

# Absence Policy



## Principles

We believe good attendance at our setting is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. At a young age continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress.

We also believe that we have a responsibility to follow up on unknown absences to ensure that the child and family are safe and well. This forms part of our safeguarding commitment.

## Aim

- Encouraging staff, parents/carers and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- Providing clear procedures for staff and parents/carers relating to our setting's attendance.

## Terms

Absence is either known to the setting, such as in the case of illness or of religious/cultural observance, holidays or unknown, such as if there is no reason given in advance.

## Procedure

It is the parents'/ carers' responsibility to contact the setting either by telephone or in writing via email if their child is unable to attend on a nominated day. This must be on the first day of absence and any following days within an hour of the child's set start time at the setting.

Staff complete a register at the beginning of each session. If parents/carers have not explained the reason for absence within 1.5 hours of the child's set start time, then staff will inform the manager of the setting. The key worker will then call the parent/s of the child and report back to the Manager of the outcome.

If the manager is not able to get hold of the parent/carers, they will:

1. Try to phone again immediately after lunch
2. If there is no answer call the child's emergency contact/s
3. Consider whether or not to visit the family home.

The manager will decide the best course of action based on their knowledge of the family and child – for example, if it is known that the family is experiencing challenges or if the child has SEND the setting may act more swiftly than the 48 hours listed below.

If no explanation is given, the manager enters this as an unknown absence on the setting records.



If the manager is unable to contact the parents within **48 hours** and there is no explanation for the absence from emergency contacts, the manager will contact Families in Focus/First Response for advice and may also contact the police.

Records will be made of contact and attempted contact with parents and/or emergency contacts and other agencies. Records will also be made of known and unknown absences. Monitoring of absence records will take place regularly and letters and/or meetings will be sent/arranged by the setting, including a referral to Families in Focus, where necessary.

If absence is a persistent problem (15% or more) a meeting will be arranged at the setting with the parent and Manager.

### **Arrival times and lateness**

At Little Foxes Forest School we believe the children can get the most out of their day if they arrive on time. Registration is between **8am – 9.30am** for arrivals. When children arrive late this can disturb our registration and morning routine so we ask parents/ carers to be punctual to enable the children to fully access welcome time. We will begin our morning teaching routines at 9:35am. If a child is late to arrive and we have already begun our day, it is the parent's responsibility to call the setting's phone and take their child to find the group.