

037 Non-Attendance/children missing from education policy

Policy statement

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

- Good attendance plays a fundamental role in supporting children's educational achievement, well-being and in keeping children safer.
- Establishing regular routines for young children supports the settling-in process and enhances their sense of security and belonging.
- Attending pre-school helps children establish routines of going to school regularly and being on time, which can help them with a smooth and positive transition to reception.
- The setting will work closely with parents to promote children's good attendance in particular for children for whom the provider receives the local authorities two year old funding or early year's pupil premium.

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.

To promote good attendance in our setting we will:

- Convey clearly to parents and children that regular attendance and punctuality 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 setting will make its policy on attendance clear to parents through sharing information and expectations prior to admission.
- The systems and procedures in place to promote children's attendance and punctuality will continue to be shared with parents at a universal level through newsletters and emails.
- Leaders 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.

Recognising the factors affecting attendance

Whilst attendance at pre-school is not statutory, authorised absence is only normally granted in the following circumstances:

- Illness of the child
- Illness of sibling or parents

Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup - policy

- Health Services appointments
- Holidays (please note absences of four weeks or more must be reported to the Early Years Finance team to confirm funding can still be claimed)
- Religious observance
- Emergency circumstances

Where these circumstances arise parents should inform the pre-school prior to the first day of absence or on the first day of absence. In the case of funded children, a record of the absence should be kept and signed by parent.

Monitoring attendance and punctuality

We are aware that attendance is not statutory, but that non-attendance could be an indicator of other concerns.

Records of children's attendance are accurately kept and regularly monitored to look for patterns of absence and to ensure that we can identify any potential problems.

All managers and staff are alert to signs that children and learners who are missing might be at risk of abuse or neglect, and appropriate action is taken. Persistent absence will trigger safeguarding checks by our DSL to rule out welfare concerns. We will be particularly vigilant in monitoring groups such as children who are in receipt of the Local Authority two-year-old funding and those for whom we receive EYPP, as these groups are considered to be vulnerable learners.

Procedures in place to record, monitor and follow up non-attendance

Daily registration

Childrens attendance or non-attendance will be recorded along with any lateness.

Non-attendance

If we are informed of the reason for this absence it will be recorded on the register.

If we do not have an explanation a telephone call will be made to parents to establish the reason for the absence.

If contact is not made, then the following process will be followed:

- In the event of the parent not being contacted, the supervisor will attempt to contact them later that day. If we cannot contact the parent, we would try to reach other family members using information in the registration form.
- If we cannot contact the family then we will contact the child's health visitor or GP; if the child has an older sibling we will try to contact the school to determine if they or the child has any information.
- If there is still no response or explanation for the absence then we will contact Starting Point - telephone number 01629 533190 (for children living in Sheffield we will contact the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub on 0114 273 4855) for further advice. Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup has a right to apply the procedures set out in our Child protection and safeguarding policy.
- If there is evidence that the family may be vulnerable to radicalisation, then we would contact the lead officer for Prevent at Derbyshire County Council on 01629 538473 for advice. For children living in Sheffield we will contact South Yorkshire Police Prevent Team by ringing 101.

- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.

Ofsted must be informed as soon as practical, of any significant incident requiring notification and in any case within 14 days, see required notifications:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-childcare-incident>

Monitoring, evaluation and use of attendance and punctuality data

Children's attendance patterns will be monitored and reviewed regularly. Concerns which arise through the settings monitoring activities will be discussed with parents.

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 infection such as German Measles.

Monitoring attendance and use of government funded hours may also be passed on at the Local Authority's request.

Funded places and fee payment

Two, three and four year old funding is provided through the local authority. This is public money, and we believe that we have a duty to ensure it is used appropriately.

Long or recurring absences may trigger notification to the local authority which may impact funding.

We would discuss reasons for absence with parents before retracting the funding offer and will make every effort to work with them to encourage them to improve attendance. Funding would only be withdrawn as a last resort.

Fees remain payable during any absence, see our Fee Policy for further information.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

034 GEP Child protection and safeguarding policy

This procedure was adopted at a meeting of Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup.

Held on:

Date to be reviewed:

Signed on behalf of the committee:

Name of signatory:

Role of signatory: