



Christchurch Pre-School Nursery
London Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 2LD
Manager – Mrs Claire Macklin
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ATTENDANCE POLICY

We know regular attendance is important to a child's development, progress & wellbeing & is encouraged at all times. Poor attendance can be a concern for a number of reasons;

- *It as a potential indicator of abuse or neglect**
- *It can significantly impact on a child's progress and/or wellbeing**
- *A child may be exposed to additional risks when not in the setting.**

We therefore take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted & they do not miss their entitlements & 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.

As part of safeguarding & attendance procedures, a daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises & their hours of attendance is maintained & this data is used to identify patterns of absence as they emerge, to ensure concerns are addressed at an early stage. Parents are asked to notify the Manager, either via email, Facebook message or phone call before 9 am each day if their child will not be present. This allows us to keep track of attendance. We share expectations with parents about attendance & for reporting absence regularly on newsletters & on our website. They are also alerted to the fact that we will take action if their child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period. The Manager contacts the family by 9:30 (or 1 pm in an afternoon session) if a child has not arrived. Late arrivals are noted in the register, along with early leavers (signed by parent) & those who are late to be collected (again, signed by parent). Keeping a record of this allows us to notice patterns that may alert us to family issues / safeguarding concerns.

We ask parents to give us adequate notice of appointments & holidays.

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 & no contact has been received from their parents/carers, the designated safeguarding lead, takes immediate action to contact them to seek an explanation for the absence & be assured that the child is safe and well.

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 & 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 & is followed up by the Manager each day until contact is made.

If contact has not been made within three working days, the DSL / Manager, or Deputy Manager / Deputy DSL in her absence, will be contacted for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services may be contacted as per LSP procedures.

All absences are recorded on the child's personal file with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration & any follow up action taken or required with timescales.

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 becomes known that gives cause for concern, *procedure 06.1 - Responding to Safeguarding or Child Protection Concerns* is immediately followed.

Safeguarding our Vulnerable Children –

The Designated Safeguarding Lead / Manager, or Deputy DSL / Deputy Manager attempts to contact the parents/carers to establish why the child is absent. If contact is made & 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 worker/family support worker.

If contact is made & the DSL / Deputy DSL is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation & follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the DSL contacts the relevant professionals & 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 becomes known that gives cause for concern, *06 Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults procedures* are followed immediately.

Safeguarding -

If a child misses three consecutive sessions & it has not been possible to make contact, the DSL / Manager, or Deputy DSL / Deputy Manager calls Social Care & 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 & welfare concerns, the DSL / Deputy DSL attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged on *06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form*, & Social Care are contacted immediately, with our Nursery's Safeguarding procedures followed.

Poor/irregular attendance –

Whilst attendance at an Early Years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding & welfare concerns that should be followed up.

In the first instance the Manager / Deputy Manager should discuss a child's attendance with their parents/carers to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc & should work with the parents/carers to offer support where possible.

If poor attendance continues & strategies to support are not having an impact, the Manager / Deputy Manager must review the situation & decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.

Where there are already safeguarding & 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.

This policy was agreed and reviewed at a meeting of Nursery Committee held in June 2025.

Signed:

Manager

Committee member