



# **Carterhatch Infant School**

## **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Adopted by Governing Body: Feb 23  
Updated and agreed by Governors: March 24  
Next Review: March 25

## School Times

**Nursery: 8.30-11.30 am/12.30-3.30 pm**

**Reception/Year 1/Year 2 – 8.45 – 3.15 Children will be marked late at 8.50 in the morning  
Children being picked up from school late may be charged for After School Club**

Information relating to attendance to support parents can be found on our website.

**Attendance team:** Business Manager – Sharon Kingham (Overall responsibility)  
Attendance Officer – Beverly Phillips  
Parent Support Worker – Sandra O'Driscoll

However, attendance is everyone's responsibility at Carterhatch Infants School

### **As a school we aim to:**

- Strive for an attendance rate of a *minimum* of 96%.
- Strive for parents' and children to value the importance of attendance.

### **Good attendance is a learned behaviour. Good attendance is important because:**

- Research shows that the brain develops faster in the child's first few years.
- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.
- Good attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Good attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with.
- Good attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Good attenders have an easier transfer to junior and then secondary school.

### **Safeguarding:**

- If a child is not in school and we are unable to contact families, our Educational Welfare Officer and/or Social Care will be informed.
- Links to Safeguarding Policy:
  - Missing children.
  - Radicalisation.
  - Female Genital Mutilation
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Remote Education Policy

Staff are vigilant and are reminded yearly at professional development days of their duty of care relating to safeguarding issues for children absent education, e.g. travelling to conflict zones and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Staff are reminded to report to the attendance team any child they are aware of that may be missing school (compulsory age). Now referred to as 'children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeated occasions' KCSIE 2023 (Referral to Social Care if family not actively seeking education for a child who is compulsory school age.) Procedures regarding to children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeated occasions': any child who is on role should be reported in the first instance to the Attendance Officer. However, if there is concerns of a safeguarding nature, e.g. FGM or radicalisation they should be reported to the police (FGM) and Safeguarding Team. If a teacher is aware of any child including those not on role at our school who are statutory age and missing

education a referral to Social Care must be implemented either by school where the teacher is employed or the teacher to inform Social Care directly.

Families register children with the London Borough of Enfield and we are advised of children who will be attending our school as places arise. Occasionally the child does not then start their education at our school and the local Authority is informed. The authority sometimes shares information regarding the child's previous school or if the child has not attended school. Our Family Support Worker contacts the child's previous school to support transition of key information, including child protection issues. However at the preliminary visit our induction form would be completed with the family and followed up with the previous school(s). Sometimes our children have attended several schools before Year 2.

Our newsletter reminds parents and carers of the need to keep the school informed of any changes of address or phone numbers.

When a child leaves our school, the local authority is informed and a Common Transfer Form (CTF) sent to the new school. However, if we are unable to ascertain the child's next school, or the child leaves unexpectedly, we will inform our Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

Staff are vigilant in completing attendance registers accurately and checks are made by our Attendance Officer. We use Arbor as our Management Information System to record attendance, lateness and attendance notes. Meetings take place with the Family Support Worker, Attendance Officer and Business Manager to ensure accurate records are in place and to monitor attendance. Our governor responsible for attendance meets with the Business Manager monthly to check systems are in place with regards to monitoring attendance, and to look at case studies/ongoing data with regards to attendance.

The attendance team attended training with the Education Welfare Officer for the London Borough of Enfield on:

Codes for Attendance  
Children Missing in Education  
Education Penalty Notices

**As a parent you should:**

- Ring or use the Arbor app on the first morning (by 9.15am) of all absences and give the reason for your child's absence and when they are likely to return.
- Make non-urgent appointments for the GP, dentist, optician outside of school hours or during school holidays.
- Provide evidence of absence on your child's return to school after an illness. eg medication, appointment cards when children unwell.
- Visit the doctor if your child has unexplained rashes. Some rashes can cause harm to unborn babies and it is important to keep safe any member of our school community who may be pregnant.
- Keep your child off school for 48 hours from when any sickness/diarrhoea stopped.
- Keep us updated by telephone, email or app message if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness.

### **Everybody is responsible for attendance in our school and we will:**

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters as soon as possible on the first day. If a phone call has not been received all contact numbers including emergency contacts will be phoned. If we are unable to find out if child is safe, we will then carry out a home visit (2 members of staff), if this does not confirm the safety of the child we will report the absence to the police as your child will then be classed as a 'missing child'.
- When a registered pupil fails to attend school for a period of 4 weeks and all efforts by the EWO and school have been unsuccessful in tracing the child we will remove the child from role if EWO has agreed. The child will be reported by the EWO as absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeated occasions'
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters and on our website.
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance with certificates and Arbor award points.
- Share attendance with families each term via email in addition to parents having access to this information on the Arbor app.
- Discuss attendance concerns at progress meetings/parents consultations.
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report.
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance.
- Make a referral to the Educational Welfare Officer, who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance matters, if we continue to have concerns.
- In discussion with parents/carers, contact our School Nurse to support absence regarding health matters.
- Notify local authority if infectious diseases <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/notifiable-diseases-and-causative-organisms-how-to-report> occur within our school community.
- Report to governors, attendance% for the school and on any specific trends and case studies for individual families.

### **Authorised Absence**

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill or religious observance.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Family holidays
- Because the parent is unwell
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.

Unauthorised absences are shared with the Educational Welfare Officer for the London Borough of Enfield. The Educational Welfare Service may contact you to discuss the unauthorised absences.

### **Punctuality**

- Children in Nursery start at 8.30am; Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 start at 8.45am;

- Morning registration is at 8.50 am for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Your child will be marked late if not in school by 8.55am.
- You can help us by arriving a couple of minutes earlier in order for your child to come into school calmly.
- Your child will enter through the designated doors
- Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.
- Arrivals after the close of registration (9.30am) will be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfE guidance.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.

We follow the LA procedures for children not collected at the end of the school day. If parents arrive late to pick up their child and have been taken to After School Club, there may be a charge.

### **Term Time Leave of Absence**

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. The headteacher and governing body are not permitted to authorise term time holiday requests.

It is our policy that:

- Requests for time away from school during term time **will not** be authorised. Absence taken and not authorised could be liable for a Fixed Penalty fine.
- The cheaper cost of holidays in term time is not an acceptable reason. We do understand the financial pressures on families but an extra week or two out of school is a lot of missed education for a child.
- Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A **good** understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom. For example, children in Year 1 or Year 2 who go on holiday for two weeks generally need to move to a lower ability reading group on their return as the children in their previous group have made two weeks of good reading progress and are much further ahead.

### **Legal Note**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and the Local Authority. The Educational Welfare Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

***"Every day counts..." "Everybody in school every day....."***

The governing body will review this policy annually.

**Carterhatch Infant School is part of Enfield Town Schools' Partnership and support their agreed attendance policy.**