**Safeguaring and Welfare Requirement: Information and records**

**Providers must make the following information available including the procedure to follow in the event of a child going missing at, or away from the setting.**

**Statement of intent**

This sets out the procedures to be followed in the event that a child is absent from preschool. The rationale for this policy is that attendance in the Early Years is important because:

* It improves outcomes for children
* It fosters healthy habits for future attendance
* It helps children settle and form good relationships
* It helps to develop positive self esteem
* Under achievement is often linked to poor attendance
* Early identification of more serious concerns is more likely with regular attendance

Even though attendance is not compulsory we are aware of the impacts of non-attendance and note what is written In the Early Years Inspection Handbook (2019)

Although attendance at the setting is not mandatory, inspectors will explore how well providers work with parents to promote children’s attendance so that the children form good habits for future learning. *Pg35, bullet point 149*

**Procedure**

* The Manager and/or Deputy are responsible for monitoring absence and following up and concerns raised by the team
* It is the responsibility of all staff to report to the Manager/Deputy each day regarding lateness/absence or if a child leaves our setting unexpectedly.
* If a child is sick or cannot attend for some reason, we request that parents call to inform us before 9.am.
* If a child has not attended and we have not been informed by 10.00am we may call parents/carers to establish why the child is absent.
* If we are unable to contact parents/carers after 2 missed sessions we will first contact any designated family emergency contacts and then we may contact other professionals (Health Visitor/Siblings schools/ family social worker, particularly in the cases of our more vulnerable families) to ensure that both parents and child are safe.
* If there is a Safeguarding concern the Manager and/or Deputy, would follow our Safeguarding procedure and phone MASH (see our Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Policy)
* If you are planning holidays during term time you must let us know in advance so we can record this in our register.
* Fees remain payable during periods of absence, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed.
* We must notify Southampton City Council where children in receipt of Early Years Free Entitlement are absent for more than 2 weeks in a term, who may retract funding. If this is the case outstanding fees that have not been met by funding are payable by the parent/carer.

**Maintaining good attendance**

* We provide a welcoming atmosphere on arrival with children being given opportunities to join us for breakfast or join in with group songs and actions. We then hold Sunshine Circles – a Theraplay Welcome activity. Being on time/attending pre-school allows your child to partake in these activities, and ensures they have a calm start to their session.
* If a child is missing a significant amount of sessions across the term or half term (e.g. if a child attends 5 sessions per week and is missing 2 or more sessions, or if patterns of missed sessions arise), we will either raise this at end of term parent consultation or, if more appropriate to the timescale of the absence we will invite parents to meet informally to discuss working together to improve attendance.
* If there are difficulties affecting absence, or a child is unsettled we will work closely with the child and family to support a positive outcome. This may include additional home visits where appropriate to help the child to settle e.g. if they have had a significant period of absence for ill health.

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