



RAINBOW PRE-SCHOOL

Established 1979

Registered Charity No: 1026005

BAPTIST CHURCH HALL

2 Dukes Avenue, Muswell Hill, London N10 2PT

Telephone 020 8883 4010 (9am-4pm)

Attendance and absence policy

Policy statement

We believe 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. When a child has a part-time place, regular attendance is especially important.

This policy outlines the procedures to promote and monitor attendance and those that will be followed if a child is absent from the preschool. We wish to create a culture where good attendance and punctuality is valued by all and so will work with parents to remove barriers to attendance. We recognise that sometimes families may need extra support with attendance, therefore effective communication is essential between parents and staff, who may be able to offer advice and support or referrals to other agencies who may be able to help, such as the health visiting team, portage or early help.

To promote good attendance, we will:

- Share our attendance expectations with parents prior to admission, including conveying clearly to parents that regular attendance and punctuality
 - Is expected
 - Is in the child's best interest, and
 - That unexplained absence will be investigated
- Keep records of attendance to enable monitoring and evaluation so that emerging patterns are addressed
- Foster a positive attitude to good attendance by quickly responding to children's absence while also recognising and celebrating, 'good' and 'improving' attendance
- Target attendance where there has been an issue and aim to set in place strategies and techniques to support improvement.

Whilst attendance at preschool is not statutory, authorised absence will be granted in the following circumstances, where parents inform the preschool 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.

Monitoring attendance

Records of children's attendance are accurately kept and regularly monitored to ensure that we can identify any potential problems and look for patterns. 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 when children stop attending. While we are aware that attendance is not statutory, we recognise that non-attendance could be an indicator of other concerns. All managers and staff are particularly aware of the need to monitor groups such as those who are considered to be vulnerable learners.

Procedures to record, monitor and follow up non-attendance

Parents are advised to contact us within 30 minutes of their expected start time their child to inform us of their child's absence. Designated persons must also adhere to Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from childcare.

Non-attendance:

- If a child is absent and we are informed of their reason for absence this will be recorded on the register
- If a child is absent without an explanation 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
- 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 no contact is made with the parents/carers 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. If contact has not been made, and we have any reason for concern about a child's wellbeing and welfare, we will contact Haringey Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for advice.
- All absences are recorded on the child's personal file with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration, and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.
- Absence records will be monitored to identify patterns and trends in children's attendance. An understanding of the child's and family's individual circumstances will inform the preschool's judgement in determining what constitutes a 'prolonged period of absence.'
- Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

- The designated safeguarding lead or key person attempts to contact the parents/carers 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.
- Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
- If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead 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.
- 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, we will follow our procedure for 'raising safeguarding concerns about a child'.

Safeguarding

- If a child misses three consecutive sessions and it has not been possible to make contact, the designated person calls Social Care and makes a referral if advised. Contact with Social Care may be made sooner if there are concerns for a child's wellbeing or welfare
- If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated person 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, and Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.

Poor/irregular attendance

Whilst attendance at preschool is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up.

- In the first instance the preschool manager should discuss a child's attendance with their parents/carers to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parents/carers to offer support where possible.
- If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the preschool manager must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.
- Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor/irregular attendance at the preschool is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.

In the case of funded children, the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, considering the reason for the absence and impact on the preschool. The preschool manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting.