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**Be Bankfields**

# Nursery School Attendance Policy

**Date: September 2025**

**Review: September 2026**

## **Nursery School Attendance Policy**

### **Introduction**

Bankfields Primary School believes that good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them at school. At a young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress.

### **Aims**

- To create a culture where good attendance is 'normality' and valued
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive
- To be consistent in the implementation of our policy and procedures

Regular and punctual attendance is paramount so that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

### **Definitions**

#### **Authorised absence**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from nursery for a legitimate reason and the nursery has received notification from parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and parent telephones the nursery to explain the absence.

#### **Unauthorised absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from nursery without the permission of the nursery. For example, if a child has been taken on holiday.

### **Procedure**

Children should be at school, on time, every day that the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Parents are expected to inform school of an absence. Messages of absence from parents are passed to school staff via Arbor where all absences are logged.

If a child is absent without an explanation school staff will contact parents to ascertain the reason for the absence.

If this does not produce a satisfactory explanation, school staff will make contact, initially by telephone. If contact cannot be made with family through any of the contacts held by school, then we will follow the procedures within our whole school Attendance Policy, ensuring that a home visit is conducted within 48 hours.

If a child regularly fails to attend nursery or stops attending altogether, a letter will be sent to the family to inform them that their child's nursery place may be at risk of being withdrawn. If necessary, an appointment will be made to discuss the matter alongside our Attendance and Welfare Officer to establish if the family need further support.

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. Children could sometimes be reluctant to attend school. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Cooperation between home and school is the best way to support children's well-being needs. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together.

Parents of children whose attendance is inconsistent and generally poor will be contacted by school and their future attendance monitored. If there is cause for concern, the health visiting service may be contacted in order to ascertain if family support may be needed.

Although attendance at nursery is not statutory, authorised absence is only normally granted when a child is unwell and parent contacts the nursery to explain the absence or emergency situations and medical appointments. All planned absences in term-time must be requested using the Leave of Absence Request Form. The form should be returned to the school office 4 weeks prior to the intended absence. Holidays will be marked as unauthorised in the attendance register.

We understand that attendance to nursery is not statutory. However, in order to ensure our nursery is compliant, staffing numbers need to be at the appropriate ratios to keep our children safe. As payment to the school is only made for the days children attend nursery, this often means poor attendance becomes a significant cost to the school. In addition, our morning nursery is often full with a waiting list to attend. Poor attendance means spaces are being taken from other children, but not being utilised. For these reasons, if children do not attend nursery regularly, their place will become at risk and the school may withdraw their place. If after one month of sending a letter and meeting parents, the child continues not to attend nursery, the child's name will be removed from the register and the place allocated to another child on the waiting list. Parents will be informed of this by letter.