent for another reason, such as an appointment, please contact the school office and we will record the reason for absence. It is important that parents keep in touch each day with the nursery school throughout the period of absence.

If children are absent and school has not been informed, we will try to make contact with parents/carers via a telephone call or email requesting contact with the school on the first day of their absence. Parents/carers will be asked to keep in touch with the nursery school daily throughout the period of absence. Children who are vulnerable will be monitored daily and the FSW worker will be informed of their absence. If the child has a named Social Worker, the Social Worker will be notified on the first day of absence and updated on the child’s attendance. Where there are concerns about a child’s attendance and/or the school has not heard from the family, the FSW/SLT will make a home visit and/or inform the relevant external agencies.

Whilst attending nursery is non-statutory, we want to work with parents and carers to develop good habits of punctuality and attendance in children. In all cases where a child is absent and the school has not been able to contact the parents or carers, the FSW and/or a member of the SLT will make an unannounced home visit to be assured of the family’s welfare. If the school has concerns then Social Care will also be informed.

The school will be proactive in its support of parents and carers to try to identify barriers to attendance and resolve any issues. This may include actions such as offering Early Help to support the family, involving other agencies or, where possible, offering alternative or extended sessions to ensure their children’s attendance improves.

As a Nursery School, we are aware that there may be occasions where children’s absence cannot be avoided, for example if they have to attend medical appointments or there is a family emergency. Such absences will be authorised. Holidays are discouraged during term time. If parents have exceptional circumstances and need to request time away from nursery school, they should complete a ‘Planned Absence Form’.

Attendance Monitoring

In addition to the above procedures, the Family Support Worker, in consultation with the Executive Head Teacher, monitors overall lateness and absence every week to look for patterns and trends.

Individualised support and conversations will take place between the key person, FSW and parents/carers in the first instance where there are concerns. They will discuss the level of absence, the number of hours of early learning that their child has missed and the impact that this has on their child's learning, development and progress.

If these concerns persist and a child is regularly absent, the FSW and the DHT or EHT will meet with the parents to explore the reasons for absence and work together on an individualised support plan to improve attendance. The school will inform parents of the importance of regular attendance in relation to progress and developing positive behaviours for school and future life skills. The school will listen and be proactive in its support of parents and carers to try to identify barriers to attendance and resolve any issues. This may include actions such as offering Early Help to support the family, involving other agencies or, where possible, offering alternative or extended sessions to ensure their children's attendance improves.

Encouraging positive attendance will also be highlighted in the half termly newsletters.

Attendance is reported to Governors via the termly Head Teacher's report.

A child will not be removed from the register until:

- the school has notice from parents that the child is leaving and established where a child has moved/transferred to;
- the end of the of their N2 academic year (if child is transferring to Primary School for Reception);
- the end of the term that a Reception age child has turned 5 years old, when the child is statutory school age and must move to Primary School.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf

Appendix 1



Bedford Nursery Schools Federation

Planned Absence Form

School	Peter Pan / Cherry Trees
Child's name	
Parent/Carer	

Date	From:
	To:

Reason	
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Signed by Parent/Carer..... Date

For office use only:

Received in office by..... Date.....

Advised Keyworker..... Date.....

SLT informed.....