Attendance Policy

# Statement of intent

It is our intention to ensure that all children at South Milford Preschool demonstrate good levels of attendance in order to support the wellbeing of children in the EYFS.

# Aim

Although it is not compulsory to attend a pre-school setting, we know that regular attendance is important to ensure positive outcomes for all children. We aim to work in partnership with children and families to monitor, record, promote and support good attendance within our setting.

# Objectives

The positive benefits of regular attendance can include the following:

1. Good habits – It builds in young children the idea that getting up and going to preschool is what you do. Children who attend every planned session develop a feel for the rhythm of the week and gain a sense of security from some regular elements.
2. Secure relationships – young children find it easier to build and sustain a range of social relationships when they regularly attend preschool.
3. Self-esteem – Children with regular attendance will know what is going on, what to expect, feel more confident with the adults and the other children and have more opportunities to be valued and praised for their own special contribution. Regular attendance, on time, helps many young children settle more readily into daily life at pre-school.
4. Learning and development – Children learn in many different ways through play with others and through being in the company of staff who actively support their learning and development. Underachievement is often linked to lower attendance.

Promoting and supporting good attendance

At South Milford Preschool we use a wide range of elements to support and encourage good attendance. These include:

1. Having a positive and welcoming atmosphere;
2. Praise for good attendance and arriving on time;
3. Being sensitive to and supportive of families from a range of cultures and background;
4. Building good relationships between children, families and staff.
5. Being rigorous in monitoring attendance and identifying and analysing patterns of absence
6. Being rigorous and persistent in seeking and recording explanations for absence\

Recording and Monitoring Attendance

Attendance records support the work of safeguarding young children and promote their learning and development. At South Milford Preschool we keep the following records:

1. Keep full registration details for every child, as specified in the EYFS.
2. Keep accurate and up-to-date records of information about parents, carers and others who may accompany a child to and from preschool.
3. Make clear and accurate entries using a manual register. This will include the timings of any children who arrive late.
4. Use the code “AB” for any absence related to illness; and “HOL” for any day/ days taken as holidays.
5. Consistently and thoroughly investigate all absences for individual children.
6. Registers are systematically and routinely monitored at the end of every half term by Mel Riches. This is to ensure accurate recording, identifying and addressing attendance issues and engaging parents.

Procedures

1. We request that all parents notify preschool if their child will not be attending and let us know why. We do understand that children will have occasional sickness and holiday absences to occur. Notification can be done by text, phone call or email. If possible please give notification of absence before 9am on their first day of absence (or earlier if known).
2. If no notification of absence has been made by the parent, then a follow up phone-call / text message within 24 hours of absence will be made by one of the managers. This is a safeguarding procedure.
3. 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 the child’s personal file and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made. We may contact your child’s emergency contact to achieve this.
4. 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 maybe contacted as per LSP procedures. This again is a safeguarding procedure.
5. Persistent absence/ lateness will be monitored and analysed. If a lot of sessions are missed, this will be discussed with the family and brief records of contact will be maintained. Explanations will be given to parents on the importance of attendance and we will look into how we can support the families to improve attendance. If there are potential barriers to attendance then we will work with parents to try to support where possible.
6. If persistent absence continues, we will seek the support/ advice from our Early Years Consultant, and/ or Children’s Centre services.
7. Although it is not compulsory for a child to attend a pre-school setting, staff will discuss any instance when a family decides to withdraw a child from a setting. If it becomes apparent that the child is being withdrawn from registered childcare altogether, then we will contact our Early Years Consultant and/ or Children’s Centre Services.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

1. 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.
2. Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
3. 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.
4. If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
5. If at any time information comes to light that gives cause for concern, Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures are followed immediately.

M. Riches - July 2023
Updated January 24 - M Riches