Winterbourne Nursery and Infant School

Inspire – Learn -Be Proud

# WINTERBOURNE NURSERY AND INFANT SCHOOL

# Attendance and Registration Policy

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| **Approved by:** | Petra Wigzell<br>(Head teacher) | **Date:** December 2026 |
| **Next review due by:** | December 2027 | |

**Aims:**

This policy provides the framework within which all staff, parents, pupils, carers and external agencies can contribute to the development and maintenance of a learning environment where high attendance and excellent punctuality is the “norm”.

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to promote excellence for children by ensuring each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The school will establish a system of incentives and rewards, which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and punctuality. The school will challenge the conduct of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet the objectives Winterbourne Nursery & Infant School will make sure that there is an effective system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support. The school attendance policy will be made available and accessible to the whole school community.

To promote our attendance policy, the school aims to:

· Support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;

· Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;

· Enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;

· Make parents and carers aware of their legal responsibilities;

· Do everything in their power to meet Government and Local Authority targets;

**School education lays the vital foundations of a child’s life and research clearly demonstrates links between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment.**

## INTRODUCTION

PLEASE NOTE – Where the word parent is used in relation to a pupil at school this also includes any person who is not their parent but who has parental responsibility for them or who cares for them.

Attendance and punctuality are the responsibility of the Head teacher and school office.

Education provides a means of advancement for all young people and regular school attendance has always been important. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them: irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to the educational disadvantage of pupils.

It is recognised that irregular attendance raises complex issues; pupils may be failing to attend regularly for a variety of reasons. Some of these may be outside the immediate control of the school but Winterbourne Nursery and Infants' will actively pursue the goal of regular attendance, both in relation to individual pupils and for all pupils at Winterbourne Nursery & Infant School.

**All absences will be carefully examined and parents left in no doubt that unjustified absences will not be tolerated.**

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

From the start of the autumn term 2025 pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

## THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive efficient full-time education. Parents are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend, and stay at, school. It is the responsibility of the school to support attendance and to take seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance.

Parental responsibility extends beyond securing regular school attendance. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. They need to see themselves as partners with school in the education of their children. This means instilling in their children a respect for education – and for those who deliver it – and ensuring that they support pupils with their homework and items needed for school eg P.E. kit, packed lunch. Parents should also impress upon their

children the need to observe schools' codes of conduct and reinforce this through discipline in the home.

**Attendance Procedures and Expectations**

**It is the 'parents'** responsibility to inform schools of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible – parental contact on the first day of absence should be the normal expectation – and to provide such further information as may be required.

Extracted from School Attendance – a DfES publication.

A child's absence is monitored initially by the class teacher and followed up by the administrator with responsibility for attendance as well as the Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Reasons for absence – when known, should be written on the absence sheet in the register by the class teacher

Letters regarding reasons for absence must be handed to the Office and kept until the end of the academic year or longer if there is a problem with a particular pupil's attendance.

Verbal and telephoned messages received by the office must be written down. These will be placed in the register and retained until the end of the school year.

The School's Attendance Officer will telephone parents who have not given reasons for absence and follow up any unexplained absences.

The appointed Family Support Worker will assist the school office with poor attendance and punctuality.

The EWO meets regularly with the School's Attendance Officer and Head Teacher to discuss attendance and strategies for improvement. The EWO attends the meeting for new parents in reception to outline the importance of regular school attendance and inform parents of legal requirements.

Any requests for referrals that the Head Teacher makes will be followed up by the EWO and may result in a home visit or interview with the parents at school. If after this, there is no improvement in attendance a decision to prosecute may be made.

We expect that all pupils will:

· Attend school every day on time

· Attend school appropriately prepared for the day

· Follow the school's Ethos every day

**Registers, Punctuality and Lateness**

Punctuality to school is crucial.

Lateness into school causes disruption to that child's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is therefore paramount that all pupils arrive at school every day on time.

When a child is arriving at school consistently late, it is recognised that the cause of this is most often the adult caring for that child. The school will contact the parents to seek an improvement in the situation. Persistent lateness by a pupil will be taken very seriously by the school and parents may be referred to the School's Education Welfare Officer who will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the concerns and a record of the discussion made.

Our school opens at 8.35am for Year 1 and Year 2 and 8.45am for Reception and Nursery ready for the learning to begin at 8.35am and 8.45am · By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil

· Pupils should enter the school via the playground.

· Should your child arrive after 9.10am they should report to the school office where they will then be entered as late and receive a late mark on the register.

· Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their annual report and will be passed on to future schools.

· Learning ends at 3.25pm for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and 3.30pm for Nursery and expect children to be collected promptly by a parent or a delegated adult.

**Requests for Leave of Absence**

Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances/Penalty Notices

· It is our School's policy not to allow any holiday or extended leave during term time. Department for Education regulations means that Head teachers can no longer authorise Leave of Absence
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· The exception is at the Head teacher's discretion and only under exceptional Circumstances

· All requests for leave must be put in writing to the school's Head teacher

The Education Welfare Officer works with the Head teacher in overseeing any such requests from parents. Each request will be considered individually taking into account: the age(s) of the student(s), the time of year, overall attendance percentage(s) and the student(s) progress. If the leave of absence involves any travel arrangement, these must NOT be booked until permission is granted.

**If the School does not agree to the request, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.**

Unauthorised holiday taken during term time will result in a referral to the Education

Welfare Officer where a Penalty Notice will impose a warning or Penalty Notice fine, as current legislation places the responsibility on the parent(s) to ensure satisfactory school attendance for their child/children.

The Education Authority, of which payment should be made within 21 days, will issue the Penalty Notice fine imposed of £60 per parent, per child. If not paid within 21 days, payment will rise to £120 per parent, per child if paid within a 28-day period.

**Registration and Time Keeping**

The registers are completed electronically.

"Computerised registers must be printed out monthly and bound into annual volumes. Registers must be kept safely for three years end of school year".

Doors open at 8.35am for Year 1 and Year 2 and 8.45am for Nursery and Reception. The morning registers will be taken at 8.55am. Registers for
Years Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 should then be sent to the school office. The afternoon registers are taken at 12.30pm for Reception and Nursery and 12.45 for Year 1 and 1.15pm for Year 2.

All external doors to the school are closed at 8.55am. Children entering the building after this time can only use the main front door. A member of the office staff records the time each child arrives late and the reason for this.

Children arriving after 9.10am and on or before 9.30am are marked 'L' with the time recorded against their name. Children arriving after 9.30am are marked U.
If a child arrives to school after 9.30am on more than 5 occasions in a six-week period a penalty fine may be issued.

**Religious Observance**

The school will authorise two separate day's absence due to religious observance but the day must be:

• Exclusively set apart for religious observance

• Set apart by the parents' religious body (not the parents)

If you wish to request an 'exceptional leave of absence due to special circumstances', you may be invited to a meeting with the Head teacher to discuss the matter further.

**Changing schools**

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform the Head teacher as soon as possible in writing. A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

· The date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next.

· The address of the new school.

· The new home address, if it is known.

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the EWO.

**Educational Welfare Service**

A referral will be made to our Education Welfare Officer when a student's attendance falls below 94%. The Education Welfare Officer will arrange a meeting and possibly a home visit to ascertain reasons for irregular attendance, and to discuss what support is available to ensure regular attendance.

Following the meeting with the Education Welfare Officer the expectation is for improved attendance to follow. Failure to do so could result in referring to outside agency for support i.e. Social Care and/or the issuing of a Penalty Notice and consideration of legal proceedings, which could result in a prosecution and a fine.

Under Section 7 of the Education Act (1996), parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child (ren) attends the School on a regular and full-time basis.

**Child Missing in Education**

A Child Missing in Education is defined by the DfE as 'a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise' (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any educational provision for a substantial period (usually 4 weeks or more). In Croydon, referrals for CME are accepted after 10 working days of reasonable checks being carried out by the educational provider the Education Welfare Officer and their Designated Safeguarding Lead.

· After all checks have been carried out, an online CME form is completed and sent to the Local Authority to the CME department, along with print out from SIMS of the personal details of the child. If the school knows that the child will not be returning and has written evidence, this is also uploaded. A registration sheet will also be sent to show attendance.

· The school then has to wait for an email confirmation from the LA with advice of when that child can be taken off roll.

**Illness & Other Legitimate Reasons for Absence**

If a child is unfit for school, parents should contact the school on the first day, in person or by phone. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments, if they must be in school time, provided evidence is produced in writing.

## HOLIDAYS

Holiday leave in term time will not be authorised other than in exceptional circumstances. Any request must be made in advance in writing by the parent looking after the child. Leave may be granted at the discretion of the Head teacher and is on a case-by-case basis. Leave may be refused where children have already missed a lot of work or at crucial times of the year for example phonic screening check.

Children leaving the country for long periods of time may be removed from the school roll if a return date is not given and agreed. Re-admittance to the school cannot be guaranteed if there is uncertainty about when the child will return.

## SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to promote attendance and to publish attendance figures. Parents will receive a copy of their child's attendance with their end of year report. Parents have a legal duty to make sure their child attends school. The school has a duty to make sure that pupils feel safe at school and find school interesting and worthwhile. The school is committed to working with parents to ensure these requirements and duties are met.