



# Attendance Policy

**Date of last review: 12th November 2020**

**Date of next review: November 2023**

**Reviewed by: Claire FitzPatrick**

This policy will be reviewed sooner if there is a change to legislation or guidance which may affect it.

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## Introduction

At Whitecross Nursery School we believe that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

Whitecross Nursery School is committed to:

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

### 1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' which states "Providers must hold the following documentation: a daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises and their hours of attendance".

### 2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of Whitecross Nursery School.

- 2.2. The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.3. The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- 2.4. The Headteacher is responsible for keeping parents and governors informed of policy and practice when the children first start nursery, through newsletters, the school brochure and at parents target setting meetings where necessary.
- 2.5. The Headteacher is responsible for keeping abreast of government targets that may have been set for some vulnerable groups such as Looked After Children.
- 2.6. The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.
- 2.7. Staff, including teachers and support staff, are responsible for following the Attendance Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 2.8. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 2.9. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.
- 2.10. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.

### **3. Definitions**

- 3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:
  - "Absence" as:
    - Not attending school for any reason.
  - An "authorised absence" as:
    - An absence for sickness.
    - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time.
    - Religious or cultural observances.
    - An absence due to a family emergency.
    - Any absence which has a reason.
  - An "unauthorised absence" as:
    - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
    - Absences which have never been properly explained.
    - Day trips and holidays in term-time of which we have not been advised.
  - "Persistent absenteeism" as:

- Missing 15 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

#### **4. Training of staff**

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will be made aware of and support in the identification of potentially at-risk pupils.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive information on this policy as part of their new starter induction.
- 4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing information regarding potentially at-risk pupils.

#### **5. Pupil expectations**

- 5.1. We aim for Pupils attendance to be above 95 percent throughout the year.
- 5.2. The importance of regular attendance will be emphasised to the children during appropriate areas of the curriculum e.g. Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

#### **6. Completing the registers**

- 6.1 The daily requirement to register children on Integris and can and should be perceived as an opportunity for the school to welcome children formally from home, and introduce them to the session.
- 6.2 It is important that registers are accurate as they provide the daily record of the attendance of all children and the numbers of children present at any time in case of an emergency.
- 6.3 The Breakfast Club will open the register on Integris on the school iPad and pass it onto the teacher registering children at the door at 9am.
- 6.4 Absence Codes as listed on Integris.

#### **7. Absence procedures**

- 7.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible (**no later than 9.15am**) on the first day of absence. This can be by letter, telephone, email, or personally at the office.
- 7.2. A phone call will be made by the administration team to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school. This contact needs to be recorded.
- 7.3. In the case of persistent absence the head teacher will contact the parents to try to resolve any issues that may be preventing the child from attending
- 7.4. The Headteacher will remind parents of the importance of good attendance and punctuality at the 'new parents meeting', through newsletters as well as personally.

7.5. If a pupil's absence drops below 85 percent, the Headteacher will discuss the situation with the parents.

## **8. Contact information**

8.1. Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date contact details. We ask for at least three contacts.

8.2. Parents are responsible for updating the school if the details change.

## **9. Lateness**

9.1. Punctuality is encouraged. Children who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

9.2. Nursery sessions start at 7.30am, 9:00am or 1.00pm.

9.3. The register is taken at the start of each Nursery session, by a staff member, positioned by the internal or external door (due to COVID), as the children arrive.

9.4. Whilst we encourage our families to arrive promptly at the start of the session, we appreciate that some are dropping older siblings at school prior to arrival at Whitecross and will therefore be a little later than 9am. Due to the social distancing requirements of the school risk assessments in response to Covid 19 parents have been asked to stand socially distanced whilst waiting to enter school. We will therefore keep the doors open for 20 minutes daily to allow the safe entry to school of all our children.

9.5. At the beginning of a session, our doors are unlocked for 20mins for the reasons given in 9.4. The Headteacher or other staff member 'mans' the door at this time to ensure a child doesn't leave without their adult.

9.6. Children must be collected from Nursery by an adult (someone over the age of 18 years) unless the Headteacher, or a member of the Senior Management team, has given permission for someone younger to do so due to exceptional circumstances.

## **10. Term-time leave**

10.1. At Whitecross Nursery School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as much as possible. However if holidays are taken during term time, we ask parents to fill in a holiday form so that we are aware of the reason for absence.

## **11. Missing children**

11.1. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the Headteacher/Senior teacher and are collected by a known adult who has the relevant pass word if it is a different adult to normal.

11.2. For the procedures to be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school see 'The Lost Child Policy'.

11.3.

## **12. Children Missing Education**

- 12.1 All children are entitled to education, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately children missing education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life.
- 12.2 At Whitecross Nursery School we monitor absences and record information regarding children's attendance, even though nursery education is non-statutory education.
- 12.3 If a child fails to attend our nursery and after the absence procedures have been followed, (including contacting the school which an older sibling may attend) the child's whereabouts is still not known, a referral will be made to Health and Social Care.
- 12.4 All Nursery School leavers have documents which are transferred to their new school. This ensures that each child has been registered at a school.

## **13. Religious observances**

- 13.1. The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals if necessary.
- 13.2. Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

## **14. Appointments**

- 14.1. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 14.2. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be taken off the register by the member of staff who sees them out and the numbers adjusted on the whiteboard and on the totals sheet on the noticeboard.
- 14.3. Pupils will attend Nursery before and after the appointment wherever possible.

## **15. Monitoring and review**

- 15.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- 15.2. Whitecross Nursery School's attendance target is 95 percent.
- 15.3. Where necessary specific targets may be set for children e.g. children in receipt of pupil premium
- 15.4. This policy is reviewed every three years by the Headteacher; the next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2020. The Safeguarding governor and Headteacher will be involved in reviewing the policy, which will then be presented for approval to the whole Governing Body.
- 15.5. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.