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**Attendance and Leave   
of Absence Policy**

Setting Manager: Jane Johnson

Business Manager: Debbie Hoddinott

Policy Approved by: Aston-on-Trent Pre-School Committee Date: March 2024

Policy reviewed by: Date:

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**Attendance and Leave of Absence**

We take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted, and they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities. At the very least, good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family.

There are several reasons why a child may be absent from a setting.

Please contact the setting every morning that a child is absent due to illness. Please leave a voice message on our answer machine if you cannot get through.

Please give as much notice as possible for appointments and holidays, so that we may staff our provision accordingly.

**Safeguarding**

Designated persons must also adhere to Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from childcare.

* If no contact is made with the parents and there is no means to verify the reason for the child’s absence i.e. through a named contact on the child’s registration form, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on *Nursery in a Box* and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made.
* If contact has not been made within three working days, children’s services will be contacted for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services may be contacted as per LSP procedures.
* All absences are recorded on *Nursery in a Box* with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.
* Absence records are digital stored via *Nursery in a Box*.
* If a child misses three consecutive sessions and it has not been possible to make contact, the designated person calls Social Care and makes a referral if advised.
* If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated person attempts to contact the child’s parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child’s absence is logged on our *Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form*, Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.
* If at any time further information comes to light that gives cause for concern, we will refer to the Safeguarding procedures outlined in our *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.*

**Safeguarding Vulnerable Children**

* The designated person or key person attempts to contact the parents to establish why the child is absent. If contact is made and a valid reason given, the information is recorded in the child’s file.
* Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social or family support worker.
* If contact is made and the designated person is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation and follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the designated person contacts the relevant professionals and informs them of the situation.
* If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.

**Poor and Irregular Attendance**

Whilst attendance at an early years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up.

* In the first instance the Setting Manager should discuss a child’s attendance with their parents to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc. and should work with the parents to offer support where possible.
* If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the Setting Manager must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.
* Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor or irregular attendance at the setting is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.
* SEND attendance is monitored and supported in the same way.

In the case of funded children, the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, taking into account the reason for the absence and impact on the setting. The Setting Manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting**.**