

SEAHAM HARBOUR NURSERY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

We are a LA Maintained Nursery School and can admit children from the term after their 3rd birthday (if a space is available) until they transfer to Primary school for full time education. We offer part time education places for 15 hours per week (3 hours per day), either on a morning or an afternoon as well as extended education for 30 hours per week (5 full days) for eligible families. We also offer 2 year places for funded places (15 hours per week, 3 hours per day) and paying places (minimum of 2 sessions per week).

At Seaham Harbour Nursery School, the attendance of all our children is of vital importance. Although we recognise that attending nursery is not statutory, we hope to instil good habits in punctuality and attendance in children and their families to help them make the most of their education and the activities.

If children do not attend school regularly, their learning and overall development is fragmented their acquisition of skills and knowledge is interrupted. Their educational achievements are potentially damaged and their development of personal and social skills. Also we believe regular attendance at nursery can set good practice for statutory school.

Aim of the Policy

Our Attendance Policy aims to ensure liaison with parents/carers to promote the highest possible levels of regular attendance and thereby establish a foundation for all future learning. We aim to do this by re-enforcing positive messages with parents, explaining the adverse effects of nonattendance. All parents are made aware of the importance of regular attendance prior to admission and through the school brochure/website.

Principles

Our Attendance Policy is based on the following principles that:-

1. All of our children have the right to access education, and to achieve their maximum educational potential.
2. Good attendance will be best secured when all partners have clearly understood roles and responsibilities.
3. All partners need to work together actively to promote and support the fundamental importance of good attendance.
4. The parents/carers should be involved as key partners in securing regular attendance.
5. Early identification, communication and action on attendance problems are critical in achieving successful outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents: Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the responsibility for ensuring that children attend school lies with parents. It is vital therefore, that parents cooperate fully with our nursery and the Local Authority by complying with absence procedures adopted by our school and by making all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child/children attend punctually and regularly.

It is important that any difficulties are discussed with the school at an early stage, to enable support and assistance to be provided, as soon as possible. 'Attendance is also substantially affected by what schools themselves do' (HMI Education observed 13, attendance at school)

Registration: The law requires our school to maintain two registers - an admission register, which serves as a school roll and an attendance register

Marking the register: Attendance registers are completed during the Morning and during the Afternoon session. They record attendance for AM, PM and ALL DAY offers. It is prescribed that children should be marked as either,
-present

-engaged in an approved educational activity, or absent.

The register must also show if the absence was authorised by the school or unauthorised. Authorised absences will be marked as LA recommended M-medical, R-reason, H-holiday.

Security and Preservation of the Register

The register is a legal document and will be kept securely for a period of three years following the last entry. It may be needed for use in the legal proceedings and should be accurately and fully completed.

Reporting Absence to the Local Authority

Our school will make information available to the Local Authority when requested concerning attendance.

If we have a child who has been absent for a period of over three weeks and we are unable to contact the family, we will consider contacting other agencies. These agencies will include Health Visitor, First Contact or the Police. Every attempt will be made to locate the whereabouts of the child.

Absence Procedures

- Staff will maintain admission and attendance registers. Absenteeism will be recorded (using the appropriate Local Authority codes) and monitored.
- Parents are requested to inform nursery by telephone or email of the reason for absence on their first day of each absence. If nursery do not receive a message we will telephone to enquire the reason for the absence. All reasons for absence are recorded in a log book.
- Persistent absences or low attendance will be addressed by the head teacher through telephone or letter and a way forward for addressing the problem is shared with parents. A continuation of poor attendance and/or no improvement

will result in the child being removed from roll and the place offered to another child.

- The head teachers will liaise with primary schools/Health Visitors if we have any concern about attendance or lateness.
- We constantly monitor and continually strive to improve levels of attendance. Attendance figures are reported to the Governing Body every term.
- We recognise that time together as a family is also important in a young child's life and these absences are not taken into consideration when determining the child's absence percentage. If family holidays are taken, parents are requested to inform the school office of the dates.

This policy will be regularly reviewed in line with other school policies.