



CHILD ABSENCE POLICY

We are committed to the welfare and safety of all children in our care. We recognise that regular attendance supports children's learning, wellbeing, development, and safeguarding.

This policy outlines our approach for monitoring attendance, recording and responding to absences, and working with parents/carers to ensure children's safety.

This policy is aligned with the statutory **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework (2025)** and Department for Education guidance.

Aims and Objectives

- To safeguard all children by accounting for their whereabouts during operating hours.
- To set out clear procedures for reporting and responding to all child absences.
- To work in partnership with parents and carers to promote good routines and attendance.
- To identify and respond to any unexplained or prolonged absences promptly.
- To comply with EYFS requirements and local safeguarding partner expectations.

Responsibilities

Parents/Carers Must:

- Notify the setting *before or on the first day* of an absence.
- Provide a reason for the absence (e.g., illness, medical appointment, family circumstances).
- Keep the setting informed if absence continues beyond one day and update with expected return date.
- Provide at least **two emergency contacts** for use if parents/carers are unavailable.

Staff will:

- Record attendance at the start of each session.
- Record absences and reasons provided by the parent or carer.
- Contact parents/carers promptly if a child is absent without notification. Consider contacting emergency contacts if parents/carers are unreachable.
- Monitor attendance regularly and discuss with parents if patterns of concern emerge.
- Report safeguarding concerns or prolonged unexplained absences to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and follow safeguarding procedures, including contacting local children's social care and/or police if necessary.

Recording Attendance and Absence:

- All children's arrival and departure times will be recorded in the attendance register.
- Reasons for absences must be clearly documented.
- Absences may be categorised as **authorised** (e.g., illness, pre-notified necessary appointments) or **unauthorised** (no reason given, no notification) in line with EYFS requirements.

Absence Procedures

First Day Absence (Unreported):

- If a child is not present at the start of the session and no prior notification has been received by [time], staff will attempt to contact the parent/carer by phone.
- If the parent/carer does not respond, staff will attempt contact using alternative emergency contacts.

Prolonged or Unexplained Absence:

- If a child remains absent and no contact can be made with parents/carers or emergency contacts, the DSL will assess whether the absence warrants further action based on the child's personal circumstances.
- If concerns remain about the child's wellbeing, the setting will follow safeguarding procedures and may contact **local children's social care or police to request a welfare check.**

Patterns and Trends:

- Staff will monitor patterns of attendance and report any concerning trends or frequent absences to the DSL for follow-up with parents/carers.

Support and Communication

- We will work with families to support attendance and address any barriers that may affect children's regular attendance, including signposting to relevant services.
- Parents/carers will receive a copy of this policy at enrolment and whenever the policy is updated.

Safeguarding and Welfare

This policy operates alongside our **Safeguarding Policy** and **Child Protection Procedures**.

Persistent unexplained absence may be a significant safeguarding concern and must be recorded and reported in line with our safeguarding processes.