



Abbots Farm Preschool

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

May 2026

Review by May 2027

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Statement of Intent

Good attendance plays a fundamental role in supporting children's educational achievement, well-being and in keeping children safer. Establishing regular routines for young children supports the settling-in process and enhances their sense of security and belonging. Even if a child only has a part-time place, regular attendance is still especially important. Attending Preschool helps children establish routines of going to school regularly and being on time, which can help them make a smooth and positive transition to reception.

Although attendance at preschool is not a statutory requirement, once a child is registered and a place is accepted, there is an expectation of regular and punctual attendance. This ensures children can fully benefit from the provision and that government-funded early years places are used appropriately.

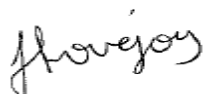
This policy sets out the procedures in place to promote and monitor attendance within our Early Years Setting and the steps that will be followed if a child is absent from the setting. It also explains the importance and benefits of regular attendance.

Our Preschool follows the same approach as the main school in promoting excellent attendance and punctuality. It is a shared responsibility between parents/carers, children, and all staff to ensure that children attend preschool regularly and on time. We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some children find it harder than others to attend preschool; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at preschool, as well as strong and trusting relationships with the children and parents/carers. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.

If there are problems which affect a child's attendance, we will investigate, and work in partnership with parents/carers and the child to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clear and focused approach aimed at improving the child's attendance.

This policy supports the Preschool's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. It reflects Warwickshire County Council guidance for Early Years Providers and will be implemented alongside the Preschool Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Signed by:



Headteacher

Date: 28/4/26



Chair of
Governors

28/4/26
Date:

1. The Preschool Day

Preschool Day:

Doors open	8:35 am Session starts at 8:45 am
AM Registration	8:50 am
Lunch Club	11:45 am – 12:30 pm
PM Registration	12:30 pm
End of Preschool Day	3:30 pm

2. Objectives

At our Preschool we endeavour to:

- To create a culture where good attendance and punctuality is 'normality' and valued by all.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.
- To be consistent in the implementation of our policy and procedures for recording and monitoring attendance.
- Work effectively with parents/ carers, children, and partners through building trusted relationships to work together to remove barriers to attendance.

To promote good attendance in our Early Years Provision we will:

- Convey clearly to parents/ carers and children that regular attendance and punctuality is essential and is in the child's best interest and that unexplained absence will be investigated.
- Keep records of attendance which provide accurate information on actual attendance and lateness to enable monitoring and evaluation so that emerging patterns are addressed.
- Build on existing good practice that fosters a positive attitude to good attendance by quickly responding to children's absence, recognising, and celebrating, 'good' and 'improving' attendance.
- Target attendance and lateness where there has been an issue and aim to set in place strategies and techniques to support and ensure improvement.

3. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2016

- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2025) 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE 'Early education and childcare: statutory guidance' (last updated April 2026)
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE 'Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2025 to 2026'
- Warwickshire County Council 'Children Absent and Missing from Early Education: Guidance for Early Years Providers' (September 2025)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Preschool and School policies and procedures:

- Preschool Admissions Policy
- Preschool Terms and Conditions
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Attendance records are personal data and will be stored securely, accessed only by authorised staff, and retained in line with the Preschool's Data Protection Policy and retention schedule, in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body will be responsible for:

- The oversight of the implementation of this policy.
- Supporting the headteacher in promoting regular attendance.
- Reviewing absence and attendance rates.
- Ensuring the Preschool is maintaining up to date and accurate documentation on attendance and absence.
- Ensuring the annual early years census is completed.

The Headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Communicating this policy to Preschool staff and parents/ carers.
- Maintaining accurate records of children being cared for at the Preschool, their hours of attendance and the names of each child's key person.
- Ensuring the Admin team maintain up to date documentation of children's names, home addresses and parents'/carers' telephone numbers.
- Ensuring the Admin team follow up unexplained absences with parents/ carers.
- Ensuring the correct staff to child ratios are in place to enable safe attendance.
- Promoting the importance of attendance to parents/ carers.

The Headteacher as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be responsible for:

- Overseeing attendance-related safeguarding concerns

- Ensuring appropriate referrals are made
- Maintaining secure records
- Liaising with external agencies where attendance may indicate risk of harm.

Preschool staff will be responsible for:

- Maintaining accurate daily attendance records.
- Monitoring attendance patterns and following up on unexplained absences.
- Reporting prolonged or concerning absences to the DSL where necessary.
- Supporting families in addressing attendance issues as appropriate.
- Taking attendance registers at the relevant times during each session.

All staff will be supported to understand Warwickshire County Council expectations relating to children absent and missing from early education, and how attendance concerns link to safeguarding and child protection.

Parents/ carers will be responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends Preschool regularly and on time.
- Notifying the Preschool of any absence, including the reason, before each session begins.
- Informing the Preschool of any planned absences in advance.
- Providing the Preschool with up-to-date contact details.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Engaging with attendance support offered by the Preschool.

5. Working with parents/ carers

The Preschool will ensure that its expectations regarding attendance and punctuality are clearly communicated to parents/carers and children prior to admission. This includes sharing information about routines, responsibilities, and procedures to support regular attendance from the outset.

Information about attendance and punctuality, including systems and procedures, will continue to be shared with parents/carers at a universal level through newsletters, digital platforms such as Class Dojo, and email communications.

The Preschool recognises that some children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), medical conditions, or additional needs, may face barriers to regular attendance. We are committed to working flexibly and collaboratively with families and relevant professionals to identify and reduce barriers and to make reasonable adjustments where appropriate to support attendance.

Where concerns arise regarding a child's attendance or punctuality, the Headteacher, class teacher, and Preschool staff will work in partnership with parents/carers to address these through discussion and support. Where necessary, standardised letters may be used to formalise communication and ensure shared understanding.

The Preschool adopts a supportive and relational approach to promoting attendance, recognising that attendance is closely linked to safeguarding and is everyone's responsibility. Families will be offered early support to help prevent concerns from escalating and to promote positive outcomes for children.

6. Recognising the factors affecting attendance

Whilst attendance at Preschool is not statutory, authorised absence is only normally granted in the following circumstances:

- Illness of the child
- Illness of siblings or parents/ carers
- Health Services Appointments
- Holidays
- Religious observance
- Emergency circumstances

Where these circumstances arise parents/ carers should inform the Preschool on the first day of absence or prior to the first day of absence.

7. Monitoring attendance and punctuality

Records of children's attendance are accurately kept and regularly monitored to ensure that we can identify any potential problems and look for patterns.

All managers and staff are alert to signs that children and learners who are missing might be at risk of abuse or neglect, and appropriate action is taken when children and learners stop attending.

In our Early Years provision, we are aware that attendance is not statutory, but that non-attendance could be an indicator of other concerns.

All managers and staff are particularly aware of the need to monitor groups such as children who are in receipt of two-year-old funding, and those for whom we receive Early Years Pupil Premium, as these groups are considered to be vulnerable learners.

8. Procedures

Daily Registration

Registration will be completed at the start of each session within 10 minutes of the start time. This is by 8:55am for the morning session and 12:40pm for the afternoon session.

Children's attendance or non-attendance will be recorded along with any lateness.

Persistent lateness will be monitored as it may impact a child's wellbeing, learning, and safety. Where lateness becomes a concern, the Preschool will discuss this with parents/carers and offer support to improve punctuality.

Nonattendance

The Preschool will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Understand the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.

Parents/carers will be required to contact the school office via telephone, email or using the Studybugs App before 8:50am or 12:35pm on the first day of their child's absence.

If a child is absent without an explanation a telephone call will be made to the parents/carers to establish the reason for the absence.

If no contact is made, then the following process will be followed.

- 1) A text message will be sent out to the parent/ carer of any child who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend Preschool.
- 2) From 9:20am or 1:05pm a telephone call to parent's/carers work or training provider will be made.
- 3) An email to parents/ carers will be sent.
- 4) Calls to other emergency contacts, including other family members listed as emergency contacts, will be made to try to establish why the child is absent.
- 5) Calls to the siblings' schools, nurseries or childminders will be made to establish if they or the sibling can confirm the child's whereabouts.

If contact cannot be made by telephone call a home visit may be carried out and a contact post card will be posted through your door.

If following this no contact is made, and there is cause for concern that the child whereabouts remain unknown, the health visiting service, your child's GP and Children and Families services will be contacted to ascertain if family support may be needed. In more urgent cases, the Police may be contacted to carry out safe and well checks.

Where appropriate, concerns will be shared in line with Warwickshire safeguarding procedures, including contact with the Early Years Quality and Safeguarding Team, Family Connect, or Children and Families Services.

Children Absent and Missing from Early Education

The Preschool recognises that unexplained or prolonged absence may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns, abuse, neglect, or that a child may be missing education. This includes instances where a child has one or more unexplained absences, attendance patterns which cause concern, or ceases to attend the setting altogether.

Where a child's attendance causes concern, or their whereabouts cannot be established, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed immediately. Attendance concerns will be managed in line with the Preschool Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and

may result in referrals to Early Help, Children and Families Services, or the Police where appropriate.

9. Monitoring, evaluation and use of attendance and punctuality data

Children's attendance patterns will be monitored and reviewed regularly. Research and experience indicate that children who attend more sessions typically achieve better learning and developmental outcomes, as they benefit from greater continuity, secure routines, and sustained relationships with staff and peers.

Any concerns arising through the setting's monitoring activities will be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest opportunity.

Attendance figures will be published each half term and shared with parents/carers, staff, and the Governing Body.

Absence will also be monitored in relation to children's health and wellbeing. This enables the setting to identify patterns or outbreaks of illness that may need investigation and to inform parents/carers of relevant infections, such as German measles.

Monitoring of attendance and the use of government-funded hours may also be shared with the Local Authority at their request.

10. Funded places

Three- and four-year-old funding is provided through the local authority. This is public money, and we feel that we have a duty to ensure it is used appropriately. If a place has been reserved but is being used for less than 75% of booked sessions, we reserve the right to offer that place to any child who may be on our waiting list, for example, a child who has been allocated three-year-old funding but cannot take up a place because sessions are full. This way we can be sure to use the funding to its best effect.

Any concerns relating to the use of funded hours will be discussed with parents/carers before any action is taken. Parents/ carers will be given clear notice, the opportunity to improve attendance, and written confirmation before funding is withdrawn. Attendance decisions relating to funding will be applied fairly and in line with Local Authority guidance.

11. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the **Headteacher** and **Governing Body**.

The next schedule review date is **May 2027**. However, if significant changes are made to WCC guidance for Early Years Providers this will be reviewed sooner.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to the school community.