

Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School
"Nurturing curiosity and inspiring imagination"



2026-27

Attendance Policy for Nursery Pupils

DOCUMENT STATUS

Produced By	Version	Date	Action
Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School	1	29.03.22	Approved by school's full governing body
		06.03.23	Annual review by Teaching and Learning Committee
		26.02.24	Annual review by Teaching and Learning Committee
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Approval

Governing body free to delegate to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher

Review

Annually

Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School

Attendance Policy

At Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School, we believe 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. Although we recognise that attending nursery is not statutory, we hope to work with parents and carers to develop good habits of punctuality and attendance in children. From the beginning of a child's learning journey at school, parents and carers are informed of the importance of good attendance and punctuality through information available in our Welcome Pack and home visit discussions with staff. Children learn and develop most between the ages of birth to five years - developing good habits now will benefit them through their entire school life and beyond. Consistency and routine is also very important for young children and greatly benefits their wellbeing. **Good attendance results in happy, settled children who make good progress.**

Aim of the Policy

Our Attendance Policy aims to ensure open and honest conversations with parents/carers to promote the highest possible levels of regular attendance which helps to establish a foundation for all future learning. We aim to do this by re-enforcing positive messages with parents and carers, working collaboratively to identify and resolve barriers to attendance and raising awareness of the adverse effects to children of non-attendance.

Principles

Our Attendance Policy is based on the following principles:

1. All of our children have the right to access education and to achieve their maximum educational potential;
2. Good attendance is best secured when the school, parents/carers and any other partners work together to overcome barriers to attendance;
3. Our school community works together and communicates effectively to actively promote and support the fundamental importance of good attendance;
4. School monitoring and analysis of attendance swiftly identifies poor attendance, including pattern of non-attendance; and
5. Early identification leads to open and honest communication between all partners, with clear actions agreed to resolve attendance issues and achieve successful outcomes.

Procedures

Parents/carers are expected to bring their children to school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

If children are absent from school due to illness, parents/carers are asked to contact the school before 8.30 am for children who attend morning sessions, or 12.30pm for those attending in the afternoon. Parent/carers' explanations of children's absence will be recorded and passed to their key worker.

If children are absent and school has not been informed, we will try to make contact with parents/carers via a telephone call/text or email requesting contact with the school. All such attempts to communicate with parents/carers regarding their child's absence will be recorded. If children are known to Social Care, this service may be informed on the first day of a child's absence.

If the school has not had a response from parents/carers and the child remains absent for a second day, school will try to make contact with other adults identified on the school admission document. In circumstances where school feels the family is vulnerable, a member of the attendance team may make an unannounced visit to the family home in a further attempt to make contact. Social Care will also be informed.

In all cases where a child is absent for three days and we have not had contact from parents or carers, a member of the attendance team will make an unannounced home visit to be assured of the family's welfare.

The school will be proactive in its support of parents and carers to try to identify barriers to attendance and resolve any issues. This may include actions such as offering Early Help to support the family, involving other agencies or, where possible, offering alternative or extended sessions to ensure their children's attendance improves.

Attendance Monitoring

The headteacher and deputy headteacher, as our attendance team, conduct fortnightly monitoring of attendance for all children. Where there are attendance concerns, this is monitored daily. During this monitoring, if the school identifies poor attendance, including patterns of non-attendance, it will take the following actions to identify barriers and support parent/carer engagement in improving their child's attendance (see Appendix 1 for the absence monitoring flowchart and Appendix 2 for the attendance letters):

- 1) Have an initial conversation with parents/carers and the child's key worker;
- 2) Send an initial letter to parents/carers, explaining the impact on children's learning and progress;
- 3) Invite parents/carers, via letter two, to discuss their child's attendance with a member of the school's attendance team; and
- 4) Send an invitation to meet with the headteacher, via letter three, with the aim of resolving attendance issues.

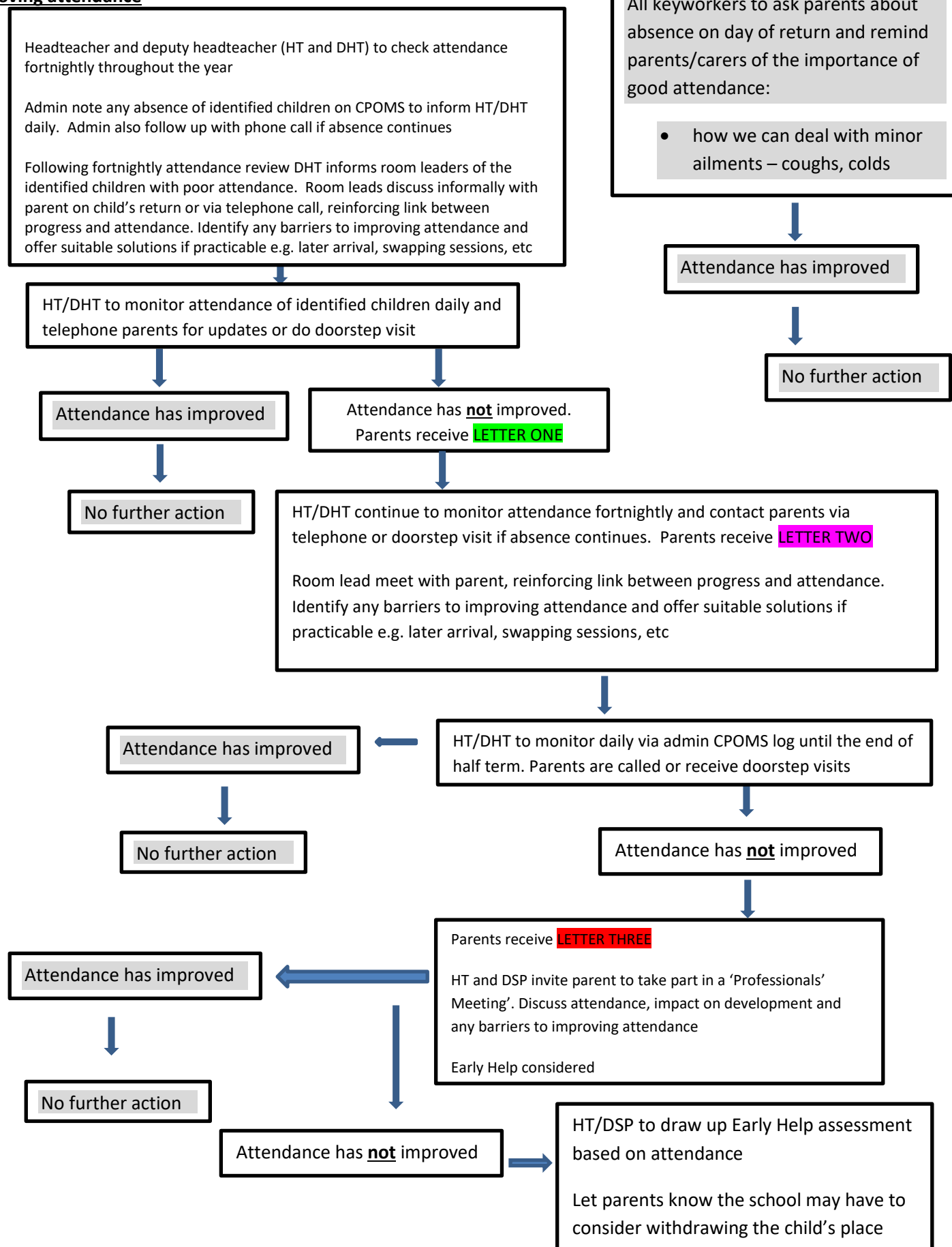
During this process, children's attendance will be monitored more regularly and, where a child's attendance improves, this will be positively acknowledged with parents/carers.

Authorised Absences

As a school, we are aware that there may be occasions where children's absence cannot be avoided, for example if they have to attend medical appointments or there is a family emergency. These such absences will be authorised.

We actively discourage parents/carers from taking children on family holidays during term times as this can impact negatively on their progress. Only in exceptional circumstances will such absences be authorised on the completion of the Planned Absence Form (see Appendix 3).

Attendance Flowchart

Improving attendance

Attendance Letters

Attendance Parent/Carer Letter 1



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Date

ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Dear Parent and Carers

At Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School, we are committed to ensuring all children benefit from their education by attending nursery regularly. Attending nursery each day enables children to settle into the learning environment, feel confident to join in new and exciting activities and make friends; this, in turn, helps children to feel good about themselves. This is the time when they learn valuable social skills that enable them to make those most meaningful relationships and strong bonds with both children and adults – these are all vitally important to being happy. We cannot stress enough the importance of regular nursery attendance and the impact this will have on your child's learning and progress moving forward.

We miss your child when they are not here and the contribution you and your child make to our Sandy Lane family. We want your child to be the best they can be and this can be done by attending nursery every day. We are here to help and provide the best nursery education for every child. If you have any concerns about anything at all, then please do not hesitate to speak to any member of the nursery team.

Attendance is monitored each half term and if your child's attendance falls to less than 87% (the equivalent of 25 days' absence over a whole school year), we will contact you and discuss how we can work together to improve your child's attendance.

Kind regards

Marcia Atherton
Headteacher



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Date

Dear Parent/Carer of

As you know, we have been monitoring your child's attendance over the last few weeks.

Unfortunately, your child's attendance has remained below 87%.

We would like to support you to improve your child's attendance and therefore invite you to meet with Jamie/Kirsten on:

-

Regular attendance at nursery has been shown to have a significant impact on children's achievement. Attendance at nursery establishes good habits from an early age and contributes to the development of a positive approach to school and education.

Please be advised that we are a popular nursery school with a waiting list and should attendance remain below the expected 87%, the school may reserve its right to withdraw your child's place and offer it to a child on the waiting list.

Kind regards

Marcia Atherton
Headteacher



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Date

Dear Parent/Carer of

As you know, we have been monitoring your child’s attendance and reporting this to you over the last half term.

Unfortunately, your child’s attendance has remained below 87%.

We want to continue to support you to improve your child’s attendance. To do this, I would like to meet with you on _____ to discuss the reasons for your child’s low attendance and how we can work together to resolve these issues.

Regular attendance at nursery has been shown to have a significant impact on children’s achievement. Attendance at nursery establishes good habits from an early age and contributes to the development of a positive approach to school and education.

Please be advised that we are a popular nursery school with a waiting list and should attendance remain below the expected 87% the school may reserve its right to withdraw your child’s place and offer it to a child on the waiting list.

Kind regards

Marcia Atherton
Headteacher

Planned Absence Request



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Planned Absence Form

This form should be used to inform the school of any necessary planned absences, eg, family holiday which will occur during term time.

The government aims for all children to have at least 96% attendance, which equates to just eight days off per year.

Regular attendance at nursery has been shown to have a significant impact on children's achievement. Attendance at nursery establishes good habits from an early age and contributes to the development of a positive approach to school and education.

Child's name:	
Parent's name:	
Dates of planned absence:	
From	To
Reasons for absence:	
Signed:	Date:
Actioned by:	Date: