

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

When taking a place at the Natural Nurture Nursery, we expect that all children will:

- Attend nursery from the allocated start date
- Attend nursery punctually
- Attend nursery appropriately prepared for the day.

We expect all parents and carers to:

- Encourage regular nursery attendance
- Ensure that their child arrives punctually and prepared
- Ensure nursery is contacted when the child is not attending
- Contact the nursery on the first day of absence
- Contact the nursery regarding any issue that may keep their child absent.

### **Encouraging attendance**

Natural Nurture Nursery encourages regular attendances in the following ways:

- By providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- By responding promptly to a child's or parent's concern about the nursery
- By celebrating good and improved attendances
- By monitoring all attendances, informing and arranging meetings with the family, and if necessary, liaising with the Health Visitor.

### **Leave of Absence**

Any long or sustained leave of absence, such as in the case of compassionate leave or long term sickness, should be discussed with the Operations Manager. Each case will be treated individually, with the needs of the child paramount.

### **Responding to Non-attendance**

- The nursery opens at 8am. If a child is not attending the 8am or 9am session, the parent should contact the nursery as soon as possible, preferably before 9am, to explain the absence. This should be by telephone or by email, not text.
- If the absence is unexplained, the Operations Manager will telephone the parent/carer to ascertain whether the child is absent or late, in which case a staff member needs to await their arrival after the other children have gone out onto the farm.
- Sustained unexplained absences will cause the Operations Manager to telephone the home. This will be followed up by a formal letter. The parent will be given every opportunity to communicate with the nursery.
- If the absence continues without an adequate explanation and every reasonable step has been taken to ensure attendance by the nursery, then the child's

nursery place will have to be terminated. This will be done three weeks after the beginning of the period of unexplained absence. The deposit given at point of admission will be forfeited and the place will be filled from the waiting list.

- The Operations Manager will notify Children's Access Point if there is no response from the parents/carers at any of their contact numbers or addresses and no information from any other emergency contacts listed for that child.
- Children's Access Point will be notified immediately if there is anything that causes suspicion or concern surrounding the unexplained absence. (See also the Safeguarding Policy)
- The Operations Manager will contact the Local Authority to seek advice on a child's Early Years Free Entitlement in the event of an unexplained sustained absence.
- In the event of a child's non-attendance the parent/carer will still be charged for the intended session.

### **Repeated Absences by a Child**

- If it is determined that a child has repeated absences, with or without reason, Natural Nurture Nursery has a responsibility to contact the child's parents/carers to establish the child's safety and welfare.
- Where repeated absences occur, the nursery will liaise with other agencies, for example, education, social services and health to ensure that the child is receiving the support that the family requires. In some circumstances there may be child protection concerns that arise and in these circumstances the Safeguarding Policy and procedures will be followed.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of The Natural Nurture Nursery Management Committee held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016.