



Toddington Childcare & Forest School Attendance Policy

Purpose:

Whilst attendance for Early Years is not mandatory, it is essential that we maintain accurate records of children's attendance in line with our safeguarding obligations set out by the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. This Attendance Policy has been developed to ensure that Toddington Childcare & Forest School meets the necessary requirements by formalising the procedures we follow in case of absences, with particular attention to safeguarding concerns when a child is absent for an extended period or without prior notification from the parent/carer.

Reporting Absences:

If a child is going to be absent from the setting, parents/carers must notify Toddington Childcare & Forest School as soon as possible, preferably before 9:00 AM on the day of absence. Parents/carers should inform us of the reason for the absence, and if appropriate, the expected return date.

Prolonged or Unexplained Absences:

We take the safety and well-being of all children seriously. If a child is absent for more than 2 consecutive days without notification from the parent/carer, or if there is an unexplained absence, we will take the following steps:

1. **Initial Contact:** Our staff will attempt to contact the parent/carer by phone and/or email to check the reason for the absence and ensure the child's well-being.
2. **Further Follow-Up:** If we are unable to reach the parent/carer or the reason for the absence remains unclear, we will continue our efforts to make contact on the third day of absence.
3. **Safeguarding Protocol:** If a child remains absent for 3 or more consecutive days without communication or there are concerns about the child's safety, we will follow our safeguarding procedures, which may include:
 - Contacting other emergency contacts listed for the child.
 - Contacting local authorities or the relevant safeguarding agency to ensure the child's welfare is protected.

- 4. Escalation to Authorities:** In extreme cases, where a child's absence raises serious concerns and cannot be explained, we will report the matter to the appropriate authorities, including local safeguarding teams, in line with our duty to protect children.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities:

- Parents/carers must provide up-to-date contact details and inform us promptly of any changes in circumstances, such as changes in phone numbers, emergency contacts, or health-related information.
- Parents should notify us as soon as possible if their child is going to be absent, including reasons for absence and expected duration.
- If a child is ill or injured, parents are encouraged to keep us informed about their child's recovery progress to help us better plan for their return.

Safeguarding and Child Protection:

We are committed to safeguarding all children in our care. Monitoring attendance helps us to ensure that children are safe and that any concerns can be quickly identified. In situations where a child's absence may indicate a safeguarding concern, Toddington Childcare & Forest School will take the appropriate action, as outlined in our Safeguarding Children & Child Protection Policy.

Conclusion:

We understand that sometimes children need to be absent due to illness or family circumstances. However, it is important that parents and carers inform us promptly if their children will be absent. By working in partnership to keep us informed of absences, we can ensure our children's well-being together.

For any questions or concerns about this policy, please contact the setting directly.

This policy was reviewed and accepted at the Committee Meeting of Toddington Childcare & Forest School in September 2025.

Signed

Sarah Malcolm
Chair of the Parent Management Committee