

Our visions and values:

- Protecting children's right to play learn and have a voice.
- Keeping parents involved in children's development
- Governors and staff leading the way on quality
- Working partnership with health professionals and schools
- Being ethical, respectful and tolerant

Attendance Policy

Status	n/a
Responsible governors	
Last review date	Autumn 2023
Date of next review	Autumn 2025
The policy is available for staff at:	School offices and shared drive
And for parents/carers at:	School website

Policy audit

version	Revision date	Revised by	Section revised
V1	3.11.15	Sandra Campbell	
V2	9.11.17	Helen Currie	Removal of Cricket Club and Children's Centres, reward certificates; 'link worker' changed to 'key worker', 'drinks' changed to 'water'
V3	14.10.19	Helen Currie	Addition of 30-hours provision; Forest Alliance of Nursery Schools branding; 'pupils' changed to 'children'; addition of information for families regarding absence
V4	29.11.21	Helen Currie	Amendment of times and information provided to families; 'carers' added; Outreach became Children and Families Centre
V5	Autumn 2023	Alison Emmett	Specifying daycare age and register close times; new starter information updated

Children's learning and development committee

Name	Signature	Role	Date
Sally Davey		Chair, CLD	30.11.23

Introduction

As Local Authority Nursery Schools children are admitted from the age of 2 years until they transfer to reception class. Two-year-olds are admitted if they meet the criteria for the free 15 hours provision.

At Church Hill and Low Hall, we offer all 3-4-year olds 15 hours' weekly, part-time, term-time education 3 hours daily, either on a morning or an afternoon.

At both schools we offer 3-4-year olds from families who are eligible for the Free Early Education Entitlement of 30 hours' early education 2 x 3-hour sessions, either morning or afternoon, plus 3 x 8-hour sessions in term-time.

At both schools we offer 2-year-olds from families who are eligible the Free Early Education Entitlement of 15 hours' part-time education, per week as 3 hours daily either in the morning or afternoon, term-time only.

At both schools parents have an opportunity to purchase additional hours for 3-4-year olds, who can attend up to 48 weeks a year.

Despite being non-statutory, we aim to promote full attendance for all of our children. We aim to support enforcing the legal framework as defined in The Education Act 1996 and The Children's Act 1989 (section 36) by preparing children and parents for when it is time for the child to enter statutory education.

The right to education

All children have an equal right, and access to, education in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework - no children will be deprived of their educational opportunities by either their own absence or lateness, or that of other children.

Aims

The Forest Alliance of Nursery Schools is committed to the principles stated in our school aims. We believe that all children benefit from the education and care we provide and, therefore, from regular school attendance. We aim to work together with parents/carers in order to ensure the achievement of high levels of attendance and punctuality for all children, with the intention of enabling all children to take full advantage of the broad range of educational opportunities available to them. In order to achieve the maximum possible attendance, any problems which may impede full attendance are acted on as quickly as possible.

Expectations

Children: the schools expect that all our children will:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time (morning registration is at 9am, afternoon registration is at 1pm)
- Listen to parents/carers and the school
- Go to bed at an appropriate time and come to school on time and ready to learn
- Have breakfast or lunch before they arrive.

Parents/Carers: the schools expect that parents/carers will:

- Bring their child for every session, therefore promoting full attendance
- Contact the schools on the first day of absence, giving the reason for this
- Inform us of any illness on the first day of their child's absence
- Endeavour to keep health appointments out of school hours when possible
- Inform a member of staff of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school

- Seek permission from the schools for any leave of absence.

The Schools: parents/carers and children can expect the following from the schools:

- To provide a welcome and safe environment
- To communicate with parents and carers
- To provide education appropriate to the child
- To promote good attendance for all
- To keep regular, accurate and up-to-date records on children's punctuality and attendance
- Action on any attendance problem notified to the schools
- Review of each child's attendance half termly.

The Governors: parents/carers, children and school staff can expect from the governors:

- To ensure there is clear policy and guidance applied fairly by the Executive Head Teacher
- To set attendance targets and monitor attendance data
- To appoint a Safeguarding Governor with responsibility for behaviour and attendance.

Home School Links

The schools will contact parents/carers first if there are concerns about a child's attendance. To ensure good communication parents/carers must be responsible for updating their contact details.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the schools if they need support to resolve difficulties with attendance and punctuality.

When a child's attendance is erratic the schools will make contact with the family. Where there is also poor communication with home, parents/carers may be invited to meet with the Executive Head Teacher. A referral to the Children and Families Centre may be agreed at the meeting if the family needs support.

Record Keeping

It is the school staff teams' responsibility to maintain the attendance registers. The registers must be sent back to the office daily at 9.15am and again at 1.15pm. To maintain a standard approach to marking, the following will be observed: a BLACK pen to indicate that a child is present, a RED pen to indicate that a child is absent.

The codes to be inserted in the event of absence are kept in the register. Nursery staff should consult the sheets and insert the appropriate code for the absence. The Nursery door is to be shut and locked promptly 15 minutes after the start of the session. Should a pupil arrive in school after this time, the parent must report to the office to notify the Office Administrator that the child is in school and is to be marked in the register, he/she must also give reasons for lateness.

Attendance Targets

Attendance at school is clearly an important pre-requisite for a successful and fulfilling school career. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lack of punctuality can all serve to undermine educational achievement and result in considerable long-term disadvantage to children and young people. Children who do not attend regularly may be placed at considerable risk and, in some cases, may be drawn into patterns of antisocial or criminal behaviour.

The DfE expects children of statutory school age to attend at least 95% of the time. Children with poor attendance at nursery are known to have poor school attendance, so early intervention to break this pattern should have long-term benefits.

Responding to non-attendance /punctuality

Lateness can have a detrimental effect on:

- The child's learning
- The learning of others
- The child's sense of belonging
- The child's behaviour

The school register opens at 9am and 1pm, and closes at 9.15am and 1.15pm. If a child is not attending, a parent should contact the school as soon as possible.

The school responds to non-attendance by contacting parents on the first day of an absence if no reason has been received for children whose attendance is monitored, e.g. if the child has a Child Protection Plan. All other parents are contacted on the second day of an unexplained absence. (Contact will be by telephone by the school Office Administrator).

The EHT monitors the attendance through group discussions with the key person in staff meeting times. Children are then grouped into three attendance groups: Children with red attendance (below 75%) and children with amber attendance (up to 85%) are then written to by the EHT. We add children with low attendance to our vulnerable children's list to ensure that their attendance is regularly discussed. The EHT then continues to monitor the attendance at half termly intervals. The EHT will write to families with improved attendance or meet with those still falling below the expected good attendance levels.

The key person discusses reasons for low attendance and gives a post card to the parent/carer to highlight why coming to school every day is important. This information is also found on the website and is emailed to families when they join the school. The parent(s)/carer(s) will be given every opportunity to communicate with the school. If attendance still continues to be unacceptably poor, without an adequate explanation, and every reasonable step has been taken to ensure attendance by the school, then the EHT will refer the matter to the School Governors.

Non-attendance without a reason being given for a period of 4 weeks would result in their child's place being offered to the next person on the Waiting List.

Authorised or Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a child to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

All other absence must be regarded as unauthorised. The following may be reasons for authorising absences:

- Illness
- Family bereavements

- Family holiday (up to two weeks) but see notes below
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available
- Days of religious observance.

Holiday Absence

The school acknowledges that from time to time some parents will want to take their children out of school for holidays. Although this is discouraged, the EHT will grant and authorise up to two weeks' holiday leave in any academic year. The school considers that these occasions should be kept to a minimum and that repeat requests within the same year should not be authorised. On occasion, requests may be received for an extended period of absence over and above the usual 10-day school holiday request. It is expected that these occasions will be exceptional, and that the necessity for, the timing and the length of such an absence will require careful consideration by school, families and children. Examples of exceptional circumstances could include:

- A trip to visit family living abroad if a family member is ill or has died. The nature of the trip justifies allowing longer than two weeks in term time.

Monitoring

Attendance data from SIMS will be provided at the end of each half term by the Office Administrator. The EHT/Assistant Head will review attendance half-termly by inspecting the attendance reports for all children falling below 90% attendance. This will enable problems to be identified early, and for staff to make the first contact with parents concerning improvements to attendance, offering support where this is appropriate.

Where attendance falls below 80% the pupil will be discussed in the regular staff meetings and the child's key person will also discuss attendance every half term using the post card as a prompt. At the end of the year the transition report will highlight any attendance issues. The key person will talk about the process at Primary schools for children with low attendance. Decisions will be taken by the EHT/Assistant Head as to which letter will be sent and/or what support offered.

The EHT will report data and progress towards targets for attendance and punctuality to the Children's Learning and Development Committee.

The school reinforces good attendance and punctuality positively by:

- Providing support for children who are experiencing difficulties with coming to school
- Providing support and Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for Looked After Children and EHC Plans for children who have significant special educational or medical needs.
- Identifying where support for parents is needed and referring to Early Help, or other agencies to meet their needs
- Providing advice to parents concerning health matters
- Providing a Breakfast Club to encourage children to arrive early, start the day in a calm fashion and offer a healthy breakfast. Providing healthy snacks and water throughout the day
- The senior teacher meeting briefly with the parent to find out if there is an underlying reason for the children being persistently late getting picked up.
- Asking parents who collect their child late at the end of sessions to sign the Late Book and record the reason for their lateness.

Extended daycare

Parents will be encouraged to use the Breakfast Club and Daycare where there are attendance and/or punctuality problems. Free places at Breakfast, Teatime or Holiday Playscheme may be provided at the discretion of the EHT for children experiencing significant social disadvantage.

We expect that this will help in the following ways:

- It will install good punctuality and attendance
- It will provide a calmer start to the day
- It will support friendship groups
- It will provide healthy food for children at the start of the day
- It will provide a healthy, calm start to the day will contribute to better concentration in nursery school
- It will support those parents/carers where there are difficulties with childcare arrangements.

Changing Schools

It is important that if a family decide to move or change schools, that the EHT is informed in writing of the following details:

- The date the child will be leaving and starting the new school
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if known
- Should a child be withdrawn from nursery and known not to be attending another nursery, Early Help or Social Services will be informed if there are concerns about the family.

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated as part of the School's Policy Review procedure.

end
