



## **Attendance Monitoring Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

At Little Explorers, we are committed to promoting regular attendance for all children to support their safety, wellbeing, and learning. Monitoring attendance also enables us to meet our safeguarding responsibilities and comply with Early Years Statutory and Funding Requirements.

Providers must follow up absences in a timely manner. If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from the parent or carer, attempts must be made to contact the child's parents and/or carers and alternative emergency contacts. Providers must consider patterns and trends in a child's absences and their personal circumstances and use their professional judgement when deciding if their absence should be considered as prolonged. Consideration must be given to the child's vulnerability and their home life. Any concerns must be referred to Somerset Safeguarding Partnership Board Social Services and/or Police for a welfare check to be requested.

### **1. Legal and Statutory Framework**

This policy complies with:

- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- Local Authority (LA) requirements for Early Years Entitlement (EYE) funding

### **2. Purpose**

This policy sets out how we monitor children's attendance, respond to absences, and ensure compliance with safeguarding and funding regulations.

### **3. Responsibilities**

- The Room Leader records daily attendance and informs the office of any absences.
- The Room Leader / Nursery Office or Manager contacts families where there is unexpected absence. (to be agreed in partnership with management)

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) reviews attendance records for concerns or patterns.
- The Nursery Manager ensures that children in receipt of funding meet attendance requirements and that the Early Years Entitlements Team is notified where needed.

#### 4. Daily Attendance Recording

- All arrivals and departures are recorded in real time on the nursery's attendance system.
- Entries must be accurate and categorised as:
  - **Present**
  - **Authorised Absence** (e.g. holiday, illness, appointment)
  - **Unauthorised Absence** (e.g. unexplained absence, no contact)
- Late arrivals are recorded with time and reason.

#### 5. Procedure for Unexplained Absences

If a child is absent without prior notification:

1. The Room Leader alerts the Office or Manager immediately.
  2. We will attempt to contact the parent/carer/emergency contacts by phone, email and/or our Ovivio app.
  3. If no response is received within 30mins-1 hour, the absence is escalated to the DSL.
  4. The DSL assesses whether the absence raises safeguarding concerns. The DSL will consider:
    - Previous attendance history
    - Known safeguarding concerns
    - Family circumstances
  5. The DSL will follow appropriate steps the same day, which may include a welfare check or Early Help referral.
  6. All unexplained absences are logged and monitored.
- All attendance concerns, contact attempts, and outcomes will be recorded to ensure a clear chronology is maintained.

#### 6. Monitoring Attendance Patterns

The Nursery Manager or DSL will regularly review attendance data to identify:

- Children with frequent or repeated absences
- Irregular patterns (e.g., certain days always missed)
- Extended time off without clear justification

Where concerns arise:

- The DSL or Room Leader will hold an informal discussion with parents.
- If no improvement is seen, a written attendance concern letter will be issued.
- Where attendance concerns are ongoing, we may initiate or contribute to an Early Help Assessment (EHA) or other external agencies in partnership with the family.

Persistent absence may be identified where a child misses 10% or more of their expected attendance.

Attendance records are stored securely in line with GDPR and our Data Protection Policy.

## **7. Funded Children – Early Years Entitlements**

Children who receive 9 month, 2, 3, or 4-year-old funding are expected to attend regularly in line with Local Authority guidance.

If a funded child has:

- Unexplained absences,
- Long absences of 2 weeks or more, or
- Persistent irregular attendance,

We will notify the Early Years Entitlements Team at the Local Authority.

This may result in a suspension or withdrawal of funding, and parents will be informed if this affects their childcare entitlement or invoices.

## **8. Safeguarding and Attendance**

Children who are absent without reason may be at risk of:

- Abuse or neglect
- Domestic violence
- Unauthorised travel (including FGM or forced marriage risk)
- Radicalisation

All unexplained or concerning absences must be viewed within the wider context of the child's wellbeing. Any member of staff who has a concern must speak to the DSL immediately.

Attendance monitoring forms part of our wider safeguarding culture, ensuring that all children are seen, safe, and supported.

## 9. Children Leaving or Not Returning

If a child leaves without formal notice or fails to return after an absence:

- We will attempt to contact the family the same day absence occurs.
- If contact is not made and concerns remain, the following may be notified:
  - Local Authority
  - Health Visitor
  - Request a welfare check via the Police where appropriate

## 10. Communication with Parents

- This policy is shared with all parents at enrolment.
- Parents must inform the nursery by 9.00am if their child will be absent.
- Planned absences (e.g. holidays) must be communicated in advance.
- It is the parents' responsibility to keep contact details up to date.

## 11. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes in legislation or local authority guidance.

| <b>This policy was adopted on</b> | <b>Date for review</b> | <b>Reviewed</b>     |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>24/01/2022</i>                 | <i>10/01/2023</i>      | <i>4th May 2026</i> |