**Kenilworth Nursery School**

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**Whitnash Nursery School**



**Attendance Policy 2023/24**

“Celebrating the uniqueness of every child.”

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| **Date initial Policy Written** | **November 2010** |
| **Approved by Governors** |  |
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| **Version 1.2** | **November 2023** |  |  |
| **Revision Due:** | **Date:****November 2026** | **Head teacher** | **Chair of Governors** |

**Attendance:**

Attendance at Nursery is not statutory. There is no legal duty for a child to attend.

However, regular, prompt attendance leads to the greatest benefits in terms of a child’s early learning and development. This phase of learning is crucial for a child’s development and we know how much progress they can make when they fully participate in our early educational offer.

Regular attendance is expected if you take a place at our Nursery School. All attendance is monitored at least half termly, in line with Department for Education expectations for Schools. Please remember that means we are expecting your child to be in school and if for any reason they are not going to be we would like you to let us know.

We understand that children may need to ‘settle in’ to Nursery school and this may be their very first experience of staying somewhere outside the home or other family members homes. We are mindful of the need for some children to build gradually and will go at a pace which is appropriate for each individual child in line with our settling in policy. Where we have agreed a settling process for your child this will not affect their overall attendance when we monitor. Even as your child is building their time with us it is very important they attend for their expected sessions. The staff team will have planned for them to be in school with us and thought about them in our development of the environment and activities offered.

Each 15 or 30 hour place is funded by the Government. These payments are made to schools on the basis of the number of children attending. Therefore if your child does not attend for an extended period of time, with no reason, the money for the place will be deducted from our budget. Financial audits are conducted to check this.

**Non Attendance:**

At times children are unwell or cannot attend. If you let us know in advance that your child cannot attend this is known as an ‘authorised absence’. We understand that children may come into contact with childhood illness in their first year of Nursery education and do not expect unwell children to come to School. If you inform us of illness we can ‘authorise’ the absence. Childhood illness absence will not trigger absence escalation concerns via our monitoring process.

 It is however very important that you contact us to let us know that your child will not be in School from the first morning of their absence. We may ask what type of symptoms your child has or which illness, this may support us to look for clusters of illness and to alert other parents when appropriate.

 If your child is not brought to Nursery for any other reason than ill-health, you must let us know and this absence maybe authorised. We can authorise absence for ‘other reasons’ for example a family holiday because your child is **NOT** statutory school age. This is **NOT** the case once your child is 5 years old.

Please phone school promptly on these occasions and let staff know why your child will be absent.

Call 01926 335312 (Whitnash) or 01926 853394 (Kenilworth) and speak to our office managers or leave a message on the answer machine.

If there is a further reason why your child is ‘not attending’ please make contact and come and talk to us at school as soon as possible so we can see what can be resolved and how we might move forward. It is not unusual for young children to say they do not want to go to school. If this is the case we absolutely recommend you listen to their reasons and find out why but also that you do continue to bring them so we can resolve any issues and ensure the child understands that school is important and is something that happens, and that is it their ‘turn’ to go to school and worries can be resolved.

If attendance drops below 80% (Not counting agreed settling in processes or childhood illnesses) then you will receive a letter from school asking for you to come and discuss the reasons for low attendance. This letter will invite you to come and be part of a discussion so that we can think together about how to improve attendance for your child. Attendance below this level will impact upon their developmental progress in Nursery School as they will be missing the equivalent of 1 day in every 5.

**Absence:**

It is really important we know about each child’s absence from the very first day it occurs, otherwise we have a statutory duty to begin to treat ‘unexplained absence’ as a concern and follow a process under our safeguarding arrangements.

**When we do not hear from you we will take the following steps:**

1. On the first day of an unexplained absence a member of the team will contact you by telephone. This will be followed up with further calls until we establish the nature of the absence, during week one.

**If we cannot make contact with you the following steps will apply**

1. Within the first 2 or 3 days any unexplained absence is further acted upon by the admin team, family leader or senior leadership team with telephone calls. Calls to members on the contact list will be made. Cross checks with siblings at local schools will be made where appropriate.
2. If contact cannot be made we will visit the family home. If no contact is made an email will be sent to Warwickshire Early Years Safeguarding Advisor stating that the child is potentially missing in education, email address earlyyearsadvisors@warwickshire.gov.uk. If there are concerns that the child may be at risk of harm, follow safeguarding procedures – contact Warwickshire Children and families Front Door for a consultation, Tel: 01926 414144. This may trigger a Police welfare check.
3. After a further week of unexplained non-attendance and no contact parents/carers are written to and advised that the nursery place is at risk.
4. After a further 2 week period the place is removed and the ‘Child missing in education team’ are informed, who may decide to act.
5. **If at any point during the period of unexplained absence we have any concerns about a child’s safety or well-being, or believe they may be at risk of harm, we will seek advice from social services.**

**Please can we stress: Your child’s place will not be removed from you if we know the reason for the absence.**