

Watery Lane Preschool

Attendance Policy



Policy statement

Attending preschool regularly is vital for every child's development, well-being, and early learning. Our attendance policy is designed to support children, parents, and staff in creating an environment where children can thrive, in line with the latest Early Years Statutory Framework (EYFS) requirements. This policy outlines expectations, procedures, and the importance of attendance, ensuring our setting meets statutory obligations and supports families effectively.

We are committed to encouraging high attendance and punctuality. Consistent routines to help every child feel secure, settle quickly, and make the most of learning opportunities. We expect all parents and carers to commit to regular attendance and to inform us promptly of any absences.

Procedures

It is the responsibility of the Designated Attendance Officer (Becki Ely) or Deputy (Amy Hadley) in their absence to Promote regular attendance for all children in the setting, Ensure compliance with the Early Years Statutory Framework (EYFS) 2025 requirements. Support children's learning, safeguarding, and welfare through robust attendance procedures. Establish clear roles and responsibilities for parents, staff, and leadership. Identify and respond promptly to patterns of absence.

Attendance Expectations

We expect all children to attend our setting regularly and on time, according to their agreed sessions. Regular attendance is critical to:

- Children's social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- Forming secure attachments with staff and peers.
- Ensuring children's safety and well-being is monitored daily.
- Meeting the requirements for the Early Years Pupil Premium and funding eligibility.

Punctuality

Children should be brought to the setting within the designated drop-off window and collected promptly at the end of their session. Late arrivals and collections disrupt routines and may affect a child's sense of security.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents and Carers

- Ensure their child attends all agreed sessions, arriving and departing on time.
- Inform the setting by 9:30am if their child will not be attending, stating the reason for absence (e.g., illness, family emergency etc).

- Provide advance notice of planned absences, such as holidays or appointments, via written communication or email to the preschool.
- Work with staff to address attendance concerns.

Staff and Leadership

- Maintain accurate daily attendance registers, marking children present, absent, or late and noting time of arrival and departure.
- Contact parents on the first day of unexplained absence to ensure the child's safety and gather further information.
- Monitor attendance trends and respond to patterns of absence, following safeguarding protocols if necessary.
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if there are concerns about a child's non-attendance.
- Support families experiencing difficulties that may impact attendance, offering guidance or referral to outside agencies if appropriate.
- Review attendance data termly and report to the management team/governing body as required.

Procedures for Absence

Reporting an Absence

- Parents/carers must notify the preschool office by telephone, email, or in person by 9:30am on the first day of absence, stating the reason.
- If the absence is due to illness, parents should update the setting if the child is likely to be away for multiple days.
- Evidence may be requested for repeated or prolonged absences (e.g., doctor's note for illness).

Unexplained Absence

- On the first day of unexplained absence, staff will contact the parent/carer using the contact information provided.
- If there is no response within 24 hours and the child remains absent, the DSL will be informed and further action may be taken, including contacting emergency contacts or external agencies as part of safeguarding procedures.
- Persistent unexplained absences may result in referral to the local authority Early Help or Children's Social Care.

Persistent Absence

Any child with attendance below 90% over a half-term period will be identified for discussion between parents and the preschool's leadership to offer support and agree on an action plan. Further action will follow if attendance does not improve.

Safeguarding Children

Irregular attendance can be a safeguarding issue. The statutory framework requires providers to be alert to patterns of non-attendance, which may indicate safeguarding concerns. All absences will be

monitored, and action will be taken if staff have any reason to believe a child may be at risk of harm.

Medical and Infectious Illnesses

Parents must keep children at home if they are unwell, especially in cases of infectious diseases (e.g., COVID-19, measles, chickenpox, vomiting, and diarrhoea). The preschool follows NHS and local health protection guidance on exclusion periods and will notify parents accordingly. Upon return, a child should be well enough to participate in normal activities.

Collecting and Dropping Off

Children must be delivered to and collected from the setting by a responsible adult known to staff. Written permission must be provided for anyone other than usual carers to collect the child. Late collection must be notified to the preschool as soon as possible. Persistent late collection will be discussed with parents.

Record Keeping and Data Protection

Attendance registers are kept securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Records are regularly reviewed and retained according to statutory timescales.

Review, Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to statutory guidance. Attendance data will be monitored termly to ensure compliance and to identify any emerging patterns or concerns. Feedback from staff, parents, and children will inform improvements.

Support for Families

We understand that there may be circumstances making regular attendance difficult (e.g., illness, family crisis, special educational needs). We encourage open communication between parents and the preschool so that appropriate support can be offered, including:

- Flexible session arrangements where possible
- Early Help referrals
- Access to local authority or health services
- Meetings with the DSL or SENCO to discuss barriers to attendance

EYFS General Welfare Requirement:

Our policy aligns with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework (2025 update), which sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure children learn and develop well, are kept healthy and safe, and are prepared for school. Key statutory points related to attendance include:

- Section 3: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements, including attendance monitoring and absence reporting.
- Clear record-keeping of all children's daily attendance, including times of arrival and departure.

- Identification and action for patterns of non-attendance or irregular attendance as part of safeguarding practice.
- Parental responsibility to inform the setting of reasons for absence.

Links to legislation, policies and procedures

- **Link to: Covid-19 risk assessment and Covid-19 procedures during the coronavirus period**
- Childcare Act 2006 / 2016
- Arrivals and Departures Policy, Uncollected Child Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Risk Assessment, Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy, Pre-school Contract, Fees Policy.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of **Watery Lane Preschool**

Held on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Name of signatory _____

Role of signatory _____ Date to be reviewed _____