



**Freeland Pre-school**  
Freeland Partnership Foundation Stage Unit,  
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Freeland Pre-school is a Registered Charity (No: 1015592)

## Non-attendance policy

### Statement of intent

This policy sets out the procedures to be followed in the event that a child is absent from pre-school. It also explains the importance and benefits of regular attendance.

### Procedure

- If parents/carers are planning holidays during term time, they must let us know in advance so we can record this in our register.
- If a child is sick, or cannot attend for some reason, parents/carers must call us before 9.15am that day to let us know.
- If we have not heard from a parent/carer by 9.35am we will call them to establish why their child is absent.
- If we cannot make contact with a parent/carer we will use all the contact details and the emergency contacts provided to try to establish why the child is absent.
- If we are concerned about the welfare of a child, we reserve the right to contact social services.
- Fees remain payable during periods of absence unless alternative arrangements have been agreed.
- We may notify Oxfordshire County Council where children in receipt of Early Years Free Entitlement are absent for more than 2 weeks in a term and the absence is unexplained.

### Good Attendance

The reasons for children to regularly attend their Early Years setting are to support their learning and development, to make sure that children are kept safe, to promote their wellbeing, and to ensure that they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities.

Good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance practice may also lead to the earlier identification of more serious concerns for a child or family and may have a vital part to play in keeping a child or other family members safe from harm.

The Early Years Inspection Handbook states *'Although attendance at the setting is not mandatory, providers should be alert to patterns of absence that may indicate wider safeguarding concerns. Inspectors will explore how well providers work with parents to promote children's good attendance, especially the attendance of children for whom the provider receives the early years pupil premium'*. (Page 41, point 160)

### **Why is good attendance important?**

There are positive benefits to be gained from regular attendance; this includes not only coming to every booked session, but also being there on time. Benefits include the following:

#### **Good habits:**

- It builds in young children the idea that getting up and going to a setting is simply what you do.
- Children who attend every booked session develop a feel for the rhythm of the week and gain a sense of security from some regular elements, even when the actual pattern or focus of their learning or activity may vary widely from week to week.

#### **Secure relationships:**

- Young children find it easier to build and sustain a range of social relationships when they regularly attend their childcare setting. Regular times arranged with parents help to develop a secure attachment within the setting.
- For some families, particularly at times of stress, the child's regular attendance at a setting allows parents to get other things done and helps them enjoy spending time with the child when he or she is at home.

#### **Self-esteem:**

- Children who rarely miss sessions at an Early Years setting, and arrive on time, are more likely to feel good about themselves. This is because they know what goes on and what to

expect, feel more confident with the adults and the other children, and have more opportunities to be valued and praised for their own special contribution.

- Children who regularly miss sessions, or are generally late, can frequently experience a sense of having to try a little bit harder just to understand what is going on and what other children are talking about or doing.
- Regular, punctual attendance helps many young children to separate from their parents or carers at the start of the day and settle more readily into daily life in their setting.

### **Learning and Development:**

- Staff carefully plan every session for each child in their care and want to take every opportunity to help them thrive. Experiences gained in one session are often developed further in the next session, whether or not these are consecutive days.
- Children learn in many different ways through play with others and through being in the company of staff who actively support their learning and development.
- Under-achievement is often linked to lower attendance. For some older students this is linked to a steadily deteriorating trend in attendance which is traceable right back to their Early Years setting.

### **Safeguarding:**

- Good attendance is important for every child, but especially those for whom specific factors make them more vulnerable to disengagement or under-achievement. Most children are well-supported by their families and continue to thrive, whatever their background or circumstances.