



Comet Nursery School and Children's Centre

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Aims

- To promote high levels of achievement and positive attitudes to education and learning by supporting families in maximising attendance and minimise lateness for their children.
- To encourage parents/carers and children to establish high standards of attendance and punctuality, which will set the pattern for their school career.
- To ensure that each child receives his/her full entitlement to high quality Early Years Education.

Context

- Our policy and procedures take into account the fact that the children are not responsible for their own attendance and punctuality. This responsibility lies with parents/carers.
- We are aware that the age of the children and the fact that this may be their first exposure to large numbers of other children is likely to make them vulnerable to minor ailments. Absence rates for nursery aged children are higher than for older children.

Attendance statement

We expect every child to attend school unless they are unwell or there is an **exceptional circumstance**. Regular attendance enhances achievement and enables children to gain confidence and build relationships.

Safeguarding children

For some children, who have been identified as being at risk or in need or whose families are experiencing difficulties, regular attendance at school is a crucial factor in keeping them safe. In such cases, specific attendance monitoring procedures may be put in place. These procedures will be agreed by the school, the family and professionals involved in supporting them.

General Procedures

- Children register their own attendance each day, using the name card system. This helps them to begin to develop an understanding that their attendance at school is important and needs to be recorded.
- The member of the room team completes the attendance register at the start of morning and afternoon session.
- Parents/carers are asked to inform the school of any absence and the reasons for it. If this has not occurred a text will be sent to the parents asking them to inform the school.
- Reasons for absence are recorded with the appropriate symbol and a written explanation in the register.
- The Office Manager processes attendance data on a regular basis for the Headteacher to analyse on a termly basis.

Short unexplained absences

If no explanation for the absence has been provided we will send a letter to parents requesting a reason. If there is no response to this the Office Manager will contact the parent/carer to discuss the matter. In cases where the reason given is unacceptable, the Headteacher may deem the absence to be "Unauthorised".

Frequent absences

The Headteacher monitors all absences and in cases where the absent is frequent, or there is a pattern of regular or unauthorised absence, will meet with the parent/carer to discuss the matter. Emphasis is placed on supporting families to improve attendance and the keyworker or Headteacher will discuss strategies and provide on-going support and monitoring.

Longer absences

- For unexplained absence, a letter is sent to the parent/carer. If no response is received, a further letter is sent and the child's name will be taken off roll.
- Parents/cares must inform the school if the family is moving or if they intend to withdraw the child from the school.

Holidays taken during term-time

We discourage the practice of taking holidays during term-time, as it is disruptive to the child's education. In exceptional circumstances, requests to take a child out of school for a holiday during term-time, a holiday request form must be submitted to the Headteacher. Holidays of more than 10 school days will not be authorised.

Punctuality

It is important that children arrive on time at the start of the session, so that they get the most out of their time at school. At the beginning of the session staff are able to greet children and talk (briefly) to parents/carers.

Session Times:

Morning: 9 am – 11.30am

Afternoon: 12.45pm – 3.15pm

Full Time: 9 am – 3.15pm

Breakfast Club: 8-9am

Tea Club: 3.15-5.45pm

Recording lateness

Lateness is recorded with the "L" symbol in the attendance register and the time of arrival noted. Parents/carers are asked to give an explanation, which is also recorded. The Headteacher monitors lateness.

Frequent lateness

- In cases of frequent lateness, the keyworker or Headteacher will have an informal discussion with the parents/carers to address the issue. This must not take place in front of the child or other parents/carers.
- If punctuality does not improve, a letter is sent and the parents/carers are asked to meet formally with the Headteacher, who will outline the importance of punctuality and devise strategies to improve.

Lateness in collecting children at the end of the session

- It is upsetting for children when parents/carers are late collecting them and can be detrimental to their sense of security. It also takes up one member of staff, who has to stay with the child. We understand that unusual circumstances can make anyone late occasionally and we try to reassure both parent/carer and child.
- If there is a pattern of frequent late collection, the keyworker will have an informal discussion with the parent/carer. If there is no improvement, a letter will be sent and the Headteacher will meet with the parents/carers to discuss the issue.

Special Circumstances

- If there are particular reasons which make it difficult for a family to arrive on time special arrangements can be made with the agreement of the Headteacher.
- In some cases, it may be appropriate or necessary for a child with special educational needs to arrive late.

Partnership with parents

We support parents/carers in maintaining good attendance and punctuality. Information about the importance of this is explained in the school booklet, at the initial parent/carers meeting and in regular newsletters.

Equalities Issues

We believe that regular attendance and punctuality are important to ensure that each child is able to access their full entitlement to nursery education.

Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor the effective deployment of this policy. This responsibility has been delegated to the Learning and Development Committee. This policy will be reviewed on a three year basis.

Monitored through:

- Weekly absence and lateness monitoring by SAO, reported to Headteacher
- Termly reports to Headteacher
- Termly reports by Headteacher to Governing Body
- Termly returns to The Learning Trust

Chair of Governors

Name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

Headteacher

Name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

Date for Review _____ Spring 2017

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Parents/Carers

- Ensure that their child maintains high levels of attendance
- Ensure that their child arrives on time and is collected promptly at the end of the session
- Help their child find their name card and make sure a member of staff is aware that he/she has arrived
- Inform the school as soon as possible if their child is absent and to explain the reason (and likely length) for the absence
- If their child attends full-time and is absent, to inform the school by 9.30am, otherwise they may be charged for lunch on that day
- Inform the school if they are unavoidably delayed
- Complete holiday request form for holidays during term time
- Inform the school if the family is moving or if they intend to withdraw their child from the school

Teachers/ Nursery Education Officers

- Maintain school registers as legal documents recording attendance and punctuality, following guidelines provided by The Learning Trust
- Prepare daily absence lists for SAO
- Ask parents/carers reasons behind absence or lateness and to record this appropriately
- Notify Headteacher of cases of frequent absence or lateness
- Inform the Designated Child Protection Officer of absence for any child for whom there are Child Protection issues

Office Manager

- Use Key Solutions to process attendance and punctuality figures, maintain records and inform the Headteacher of all unauthorised absences, cases of frequent or prolonged absence or lateness
- Relay all messages from parents/carers relating to absence or lateness to the room team
- Contact families of absent children, where appropriate
- Complete Attendance and Roll returns, as required by The Learning Trust and DCSF

Headteacher

- Monitor attendance and punctuality data for individual children and the whole school
- Follow procedures for addressing issues of attendance and punctuality with individual families
- Support parents in finding ways to improve attendance and punctuality
- Report regularly to the Governing Body with regard to attendance, rolls and punctuality.
- Provide information for parents which stresses the importance of attendance and punctuality through the newsletter/ letters

The Governing Body

- To monitor attendance and punctuality data and policy and procedures for addressing these issues within the school