

Attendance Policy

This policy aligns with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework** and incorporates updated **attendance and safeguarding requirements effective from 1st September 2025**.

The EYFS requires all early years providers to:

- Follow up on absences in a timely manner
- Make contact with parents/carers if a child is absent without notification
- Contact emergency contacts if parents/carers are not responding
- Consider patterns and trends in a child's absences
- Use professional judgement to determine if an absence is prolonged
- Consider vulnerabilities of the child, parents/carers, and home life
- Refer concerns to local children's social care services where necessary

Although attendance in early years education is non-compulsory, **Nestots Day Nursery has a legal duty to safeguard all enrolled children**. Regular attendance supports children's learning, emotional well-being, and safety, and enables staff to identify any emerging welfare concerns in line with statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

Policy Statement

Regular attendance plays a fundamental role in supporting children's learning, development, emotional well-being, and safety. Irregular or unexplained absences may indicate underlying issues within the child's home life, health, or emotional welfare and may signal a need for additional support.

While attendance in early years education is not compulsory, once a child is enrolled at **Nestots Day Nursery**, regular attendance is expected. This ensures children can fully benefit from their early education experience, build secure relationships, and engage consistently in routines. Parents and carers are encouraged to treat attendance with the same importance as school attendance.

This policy outlines how **Nestots Day Nursery** promotes and monitors attendance and the procedures followed when a child is absent.

Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure attendance is managed effectively while promoting children's welfare and fulfilling safeguarding and legal responsibilities. Our objectives are to:

- **Promote regular attendance**
Regular attendance supports children's learning, routine, and emotional security. It also acts as a key safeguarding measure, enabling early identification of concerns and timely support.

- **Support families with attendance challenges**
We recognise that families may experience difficulties affecting attendance. Nestots Day Nursery is committed to working collaboratively with parents and carers to identify barriers and offer appropriate support, including flexible arrangements where appropriate.
- **Manage absences consistently and transparently**
Clear procedures are in place for recording attendance, communicating with families, and responding to unexplained or prolonged absences.
- **Identify and respond to attendance patterns**
Early identification of irregular attendance patterns is vital in safeguarding children and ensuring early intervention when needed.
- **Meet statutory safeguarding duties under the EYFS**
Attendance monitoring forms part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and may involve working with external agencies where concerns arise.

Responsibilities

Nestots Day Nursery (Provider Responsibilities)

The nursery will:

- Maintain accurate daily attendance registers, completed at the start of each session
- Monitor attendance and follow up on all unexplained absences promptly
- Identify patterns or trends in attendance that may indicate safeguarding concerns
- Communicate effectively with parents/carers regarding attendance concerns
- Use professional judgement when assessing prolonged or repeated absences
- Conduct welfare checks or home visits where appropriate
- Make referrals to children's social care or other agencies if safeguarding concerns arise
- Ensure emergency contact details are up to date, with **more than two emergency contacts** held wherever possible

Parents and Carers (Expectations)

Parents and carers are expected to:

- **Report absences promptly**
Inform the nursery by **9:00am on the first day of absence**, stating the reason and expected return date.
Absences can be reported via phone, email, or nursery communication system.
- **Provide updates for longer absences**
If a child is absent for more than two consecutive days, parents should provide regular updates on their child's condition and anticipated return.
- **Engage with the nursery**
Work in partnership with staff to address any attendance concerns and support their child's return to nursery.

- **Home visits**

If a child is absent for more than two days without contact, the nursery may arrange a home visit to assess welfare, identify support needs, and plan the child's return.

Procedure for Managing Absences

- **Recording attendance**

Attendance is recorded at the beginning of each session. Any unnotified absence is immediately flagged.

- **Initial contact**

If a child is absent without notification, staff will attempt to contact the parent/carer by phone as soon as possible.

- **Emergency contacts**

If parents/carers cannot be reached, all emergency contacts on file will be contacted.

- **Escalation**

If no contact is made within 24 hours, the matter will be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will decide the appropriate next steps.

- **Early intervention**

Where patterns of irregular attendance are identified, the nursery will meet with parents/carers to explore reasons and offer support, which may include Early Help or referrals to external services.

Monitoring and Identifying Attendance Patterns

The **DSL** will regularly review attendance records to identify concerning trends, such as:

- Frequent absences
- Absences on specific days
- Repeated unexplained absences

Families will be contacted to discuss concerns, explore underlying issues, and agree on supportive actions where appropriate.

Integration with Safeguarding Policy

- **Attendance as a safeguarding indicator**

Unexplained or irregular absences may indicate potential risks to a child's welfare and will be managed in line with the nursery's Safeguarding Policy.

- **Safeguarding action**

The DSL will assess attendance concerns and may request welfare checks or make referrals to the local authority if needed.

- **Prolonged or unresolved absences**

Where absences remain unresolved or raise serious concerns, a referral to children's social care or other relevant agencies may be made.

Communication and Training

- **Staff training**
All staff receive training on attendance monitoring and safeguarding concerns, renewed at least every two years in line with EYFS requirements.
- **Roles and responsibilities**
The Nursery Manager is the main point of contact for attendance concerns. The DSL leads on safeguarding issues arising from attendance.
- **Policy sharing**
This policy is shared with families at registration and is available upon request.
- **Ongoing communication**
Parents will be informed in writing if attendance concerns arise and will be involved in any agreed actions.

Policy Review

- **Annual review**
This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes.
- **Feedback**
Nestots Day Nursery welcomes feedback from staff and families to improve practice.
- **Policy updates**
Any updates will be shared promptly with families to ensure transparency and consistency.

- Signed...Gemma Spicer..... Date...September 2025.....

- Next review date...September 2026.....