

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Good attendance plays a fundamental role in supporting children's educational achievement, well-being and in keeping children safe. Establishing regular routines for young children supports the settling-in process and enhances their sense of security and belonging. Even if a child only has a part-time place, regular attendance is still especially important. Attending Preschool helps children establish routines of going to school regularly and being on time, which can help them make a smooth and positive transition to reception.

Purpose

This policy explains the importance and benefits of regular attendance. It also sets out the procedures in place to promote and monitor attendance within our Early Years Setting and the steps that will be followed if a child is absent from the setting.

This policy is written in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2026 and in particular reflects EYFS section 3.11.

Our Aims

- To create a culture where good attendance and punctuality is 'normality' and valued by all.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.
- To be consistent in the implementation of our policy and procedures for recording and monitoring attendance.
- Work effectively with parents, children, and partners through building trusted relationships to work together to remove barriers to attendance.

Promotion of Good Attendance

Procedures

To promote good attendance at Little Stars Preschool we will:

- Convey clearly to parents and children that regular attendance is essential and is in the child's best interest and that unexplained absence will be investigated.
- Keep records of attendance which provide accurate information on actual attendance and lateness to enable monitoring and evaluation so that emerging patterns are addressed.

- Build on existing good practice that fosters a positive attitude to good attendance by quickly responding to children's absence, recognising, and celebrating, 'good' and 'improving' attendance.
- Target attendance and lateness where there has been an issue and aim to set in place strategies and techniques to support and ensure improvement.

Working with parents:

The systems and procedures in place to promote children's attendance and punctuality will continue to be shared with parents through parents' newsletters, emails and Managers, and staff will work with parents to address specific aspects of attendance or punctuality, which cause concern through discussion and where appropriate standardised letters will also be used where a parental response and signature is required.

Authorised Absence

Whilst attendance at nursery is not statutory, authorised absence will be granted in the following circumstances, where parents inform the nursery on the first day of absence or prior to the first day of absence:

- Illness of the child
- Illness of siblings or parents
- Bereavement
- Health services appointments
- Holidays, including extended visits to family overseas
- Religious observance
- Emergency or exceptional circumstances.

Where these circumstances arise parents should inform the Preschool prior to 9.00am on the first day of absence or prior to the first day of absence.

Reporting Absences

In all instances parents and carers must inform the setting of their child's absence on the first day and before 9am.

Planned Absences

Parents must notify the setting in advance of any planned absences, such as family holidays, so these can be recorded appropriately.

Unplanned Absences

We ask parents to:

- If their child is sick or cannot attend for some reason, call us before 9.00am that day to let us know.

Reporting methods

This can be done by emailing littlestars.preschool@emmanuelchurch.co.uk or calling/messaging on 07736230140 and should include the reason for absence.

Non-attendance:

Authorised Absence

If a child is absent and we are informed of their reason for absence this will be recorded on the register.

Procedure in the Event of Unauthorised Absence

If a child is absent without an explanation:

- If we have not heard from parents, a telephone call (to priority and secondary numbers, e.g. home and work) will be made to the main carer to establish the reason for the absence by 9.30am.
- If no contact is made, then we will follow this process:
 - Contact any second main carer (to priority and secondary numbers, e.g. home and work)
 - Contact the first emergency contact number
 - Contact the second emergency contact number.
 - If contact cannot be made by telephone call, a home visit may be carried out and a contact postcard will be posted through your door if there is no response
 - If there continues to be no contact and there is cause for concern, the health visiting service and/or the Children and Family service will be contacted to ascertain if family support may be needed
 - In more urgent cases, the police may be contacted to carry out a welfare check.

Prolonged absences and monitoring attendance

If we are unable to make contact using the methods outlined above and the absence is considered prolonged, a home visit may be undertaken, and a contact letter will be left at the parent/carer's address. If no response is received and there is ongoing concern regarding the child's welfare, we will implement our Safeguarding policy and procedures. Any concerns will be referred to the local children's social care services and/or a police welfare check is requested to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing. implementing the setting's safeguarding procedures, following up with the parents and/or carers and contacting emergency contacts

Monitoring attendance

Children's attendance / lateness is carefully recorded and routinely monitored on our daily register.

This enables us to identify patterns in absence and consider individual circumstances, e.g. is the child's absence on the same day/from the same parent.

This insight supports the use of professional judgement when determining whether an absence may be deemed prolonged. Consideration is given to a child's vulnerability, parent's and/or carer's vulnerability and their home life.

All managers and staff are alert to and implement our Safeguarding policy and procedures, and appropriate action is taken when children stop attending. In our setting, we are aware that attendance is not statutory, but that non-attendance could be an indicator of other concerns. Concerns which arise through the setting's monitoring activities will be discussed with the parent and/or carer. Absence will also be monitored for the health and well-being of children, for example so that we are aware of outbreaks of illness which need to be investigated, or to warn parents of infections. Monitoring attendance and use of government funded hours may also be passed on at the Local Authority's request.

Fees and Free Entitlement

- Fees remain payable during periods of absence, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed.
- Surrey County Council are notified where children who are in receipt of Early Years Free entitlement are absent for more than two weeks.

Leaving the nursery

If you decide to withdraw your child from the nursery, please see our Parent Contract and Terms and Conditions for notice periods. This will ensure that we remove your child from our systems and therefore will not expect them to attend.

If your child is transitioning to another early years provider or school, please provide us with the details of the new setting so that we can transfer essential information, such as their unique pupil number or funding eligibility code.

Review / Version Control				
Review period - 3 years				
Version	Created	Reviewed	Initials	Changes
Attendance Policy v1.0	09/2026		DH SH AP	New policy expanding upon and replacing previous non-attendance policy