Manningham Community Nursery Schools Federation

Attendance Policy

Rationale

We regard 100% attendance and punctuality as a high priority. There is a strong link between high attendance and high achievement. Children who make the most progress have higher attendance levels in comparison to children with lower levels of attendance. Department for Education (2016) research shows a direct relationship between the attendance of learners and their outcomes at the end of primary school or secondary school. The more days children go to school, the better they do.

Children whose attendance is high will settle much more easily. This enables them to succeed and offers the best start in lifelong education.

It is important that we ensure families and children recognise that regular attendance has a beneficial effect on children's learning and promotes positive attitudes, which continue throughout school life.

Children may be at risk of harm if they are not in school regularly. Children who are missing from school are at significant risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, underachieving, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

We will do everything we can to ensure our children are safe.

Aims and Intentions of this policy

Our aims are:

- To ensure that attendance and punctuality is a key priority for the federation.

- To promote 100% attendance and punctuality in order to ensure that children's best interests are met and that educational attainment is improved.

- To raise awareness of parents regarding the benefits that consistent attendance has on children's achievement, instilling good habits of attendance from the very start of a child's learning journey.

- To promote high expectations and build a culture of prioritising attendance across the school.

- To ensure parents/carers and their children are made aware of the importance of good attendance and punctuality and are informed of the consequences when it is not.

- To ensure all staff understand their role in ensuring good attendance and punctuality, and in reducing absence, including, persistent absence.

- To ensure governors understand the role they play in attendance monitoring and prioritisation.

- To provide regular attendance monitoring by senior leaders in conjunction with room leaders, teachers, administrators and the wider staff team.

- To recognise that poor attendance and lateness are a safeguarding concern and to link the monitoring of attendance with our wider safeguarding monitoring procedures.

- To take early action to address patterns of absence.

- To recognise and acknowledge improving attendance and/or punctuality.

- To ensure we contact the parents of children with poor attendance and/or punctuality and discuss absenteeism at an early stage.

- To use local authority sanctions as a last resort for children aged 5 years and over.

- To ensure parents/carers are supported to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attends regularly.

- To build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand the barriers and work to remove them.

- To inform parents/carers on how their child is performing, what their attendance and punctuality rates are and how these relate to their attainment and progress.

- To formalise support where absence persists. This may include referrals to Early Help, Mental Health support agencies, SEND support, or other agencies.

- To inform parents/carers when we have concerns about their child's attendance or punctuality.

Objectives

Our aims will be implemented through the following objectives:

- We will provide clear guidelines on follow up of procedures based on Local Authority Policy.

- We will ensure on entry to Nursery that parents/carers are made aware that regular attendance is an expectation and include this information in Welcome Meetings for new parents.

- We will make parents/carers aware of the benefits of regular attendance.

- We will monitor attendance and analyse data on a weekly, half-termly and annual basis, in order to ensure progress.

- We will follow Local Authority Policies and Guidelines on extended visits abroad / holiday absence for all children.

- We will work closely with families where there is regular non-attendance or lateness.

- We will intervene when attendance falls below 95%.

- We will include attendance monitoring in our Barriers to Learning approach for assessment, helping us to identify and support the most vulnerable learners.

- We will allocate specific administration staff to lead on attendance and ensure attendance records are accurate. They will report directly to the attendance lead. The attendance lead for Manningham Community Nursery Schools Federation is the Headteacher – Ginny Robinson.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body
The governing body is responsible for:
- Monitoring the federation attendance figures on at least a termly basis.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The named governor for safeguarding, including attendance, is Kate Welsh.

The Headteacher
The Headteacher is responsible for:
- Implementation of the Attendance Policy across the federation
- Implementation of the federation's attendance strategies
- Ensuring attendance is a standing item on senior leadership meetings
- Monitoring school-level absence data weekly and a deeper dive every half-term
- Authorising exclusions and having oversight of partial timetables and children moving off the roll of the schools.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils, in particular those that are complex and are at high risk of harm (Linked to Barriers to Learning approach)
- Authorising fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Undertaking quality assurance and accountability checks on registers and monitoring the implementation of the attendance strategy
- Authorising any amendments to the school attendance register.
- Reminding parents/carers about their duty to keep contact details up to date, including, where reasonably possible, having more than one emergency contact for each child
- Analysing the data on a weekly basis.
- Delivering early intervention when attendance is falling.
- Developing and implementing persistent absence action plans with pupils and families which address barriers to attendance and help establish positive attendance routines.
- Where pupils have additional vulnerabilities, arrange team around family meetings.
- Involving external agencies to support children and families as necessary.

The Office Attendance Lead
The office attendance lead is responsible for:
- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual child level.
- Liaising with parents/carers and key persons in school about updating contact information and where reasonably possible, asking for more than one emergency contact per child.
- Providing class teachers/room leaders with data on the attendance and absence, including reasons, of pupils in their class/form
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Referring any requests for holidays to the Headteacher

- Creating weekly attendance reports and liaising with the Headteacher on follow up actions to be taken.
- Sending out letters to parents as requested by the Headteacher.
- Recording information on CPOMS (our digital safeguarding recording system) as directed by the Headteacher.

Office Administration staff
Office administration staff are responsible for:
- Taking calls from parents about absence and recording it on the Arbor system.
- Enquiring about reasons for absence and recording that information on Arbor.
- Where appropriate, reassure parents that support is available in school and encourage parents/carers to send their child in.
- Signing-in children who are late to school: those arriving late (L or U codes), those late due to authorised reasons, e.g. following a medical appointment.

Teaching Staff
Teaching staff are responsible for:
- Monitoring changes in presentation and engagement.
- Intervening appropriately and referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Recording attendance in the morning and the afternoon, using the correct codes, in Arbor.
- Identifying and mitigating potential barriers to good attendance.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Establishing close partnerships with parents.
- Keeping in regular contact with children and families who have low/no attendance, including home visits for vulnerable children, to check on the welfare and presentation of the child.

Parents/Carers
Parents/carers are responsible for:
- Providing current, up to date contact details including, where reasonably possible, more than one emergency contact number for each child.
- Ensuring that their child arrives at school on time and comes to school every day.
- Informing the school on the first morning of their child's absence and providing a reason for absence.
- Keeping school informed of their child's likely return.
- Responding to phone calls and home visits from school to check on the welfare of their child.
- Where practicably possible avoid booking medical appointments during school hours.
- Booking family holidays during school holidays.
- Engaging with school and other agencies to support improvements in attendance, if needed.

Guidelines

Absence Procedures

If a child cannot attend school due to illness or any other unplanned event, the parent must contact school by telephone by 9:15am, for morning children, or 12:45pm, for afternoon children.

If no contact is received from parents by the above times, on the first day of absence, administration staff will contact parents to find out the reason for absence.

If administration staff cannot make contact with the parent, they will inform the senior leader in charge immediately, in order that they can carry out a risk assessment.

The senior leader will use their knowledge of the family to decide on next steps. One or more of the following steps will be taken:
- If older siblings contact the primary school where they attend
- Call emergency contacts
- Contact the Health Visitor
- Carry out a home visit
- Contact neighbours, family friends and known contacts of the child to establish their whereabouts

If we are not able to obtain any information and we have concerns, Social Care will be contacted.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the child's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

Parents/carers can support their children by:
- Ensuring regular routines and early bedtimes.
- Providing a healthy breakfast/lunch.
- Reporting any concerns promptly to the school.
- Retaining an open and honest communication with the school.
- Being positive about coming to school

Promoting good attendance in school
Our schools will provide an environment in which children and their parents/carers feel safe, valued and welcome.

Our ethos must demonstrate that children and their parents/carers feel their presence is important and that it is vital for their achievement and progress. Children and their parents/carers need to know they will be missed, and any absence will be followed up by their key person and attendance team.

Dropping off or collecting
Children must be escorted to classrooms by a person aged 17years or older.

If parents wish to send a person to collect their child, who is not named on the pick-up list, they must provide a password, known to the person collecting and school. Parents must provide the name and a description of the any new person coming to collect.

Taking Registers

Daily attendance will be recorded using our digital system – Arbor.

Staff in classrooms will take the register digitally, using iPads. Staff will mark children present as they arrive, up until 9:15am and 12:45pm.

Children arriving after these times must go to Reception to be signed in by administrative staff. For children using paid provision and arriving at 1pm, the registration period will be open until 1:30pm.

Administrative staff will escort late children to classrooms. Administrative staff will encourage parents to bring their child on time and find out the reason for lateness.

The attendance register will mark whether every pupil is:
- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent, including a reason if known (If unknown the office attendance lead will follow up)
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include the following and an audit trail will be kept, including confirmation of changes and sign off by the Headteacher:
- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for three years after the date on which the entry was made.

Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late after the registration period has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

Children arriving after registration time will receive a late mark (L) in the register. If a child is going to be late, parents/carers have a responsibility to inform the school of their child's lateness by telephone.

Registers close at 9:30am and 1pm. After this time the attendance mark will be coded as U, which is an unauthorised absence and will affect the child's attendance percentage. Parents will be challenged for persistently poor punctuality.

Ultimately, the parent/carer of a child of statutory school age who frequently arrives late at school can be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court under the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure their child attends regularly.

Absence Monitoring

Our aim is for children to have 100% attendance. We do recognise, however, that childhood illnesses can affect children's attendance, particularly in a nursery school, where children often come into contact with childhood viruses for the first time. Therefore, we will consider attendance of 95% or more as excellent.

Room leaders/Teachers should check Arbor every day (when they take the register) for any planned absences for children.

All absences will be recorded using the codes in Appendix 1.

Every Friday the office attendance lead will run a weekly report from the Arbor system that details for each child:
- The number of times the child has been late during the week
- The percentage of attendance the child has been marked present
- The percentage of attendance the child has been marked absent

The office attendance lead for **Abbey Green is Yvette Guy**.
The office attendance lead for **Midland Road is Madison Kay**.

The office attendance lead will check the weekly attendance report for accuracy and highlight children that have an attendance of lower than 95% in yellow. They will highlight children with more than one late mark in purple.

The office attendance lead will pass the weekly report to the Headteacher every Friday afternoon.

At the end of every half term, the office attendance lead will run a report from Arbor that details each child's overall attendance, their absences and the number of times they have been late.

The Headteacher will decide on next steps for children whose attendance is causing concern and mark this on the reports. The office attendance lead will then input any specific actions to be taken onto CPOMS (our digital safeguarding monitoring system) and tag in the relevant staff.

The weekly absence reports will be kept in the absence monitoring folder in the main office. Teachers/room leaders must check the absence folder every Monday and ensure all actions/discussions with parents are completed.

Absence Monitoring Follow Up Actions

Key persons will talk to parents of children that are late more than once in any weekly period to check the reason for lateness and whether or not there are any ongoing issues that will cause further occasions of lateness. The aim of this conversation is to identify if there are any ongoing concerns and to offer help if needed, in getting to school on time.

If children are late more than 5 times during a half term period, a punctuality concern letter will be issued to parents and the teacher/room leader will contact the parent to arrange a formal meeting. The purpose of this meeting will be to formulate a plan of action that helps the parent to ensure their child gets to school on time.

If a child has 3 or more separate absences in a half term, the teacher or room leader along with the child's key person, will hold a meeting with the parent to discuss the reasons for absence and find ways to overcome any issues.

If a child's absence falls below 95% across a half term a letter (absence monitoring letter 1) will be sent from the Headteacher and the child's teacher/room leader will hold a meeting with parents. If attendance does not improve, the Headteacher will request a meeting with parents.

Outcomes of attendance monitoring discussions with parents will be recorded on CPOMS (our digital safeguarding monitoring system).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will monitor attendance trends across a half term.

Planned Absence
A planned absence from school should be communicated to school as soon as this is known.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the child's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the child should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Holiday Requests
Holidays should be taken when the school is closed.

If, in exceptional circumstances, parents need to make a request for holiday leave, a form must be completed at the main office. The Headteacher must authorise all requests for holidays and cannot authorise any more than 10 days holiday in any academic year.

Completed holiday request forms should be shared with the Headteacher as soon as possible. All sections of the form should be fully completed before passing the request to the Headteacher, including information about the number of previous holiday requests.

Persistent Absence
A child will be considered to have persistent absence if their attendance falls below 90%. If a child's absence becomes persistent a persistent absence letter will be sent to parents. If persistent absence continues the Headteacher will request a meeting with parents. Any further absences will require medical certificates as evidence of illness.

If a child of compulsory school age (Reception), who is registered at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Children with Medical Conditions or Disabilities

Children with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities can face additional barriers to attendance if they suffer from long term medical conditions.

Our schools aim to work with families to improve attendance and remove the barriers these children face and put additional support in place where necessary to allow them to access full time education. This can include:
- Organising meetings and developing good relationships with the family
- Making reasonable adjustments for the individual child
- Making necessary referrals to relevant agencies to support the family and child
- Liaising with the school's SEND team and the local authority SEND team

Use of Legal Sanctions for children aged 5 years and over

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice will take into account:
- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Children Missing from Education

For the purpose of this policy, a 'child missing education' is defined as a child or young person of compulsory school age (over 5 years old) who is not attending school or is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere.

A 'missing child' is one who is not accounted for even though they should be in our care.

Where a child of compulsory school age has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from the school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the child will be removed from the admission register with approval from the Local Authority.

In the meantime, irrespective of any local intelligence as to where the family may or may not be, the school will continue to make reasonable enquiries and attempt to contact the family until the local authority confirms that they have exhausted their enquiries and approval has been given to remove the child from roll.

Leaving our Schools

We are always sad to say goodbye to our children. If a child is leaving our federation because they are relocating or they are changing schools, please inform us. We need the child's new address and the details of the new school, including school name, address and start date.

This safeguarding procedure means that we know that the child is still in education, safe and well. If a parent/carer decides to Home-school their child, it is essential that you inform school in writing.

The following support the **implementation** of this policy and ensure we monitor **impact**

    a. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

    b. Assessment policy and guidelines

    c. Overcoming barriers to learning/Next Steps Meetings

    d. Parental Involvement In Children's Learning Policy

    e. Parent information leaflets on attendance and persistent absence

    f. Arbor system reports

Appendix 1

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced and partial enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

KEY

Present
Authorised absence
Unauthorised absence
Approved Education Activity (Present)
Not counted in possible attendances