



Attendance Policy

Regular attendance ensures that children benefit fully from the curriculum and helps them develop a sense of routine and belonging. This policy outlines our expectations for attendance, procedures for reporting absences and the actions we will take in cases of unexplained or prolonged absences. We aim to promote consistent attendance for all children, helping them feel safe, settled and able to enjoy all learning experiences. We are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children in our care.

Attendance Expectations

We understand the importance of regular attendance in helping children feel safe, settled, and ready to learn. Establishing good attendance habits in the early years lays the foundation for lifelong learning and well-being. With regular attendance we can support children in building confidence and secure relationships.

By attending regularly and consistently children will:

- Develop relationships with staff and peers.
- Access a broad range of learning opportunities.
- Benefit from routine, stability, and emotional security.

We expect children to attend their scheduled sessions regularly and punctually. If a child is unable to attend, parents/carers must notify us as soon as possible. However, regular absence (even for minor reasons) can interrupt your child's learning and confidence.

Reporting Absences

Parents/carers **must** contact the setting if a child is going to be absent on the morning of absence giving a reason for the absence. It is a government requirement that we follow-up absences and address them especially those that are prolonged or without notification.

Emergency Contacts

We require 4 emergency contacts.

Emergency contacts are a mix of:

- Parents/carers
- Grandparents or close relatives
- Trusted family friends or neighbours

We will ensure contacts are:

- Regularly updated
- Aware they're listed as emergency contacts
- Have working phone numbers and availability



Unexplained Absences

On the day of absence, if we have not been notified to the child's absence, we will attempt to contact the parent/carer using all available contact information. If parents/carers are unreachable, we will attempt to contact the additional emergency contact details to try and locate the child and understand the reason for absence.

For safeguarding reasons, we are required to follow up on any unexplained absences. If we are unable to make contact and have concerns about a child's safety and well-being or if the absence is unexplained and persists, we will follow our safeguarding procedures. This may include referring the matter to local children's social care services and/or requesting a police welfare check.

No Show / No Contact

Day 1 If a child does not attend their session and no contact has been made by the parent or carer:

- Staff will attempt to contact the family by **phone** (and/or other known means).
- Staff will attempt 2nd, 3rd and 4th back up contacts.
- If contact is not made, a **follow-up attempt** should be made later the same day.
- The absence and actions taken will be **recorded**.
- If there are **safeguarding concerns or known vulnerabilities** (e.g. child protection plan, history of neglect, recent domestic abuse), the **DSL should be informed immediately**.
- The DSL will assess the risk and determine next steps.

Day 2 – Continued Absence and No Contact

- If still no contact has been made, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed.
- A **risk assessment** is conducted to determine next steps.
- Depending on the child's vulnerability, the setting may:
 - Carry out a **home visit** (if safe and appropriate).
 - Contact **other emergency contacts** on file.
 - Liaise with relevant professionals (e.g., health visitor, social worker).

Day 3 – Safeguarding Escalation

- If there is **still no contact** by Day 3:
 - The setting must consider this a **safeguarding concern**.
 - A **referral may be made** to the local authority's **Children's Services** or the **Children Missing from Education (CME)** team.

Prolonged Absences



A prolonged absence is any **continuous period of absence lasting 5 or more school days**, whether authorised or unauthorised. This includes:

- Extended illness
- Hospitalisation or medical treatment
- Family emergencies
- Travel or holidays
- Unexplained non-attendance

Parental Responsibility

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Notify the setting **as early as possible** of any prolonged absence.
- Provide updates if the return date changes.
- Supply medical evidence if requested (e.g., for recurring or long-term illness).
- Arrange a meeting with the manager before the child returns, if needed.

Ongoing Monitoring

If the absence is unexplained or no contact is made, staff will:

- Attempt to contact the family by phone and/or email.
- Follow the **safeguarding policy** if there are concerns (e.g., conduct a home visit or alert the Local Authority).

After 10 Days of Unexplained Absence

If a child is absent for a prolonged period (consecutive sessions of absence without a valid explanation) we will make repeated attempts to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts. If there are concerns about the child's welfare and safety we will consult with our safeguarding lead. We will follow our safeguarding procedures and work with relevant authorities as necessary. In line with government requirements, we will keep detailed records of absences, including dates, reasons and actions taken to follow up.

Illnesses

We understand that occasional absence may happen due to illness. Please keep your child at home to prevent the spread of infection and inform us of any contagious illnesses such as



chickenpox, measles or COVID-19. Children should not return to the setting until they are symptom-free or as advised by a medical professional.

Late arrival/Early Collection

Although punctuality is encouraged, we understand that there may be instances where your child may be arriving late or will be collected early. Please ensure that you inform us of any changes to collection arrangements. Only authorised persons can collect children.

Late Collection

It is important that you arrive on time to collect your child. Please ensure you arrive promptly to collect your child at the agreed time. If you're unable to do so, kindly arrange for a trusted family member or friend to collect them on your behalf and inform the setting as soon as possible. If no alternative arrangements are made and staff are required to remain beyond normal hours, a late collection fee will apply.

Support for Families

We recognise that there are many valid reasons why attendance can be a challenge for families.

We are here to help. We will work with you to:

- Adjust your child's settling routine
- Offer flexible approaches to support re-engagement
- Use a key person approach to promote security and trust
- Refer to external services when needed

Reviewed: August 2026