

Attendance Policy

Statement of intent

Playhouse Pre-School recognises that regular attendance and good punctuality support children's wellbeing, security, relationships and learning. Regular attendance helps children to develop positive relationships with their key person and other children and enables them to benefit fully from the experiences and opportunities provided at the setting.

We understand that young children may occasionally be absent due to illness or other circumstances. We work with parents and carers to encourage regular attendance and to identify and respond appropriately to unexplained or prolonged absences.

Playhouse Pre-School has a duty to provide a healthy and safe environment for the children in our care. We aim to operate a consistent yet sensitive approach to the management of children's absence and the exclusion of children who are unwell or infectious. Staff will ensure that children receive appropriate care and attention if they become unwell while attending the setting, until they can be collected by their parent/carer or an appropriate emergency contact.

Parents and carers roles and responsibilities

- To support their child's regular attendance and ensure that their child attends their booked sessions wherever possible, unless they are unwell or there is another appropriate reason for absence.
- To inform Playhouse by 9am if their child is going to be absent and provide the reason for the absence. This can be done by email, text, telephone call or Eylog message.
- To inform Playhouse by 9am on each day of absence, unless the expected period of absence has already been communicated to the setting.
- To inform Playhouse of holidays being taken during term time.
- To drop off and collect children promptly.
- Ensure that children are brought and collected by a responsible adult, over the age of 16.
- Ensure that Playhouse is informed every time someone different will be collecting their child and that person has a password.
- To provide at least two current emergency contacts and ensure that their contact details remain up to date.
- Fees for missed sessions are still applicable and no replacement/alternate sessions are provided.

Playhouse Preschool's roles and responsibilities

- To be aware that poor attendance and/or punctuality could be a safeguarding issue and to respond in accordance with the Preschool's Safeguarding Policy & Procedures.
- To provide positive messages to parents/carers about the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Staff to inform the Management team if they have concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality.
- To ensure that registers are accurately completed on the Eylog app and that absences are recorded, including the reason for absence where this is known.
- Children's attendance is monitored through daily registers.
- If a child attends irregularly or a pattern of absence is identified, the key person will inform the Management Team. The setting may contact the child's parents/carers to discuss the attendance and offer appropriate support where necessary.

- Late arrivals or early collections can cause disruption to the setting and should be communicated to the Pre-School Manager. Late collection charges may apply to families who regularly collect their children late, in accordance with our Late Collection Policy.
- Absence is also 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 such as chicken pox.
- Attendance information and use of government-funded hours may be shared with the local authority where required.

Unexplained absence

If a child is absent and the setting has not received an explanation from the parent/carer, Playhouse Pre-School will follow up the absence promptly.

Step 1 – Parent/carer contact

On the first day of an unexplained absence, the setting will attempt to contact the parent/carer using the contact details held on record. More than one attempt may be made where necessary.

Step 2 – Emergency contacts

If contact cannot be made with the parent/carer and there are concerns about the child's welfare, the setting will contact the child's emergency contacts.

Step 3 – Safeguarding consideration

If the setting remains unable to establish the child's whereabouts or welfare, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider whether further action is required. This may include seeking advice from or making a referral to Children's Services, contacting the Police or requesting a welfare check.

The response will be proportionate to the circumstances and any existing safeguarding concerns. A welfare check may be requested sooner than the third day if the DSL considers there is a concern about the child's immediate safety or wellbeing.

All attempts to contact the family and any action taken will be recorded.

Safeguarding

Playhouse Pre-School recognises that absence can be an indicator of safeguarding or welfare concerns. Attendance records are accurately maintained and regularly monitored so that the setting can identify unexplained or prolonged absences and patterns of non-attendance.

All staff are alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm or neglect, including where a child stops attending or there is an unexplained change in their attendance pattern. Any concerns will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the setting's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Where appropriate, the setting will contact parents/carers and emergency contacts, seek advice from relevant professionals or make a referral to Children's Services or the Police.

The setting will pay particular attention to children who may be more vulnerable and will take account of any existing safeguarding, welfare or support plans.

Procedures for when a child becomes ill

- If a child becomes unwell or shows signs or symptoms of an illness while attending Playhouse Pre-School, a senior member of staff will be informed and the parent/carer contacted as soon as reasonably practicable.
- The child will be cared for and made comfortable by an appropriate member of staff, wherever possible their key person, until they can be collected by their parent/carer or an authorised emergency contact. A paediatric first aider will be involved where appropriate.
- Reasonable measures will be taken to reduce the risk of infection spreading to other children and staff, including providing the child with a suitable area to rest away from other children where appropriate.
- If a child's condition requires urgent medical attention, staff will call 999 and provide appropriate first aid or emergency care while waiting for the emergency services. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable. Staff will not delay emergency treatment while waiting for a parent/carer to arrive.

Exclusion

Playhouse Pre-School follows current UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance on infection prevention and public health exclusion periods in children and young people's settings. A child who is unwell or has an infectious illness may be asked to remain at home where this is necessary to protect their health and the health of other children and staff. The length of any exclusion will depend on the illness and will follow the current UKHSA public health exclusion guidance. Parents/carers will be informed of the relevant exclusion period where applicable. For diarrhoea and vomiting, children should not return to the setting until at least 48 hours after the last episode. Where a child has a condition requiring a different exclusion period, Playhouse Pre-School will follow the current UKHSA guidance and, where appropriate, advice from health professionals or the local Health Protection Team.

Government-funded places

Where a child attends Playhouse Pre-School using a government-funded early education entitlement, attendance will be recorded accurately in accordance with the requirements of the relevant funding authority.

Parents/carers should inform the setting of any planned absence. The setting may be required to monitor attendance and provide attendance information to the local authority or other relevant funding body.

This policy was agreed by the staff of Playhouse Pre-School Broadwater.
Adopted on 6th November 2015 and will be reviewed annually.
Reviewed on 22nd September 2026 by Z. Munford