

THE ISLAND DAY NURSERY

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

This policy outlines the procedures for monitoring, recording, and following up on children's attendance and absences. Regular attendance is essential for a child's sustained learning, development, and well-being. Consistent or unexplained absences are potential safeguarding concerns.

Parent and Carer Responsibilities

Parents and carers must adhere to the following procedures regarding the child's attendance:

Reporting Absences

- Parents/carers must notify their child's setting on the first day of absence. Notifications can be made via telephone, email or using the Famly app.
- A clear reason must be provided for the absence – for example illness, appointment, day with family etc.
- Where possible an estimated date of return should be given.
- If the absence extends beyond 3 days the parent/carer will provide a daily update unless a long-term absence has been agreed with the Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Emergency Contact Information

The settings are required to hold comprehensive emergency contact details.

- Parents/carers must provide the setting with details of at least two reliable emergency contacts (other than the primary carer) who can be reached quickly in case of emergency or unexplained absence.
- Parents/carers must immediately notify the setting of any changes to contact numbers, addresses or guardianship arrangements.

Setting Procedures for Absence Follow-Up

The setting will commit to following up on all recorded absences to ensure the child's safety and well-being:

Day 1

- A member of the team will attempt to contact the primary contact via telephone or the Famly app if the child is absent and the setting has not received notification.
- If contact is still not made, a lead member of the team will attempt to contact the primary contacts for a second time.
- If contact is not established a third attempt at contact will be made.

Unexplained or prolonged absence – Day 2 onwards

- The manager/DSL will attempt to contact all emergency contacts provided on the child's registration forms.
- If contact remains unsuccessful, the DSL will document all attempts and begin a review of the child's file and attendance history, looking for patterns and existing vulnerabilities.
- Managers/DSLs may contact other professional as a follow up – Health Visitors/ GP Surgeries etc.

Escalation Procedures (unexplained absence and safeguarding concerns)

The DSL will use their professional judgement to decide if an absence is deemed 'prolonged' or if there are emerging concerns based on the child's personal circumstances. If internal attempts to contact/parents and emergency contacts fail, or if the reason for absence raises immediate welfare concerns the DSL must contact:

- MASH – the professional line - 01983 823426 for advice or submit and Inter Agency Referral Form.
- The police if they feel a welfare check is needed.

Priority Follow Up for Vulnerable Children

In instances where a child is subject to Child Protection Plan or a Child in Need Plan any unexplained absence is a high-priority safeguarding concern.

- If a child is in this category and absent without notification the Manager/DSL must contact the child's assigned Social Worker with details of times and dates.
- The above action will take place alongside the actions set out on page 1 of this policy.

Monitoring Absence Patterns and Trends

Staff must be vigilant regarding patterns in a child's attendance, as these can indicate a safeguarding concern.

- Managers/DSLs will review records of any child demonstrating poor patterns of attendance, including frequent Monday/Friday absences, regular late arrivals or absence coinciding with known domestic difficulty.
- Where patterns are identified, a confidential discussion will be held with the parent/carer to develop a plan to improve attendance.
- If patterns persist and there is cause to suspect neglect or abuse, the DSL will follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and make a referral to the Local Authority.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- Accurate records of daily attendance are maintained on Family.
- All attempts to contact parents/carers, including times and methods must be logged.

- Decisions regarding escalation must record the rationale and the outcome of any referral made.
- All information is stored in accordance with GDPR requirements.

Persons responsible for implementing this policy:

Erica Dunwell/Heather Bishop/ Rosalind Moreno/Cara Bonner– Barton

- Erica Dunwell/ Heather Bishop/ Jonathan Reed – Sandown
- Erica Dunwell/Becky Kujabi/Sam Hicks – Wootton

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