The Federation of Duke Street and Highfield Nursery Schools

Attendance Policy

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Contents

Introduction

This is a successful nursery school and every child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all children to achieve their potential and aspire to excellence.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and every child should be at nursery, on time, every session they have booked unless they have an unavoidable reason to be absent. Nursery attendance is vital not just for academic reasons but those such as social skills and communication. Children who attend regularly usually develop strong attachments with adults and peers which in turn helps them feel safe and secure leading them to progress in all areas of learning.

Government research shows a direct link between attendance and attainment and good attenders also make better progress socially, learn to work with others, and are better prepared for the transition to primary school. Regular attendances helps prepare your child for their next step in life.

Absence or late arrival also disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same group / environment.

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.

Our attendance target this year is:.

Cohort	Attendance Target
Pre-school (all children in their last year before starting school)	93%
2-3 year olds.	86%

We know and understand young children are building up their immune systems when they first start nursery, so we understand they may be absent more due to illnesses.

2 Responsibilities and roles

2.1 Families

Parents and carers must also ensure that nursery has up-to-date contact information for themselves and emergency contacts.

If your child is going to be absent, parents must inform nursery as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

2.2 School

Executive Head Teacher and / or Head of School

- Lead on giving attendance a high profile.
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters and protected time allocated to discharge those responsibilities.

- Where there is uncertainty regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence, or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process.
- Provide regular reports to the governing body on school attendance, including persistent absence and vulnerable groups.

Office staff:

- First day response: office staff contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided and record this information accordingly. Contact emergency contacts if parents cannot be reached. Contact is made via phone call; email and text messaging systems (with open response option back if that suits for parents.)
- Update attendance registers.
- Regularly identify and monitor children, year groups and whole school attendance and punctuality levels, particularly that of vulnerable groups.
- School attendance data is sent every term to the governing body.
- Regularly communicate child's attendance and punctuality levels to parents.
- Promote regular attendance through the nursery newsletter, website and displays and ensure the nursery's attendance policy is readily accessible
- Weekly reports of attendance in vulnerable groups are monitored by office staff and the family support worker.
- Monthly reports from sims.net for any missing marks/N codes to be investigated and checked for correct information.

Family Support Worker:

- Work with children and parents to remove barriers to regular and punctual attendance..
- Involve external agencies to support children and parents as appropriate to better understand and address the issues causing attendance concerns.

All school staff

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and a safe learning environment.
- *From Sept 24, keyworkers will update parents on attendance percentage of their child at the same time as the recent assessment review.*
- Be aware of factors that can contribute to poor attendance and punctuality.
- Adhere to the procedures in place within school to promote good attendance.
- Promote the link between attendance and educational and social attainment to parents; (individual attendance percentages are used by keyworkers and noted on termly assessments).
- Complete attendance registers in accordance with the legislation and under the direction of the head teacher.
- Discuss attendance concerns at an early stage with parents.
- Raise any concerns about attendance with the attendance lead and/or head teacher / head of school.

Governors

- Agree an attendance policy for the Federation and review it annually.
- Where the school is not meeting its attendance targets, or when the governors believe there is cause for concern, instigate a review of school's attendance procedures.
- Ensure the nursery school is following all guidance related to children missing from education given in KCSIE 2024.
- On receipt of half termly school attendance data Governors are able to monitor and review school absence levels. The Governors review attendance data in the following format/timeframe.

	Duke Street	Highfield
Attendance- Autumn Term 2024 *With persistent absentees taken out	2025 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) * 2026 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) *	2025 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) * 2026 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) *
Attendance- Spring Term 2025 *With persistent absentees taken out	2025 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) * 2026 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) *	2025 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) * 2026 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) *
Attendance- Summer Term 2025 *With persistent absentees taken out	2025 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) * 2026 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) *	2025 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) * 2026 Leavers: % (%) * EYPP: % (%) * Vulnerable: % (%) *

2.3 Lancashire County Council (the local authority)

School Attendance Consultants (SACs)

SACs are schools' first point of contact for attendance advice regarding individual pupils and the whole school.

Children Missing Education (CME) Team

The CME team ensures the local authority fulfils its statutory duty to identify children in their area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. For further information see section 7, below, regarding notifications schools must submit.

3 Types of absence

3.1 Authorised absences

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from nursery for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in nursery time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

3.2 Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the nursery does not consider reasonable. Examples of unauthorised absences are:

- Parents/carers keeping children off nursery unnecessarily.
- Absences which are not explained satisfactorily.
- Children who arrive at nursery after the register has closed.
- Days off for shopping, birthdays or looking after other children.

It is the head teacher's responsibility to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Hence, if there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, nursery may request further evidence from parents before an absence is authorised. This may be in the form of a prescription, appointment card or similar. Parents should not ask their doctor (GP) to provide "sick notes" to excuse absence.

Whilst any child may be off nursery because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend nursery for other reasons. If your child is reluctant to attend nursery it is better to speak to us as soon as possible to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. As a nursery, we will always work with parents (and external agencies as appropriate) to understand and address the reasons behind absence. We are here to help you maintain a regular attendance for your child. We have a family support worker who will work with you to support any challenges you or your child may have.

3.3 Persistent Absence (PA)

Persistent absence is when a child misses 18% or more across the nursery year for whatever reason, authorised and unauthorised . We are fully aware young children may become ill more frequently than older children who have had time build up their immune systems, hence why we have increased the threshold to 18%.

At our federation of both nursery schools, we monitor all absence thoroughly, therefore any child whose attendance indicates they are likely to reach the PA threshold will be prioritised and parents will be informed of this promptly and a leaflet handed to them to inform them of the effects of persistent absence on their child's development and education.

The family support worker will invite you into nursery to discuss and support you in increasing attendance, if possible.

100% Attendance	Excellent
95% Attendance	Good
90% Attendance	Satisfactory
85% Attendance	Poor
80% Attendance	Very Poor

3.4 Leave during term time

By law, maintained schools cannot authorise any leave in term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their education and progress as much as any other absence. **However, we are a**

maintained nursery school and children are not statutory school age, therefore we understand the benefits of some family holidays. Whilst we encourage family holidays out of term time dates, we are empathetic to the reasons why parents may want to book a holiday in term time. We request you complete a "holiday form" prior to your child's absence so we know where you are and we are not chasing you regarding absences. Holiday request forms can be collected and returned to the nursery office.

3.5 Religious absence

Nursery are understanding and will authorise absence per religious festival, eg Eid, and this will be marked as code R in the register. The authorised number will be that set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member.

We ask parents to request any leave in advance again so we know where your child is and we are not chasing the absence.
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4 Registration

4.1 Attendance registration

Morning registration is between 8.45am- 8.55am at Duke Street Nursery School and 9.00am – 9.10am at Highfield Nursery school.
Afternoon registration is between 12.30pm – 12.40pm at both schools.

After the attendance register has been taken it remains open until 9.30am at both schools in the morning and 1.15pm in the afternoon.

4.2 Late arrival

Children who arrive after the registers have been closed must be signed in by office staff into the late book before they are taken into ratios.

Image: late book located in school reception at Duke Street & Highfield

4.3 Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss vital social experiences and often special small group time with their key person. We often observe those children who arrive late appearing uncomfortable and less confident when arriving after their peers. They miss the opportunity to find their favourite thing or person to play with in the environment, which supports their transition into nursery. Children arriving late also disrupt group learning time.

If your child is often late you will be asked to meet with the family support worker to discuss ways to improve punctuality, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

4.3 Codes within sims.net

Sims.net has updated over August 24, codes have been updated to reflect the removal of the H code for holidays.
Across the federation term time holidays, once authorised and approved by the Headteacher (as child is not compulsory school age); are coded as C (authorised leave) with an internal comment to confirm this is a family holiday.
Within the federation children are not of compulsory school age to impose attendance/fines.

5   School attendance procedures

Flowcharts detailing attendance procedures can be downloaded from the school website.

5.1 First day of absence

If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, we will telephone you on the first day of absence to find out what the reason is and when your child is expected to return. If we are unable to contact you we will leave a message for you to return with relevant information. For some children, the office staff will pass this information over to the family support worker who may make a home visit. Please note that such home visits may be unannounced.

5.2 Second day of absence

As above.

5.3 Third day of absence

If we have had contact with you and know the reason for absence we will mark the register accordingly. If we have unable to make contact with parent / carer and or emergency contacts, office staff will contact parents/ carers and emergency contacts. Messages will be left to ascertain where your child is. If we are concerned a home visit may be made. Please note that such home visits may be unannounced.

If staff are unable to gain access or speak to parent/ carers a note requesting contact will be pushed through the family home letterbox.

5.4 Fourth day of absence

If we were unable to gain contact with you on day 3, we will once again try parents/ carers and emergency contacts. If your child has siblings at another school we will contact the school to ascertain if siblings have been absent. We will ascertain if school staff have seen the nursery child within the period of time your child has been absent. If we have concerns the family support worker and if possible key person or member of senior leadership team will complete an unannounced home visit. If no access to the property a note will be left through the door. Staff will ask neighbours if the child / family have been seen. Actions and information will be recorded on CPOMS system.

5.5 Fifth day of absence

If by day 5 we have still no contact from parents/ carers and / or emergency contacts, senior staff will complete a home visit . If staff have reason to be concerned about the family and still no contact has been made, senior staff will contact the police and a request made for a welfare visit to the family.

5.6 Attendance concerns

Parents/ carers are expected to contact nursery at an early stage and to work with us in resolving any attendance problems together; this is nearly always successful. However, if concerns persist, nursery will use the following procedures and interventions, as required, to support parents in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality.

- Telephone calls and/or letters to make parents aware of school's concern about their child's attendance.
- Invitation to meetings to discuss concerns with our family support worker and/ or head teacher or head of school.
- Parents and the family support worker will agree strategies nursery can offer to improve regular attendance.
- Use of the Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and/or referral to other agencies and services if poor unexplained attendance and other issues of concern.
- If after 10 days we have not been able to contact the family and they are not under statutory services; the school will contact the local authority for further guidance and advice.

5.7 Pupils with medical needs who have difficulty attending school

Government guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (see appendix) emphasises the role of governing bodies in ensuring that children with medical conditions are able to access nursery in the same way as other children, if and when well enough. Nursery staff will work with parents and provide activities to

support child's development at home if too unwell to attend nursery. Parents can request this support by request through Tapestry or telephone conversation.

When a child has been absent from nursery for an extended period, the head teacher, key person and other support services will work with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

6 Notifications school must submit to the local authority

6.1 Admissions

All schools must notify the local authority within 14 days of adding a child's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the child.

6.2 Leavers

All schools must notify the local authority when a child's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as soon as the ground for removal is met, in our case this would be **non-compulsory education age**. This will be completed within and no later than 5 days after nursery is notified of child leaving.

Where a nursery school notifies a local authority that a child's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the nursery must provide the local authority with the required information as laid out in regulation. This includes, child's name and address, nursery or school child is moving to and expected start date. If the parents / carers are unable to confirm a nursery / school for the child, CFW service and health services will be informed and request made to support parents doing this in the new area.

In addition to submitting a notification about removal from roll, some circumstances also require school to make referral to other local authority teams such as the Children Missing Education team. If staff are unsure as what to do we will contact our School Attendance Consultant for advice on removing children from roll.

Both on roll and off roll notifications are completed and submitted electronically via common transfer files – CMJ and CML ctfs no later than 5 days after the joining/leaving date.

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CPOMS file transfer request procedures

Federation Family Support Worker informed of all on roll and off roll notifications at time of processing and will complete a safeguarding handover within 5 days – *fully recorded; dated and topics discussed on CPOMS*- with destination schools (if

applicable) providing a brief background to the destination school including the latest incident shown on CPOMS for the child.

Destination schools will make formal request via cpoms system for cpoms file to be transferred to them.
In line with General Data protection regulation (GDPR) legislation and ensure confidentiality of data at all times; any file transfer request to be authorised and processed by Family Support Worker or the Head of School.

6.3 Pupils who fail to attend

All schools (including academies and nursery schools) must inform the local authority of any child who fails to attend school or is absent without permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. In Lancashire primary schools, this can be done via a variety of means and school can contact their School Attendance Consultant for further advice. We may also be required to contact Children Missing from Education team.

6.4 Children missing education (CME)

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure they receive a full-time education. As part of our safeguarding commitment if a child has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, we will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. This will include informing the police, health services and CFW we will then notify CME team.

Children Missing Education Team
01257 517333
cme@lancashire.gov.uk

Appendix:

Schools

Attendance and absence registration codes

School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, DfE, regularly updated

This guidance also states that the government expects s*chools and local authorities to:*

- *Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;*
- *Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,*
- *act* early *to address patterns of absence.*

Data protection

Schools must ensure that personal data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. See the Federation Privacy Notice for information about how personal data will be used.

Duty for schools to include attendance information in reports for parents

The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005

Duty for schools to notify the local authority when pupils join or leave school

Regulation 12 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Duty for maintained schools to publish attendance data

What maintained schools must publish online, DfE guidance

Duty for schools to report attendance concerns about individual pupils to the local authority

Regulation 12 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Duty for schools to report attendance data to Government

Section 537A of the Education Act 1996 and

Complete the school census, DfE guidance for schools and local authorities on what data government requires

Duty for schools to safeguard and promote welfare of children

Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, DfE, regularly updated

Pupils with health needs who cannot attend school

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions: Statutory guidance, DfE, 2015

Regulations regarding participation in performances

The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014

Regulations regarding removal from roll

Regulation 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Regulations regarding the school day and number of sessions.

The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999