



Childcare practice procedures

10.8 Absence and Attendance

Children must be at their session start times on time, any one running late may call to inform us, otherwise you may incur a late fee.

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. In most cases it is reasonable to expect that parents/carers alert the setting as soon as possible, or in the case of appointments and holidays give adequate notice. The attendance and absence policy are shared with parents and carers, and they are advised that they should contact the setting within one hour of the time the child would have been expected to advise of their absence. Designated safeguarding leads must also adhere to Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from the provision.

- If a child who normally attends fails to arrive and no contact has been received from their parents/carers or if the child is absent for a prolonged period of time, the staff who is in charge of the register, takes immediate action to contact them to seek an explanation for the absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. They also inform the designated safeguarding lead.
- Attempts to contact the child's parents/carers or other named carers continue throughout the day on the first day of absence.
- If no contact is made with the parents/carers and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence i.e. through a named contact on the child's online profile, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on the child's online profile and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made.
- If contact has not been made and we have any reason for concern about a child's wellbeing and welfare, children's services will be contacted for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services maybe contacted as per LSP procedures.
- All absences are recorded on the child's online personal file with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.
- Absence records will be monitored to identify patterns and trends in children's attendance. An understanding of the child's and family's individual circumstances will inform the setting's judgement in determining what constitutes a 'prolonged period of absence'.
- Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.

If at any time further information comes to light that gives cause for concern, procedure 1.2a Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns is immediately followed.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

- The person in charge of the register 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 online file. The designated safeguarding lead is informed if no contact made.
- A Safeguarding note is made on the child's profile, stating who was contacted and what happened, explanation given if they reach them.
- Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
- If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead 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 safeguarding lead 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.
- If at any time information comes to light that gives cause for concern, 1.2 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures are followed immediately.

Safeguarding

- If a child misses three consecutive sessions and it has not been possible to make contact, the designated safeguarding lead calls Social Care and makes a referral if advised. Contact with Social Care may be made sooner if there are concerns for a child's wellbeing or welfare
- 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 safeguarding lead attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged, and Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.

Poor/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.

- Children must be at their session start times on time, anyone running late may call to inform us, you will be reminded of the session start time if arriving late.
- In the first instance the setting manager should discuss a child's attendance with their parents/carers to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parents/carers to offer support where possible

- If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the setting manager's 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/irregular attendance at the setting is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.

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's are aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting.

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Adopted by	<hr/>	Perranporth Pre-School 1210551	