



Absence Policy

Aims

Acton Playgroup staff and committee have looked closely at the practices regarding pupil absence to see how, in partnership with parent and carers, we can improve protection for children.

It is important that our records of children's attendance are accurately kept and regularly monitored to ensure 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. We are aware that attendance is not statutory but that non-attendance could be an indicator of other concerns. We are particularly aware of the need to monitor groups such as children who are in receipt of two-year funding and those for whom we receive EYPP as these groups are considered to be vulnerable learners.

We ask parents to contact the playgroup if a child for any reason is unable to attend their pre booked playgroup session either prior to the day or on the morning of their first missed session. Staff will then record in the register the reason - medical/hospital/holiday or personal circumstances. If no contact is made from the parents/carers then the following procedure will be followed:

Step 1: First session of unexplained absence

The staff at playgroup will endeavour to make contact by telephone or e-mail to parents, carers or emergency contacts informing them that the child is absent and requesting a reason for the absence. If no contact can be made with the parent/carers or emergency contacts on the first day of absence, this will be noted in the absence book located near the telephone, date and sign the entry. If the family is known to other agencies, because of possible concerns about his/her wellbeing, then contact will be made with these agencies.

If we fail to make contact within 48 hours by phone, text, e-mail, we will contact the Children's Service (This is in accordance with The Children's Act 2014).

Step 2: Second session of unexplained absence

The staff will make vigorous attempts to contact a carer or family member by telephone, text or e-mail. If no contact can be made on the second day of absence, this will be noted by the playgroup.

Step 3: Third session of unexplained absence

If no contact is established the playgroup will arrange a home visit to check the situation. If the child is not found and no satisfactory explanation is given for absence, the police will be notified of the child's non-attendance. The police will treat this as a missing persons alert.

For these arrangements to work effectively it is essential for nursery to have parents help with the following, as requested in the playgroup's prospectus:

Steps for Parents (from Playgroup Prospectus)

Keep the playgroup up to date with your telephone number, including mobile phone if you have one, and other details for emergency contacts.

Be responsible for the safety and well-being of your child/children whilst they are not in school.

Inform the playgroup of any prearranged absence, e.g. attendance at an hospital appointment or other unavoidable event, prior to the absence taking place.

Inform the playgroup of your child's absence between 8.30 am and 9.15am on the morning of the first day of absence via the playgroup telephone on 01787 464270. Respond promptly to contacts from the playgroup.

Where contact cannot be established in relation to an unexplained absence, the playgroup may inform other relevant services, e.g. social work and/or police.

Whilst cases of children being at risk from harm when they are absent from nursery without explanation are very infrequent, it is essential that we take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of nursery pupils.

The role of the staff is to complete a register for each session and lunch club. If a child is absent and the pre-school haven't been notified by 09.15am staff will contact the parent/carer. This will be logged in our daily diary and will include times and parent's response.

- Customer First 0808 800 4005
- Email customerfirst@suffolk.gov.uk

Policy adopted by:

Acton Playgroup and Committee

On:

_____ (date)

To be reviewed:

_____ (date)

Signed on behalf of provider:

Name of Signatory:

Kim Farley

Sabrina Elsdon

Role of Signatory:

Lead Practitioner

Committee Chairperson

Reviewed August 2024