

EXPLORING THE WONDERS OF NATURE

**NATURE'S PATHWAY**

ROOTED IN LEARNING

Signed: Mrs N Butler

**Introduction:** For our young people to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. It is therefore very important that each young person attends regularly as has been agreed with staff, young person, host school/Local Authority and parent/carer.

**Why Regular Attendance:** is so Important: Learning – Any absence will affect the pattern of a young person's education and regular absence will seriously affect their progress. It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends regularly and does not permit absence without good cause.

**Safeguarding:** A child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each young person is everyone's responsibility, as is promoting their welfare and opportunities in education and in life

**Promoting Regular Attendance:** Helping to create a routine, and expectation of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – host school, parents/carers, young people and all members of staff. To help with this we will:

- Agree individual attendance targets around each young person's individual needs. This could be an initial period of 1:1 Outreach, an agreed reduced timetable or integration timetable or 'full time' attendance in the provision.
- Support each young person to achieve their targets.
- Reward good or improving attendance through certificates and rewards.
- Report attendance to host schools daily.
- Report to parents/carers through regular contact and reviews.
- Maintain daily contact with parents/carers and host schools in any period of absence.

**The Law Relating to Attendance:** Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable a) to age, ability and aptitude and b) to any special educational needs he/she may have - either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'

**The Law Relating to Safeguarding:** Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty of care on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State concerning safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

**Understanding Types of Absence:** Every session absent from the provision must be classified by the provision and host school (not the parents) as either Authorised or Unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Authorised absences include time away from the provision for a valid reason such as illness, hospital appointments which unavoidably fall in school time and emergencies. NB: If a medical appointment with a GP or a dental appointment must be taken in school time the centre expects your child to attend before or after the appointment as normal.

**Unauthorised absences include:**

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Absences which are not properly explained.
- Shopping, looking after other children, parents/carers Birthday's or young person's Birthday.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed. Any young person may be off school because they are ill but sometimes, they can just be reluctant to attend for a wide variety of reasons. Any problems over attendance should be discussed with the Nature pathway Team, parents/carers and young person. It is never better to cover up absence or give in to pressure to excuse your child from attending as this will generally only make matters worse.

**Absence Procedures: If your child is absent, you must:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence. This can be by a telephone call from the parent/carer/ or school.
- Maintain daily contact for the period of the absence unless agreed otherwise.
- Where absence is for a hospital appointment prior evidence of the letter is required.
- Where absence is for a medical appointment with a GP or a dental appointment prior evidence of an appointment card is required.
- Call in to the provision and speak to one of the Nature Pathway Team.

**If your child is absent, we will:**

- Make contact with Parent/Carer and host school at 10:15 to inform the that their child is late.
- Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence, and subsequent days, if we have had no communication, whilst continuing to notify host school of absence.
- Second day of absence, we will contact the parent/carer either by telephone and notify host school. or visit to support the pupil within school to attend school.

- 3rd day of absence, we will contact parents/carers and the host school to arrange a host school safe and well check.
- Fourth day of absence, contact parents/carers and host school to arrange a meeting to support the young person to attend the provision.
- Endeavour to provide additional support to improve attendance, being mindful of any difficulties and problems.
- If your child's absence becomes a cause for concern, you will be contacted by your child's host school and/or The Natures pathway Team to discuss this further, this will take the form of a phone call, letter home or home visit, to which the host school will be invited to attend.
- In extreme cases your child's place may be withdrawn when support and strategies have been exhausted

**On Return to The Provision:** Following any absence from the provision the parent/carer is requested to notify the school in writing of the reason for the absence if they believe it to be an authorised absence. The Provision will only consider authorising any absence upon receipt of written notification – any absences will therefore remain unauthorised until that time. Staff will further support the young person to ensure full attendance is maintained. NB: If your child has been in hospital a discharge letter from the hospital could be provided.

**Lateness:** The Natures pathway Provision starts at 10.00 am, all young people should be in by this time. Registers close at 10.15 and if a young person arrives between these times they will receive a late mark, unless a special arrangement has been made. Special arrangements in individual cases may be put in place.

**Requesting a Leave of Absence (LOA):** Requesting any leave of absence during term time will affect your child's education just as much as any other absence and we would ask parents/carers to help us by not requesting any such leave. There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time and we follow any guidance from the host school, Government and DFE on this.

**Authorised leave of absence:** will only be granted if the Natures pathway Team considers that there are "exceptional circumstances" relating to the request. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. 'Unavoidable' means that it could not be reasonably scheduled at another time. Absence during term time for holidays is therefore not considered an exceptional circumstance.

**Recording and Reporting:** We constantly monitor absence and attendance to show us areas of concern and where improvements need to be made. This is done on a daily basis for each young person as well as a more in-depth analysis every at the halfway point of their programme. Young people could be put onto Attendance Watch with their host school if the school feels the young person need further support to improve or maintain their attendance in order to gain a full learning experience within the provision environment. We have a duty to report our data on attendance to the host school/Local Authority

This policy was last reviewed on: 6th<sup>st</sup> January 2025

Signed: N Butler

Renew Date 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026