

Bright Sparks



Childcare

Absent Child Policy & Procedure

At Bright Sparks we believe that good attendance is important, even for very young children: there are positive benefits to be gained from regular attendance, whatever the weekly pattern of childcare. This includes not only coming to every planned session, but also being there on time.

Benefits include the following:

Children who attend every planned session develop a feel for the rhythm of the week and gain a sense of security from the routine, even when the actual pattern or focus of their learning or activity may vary widely from week to week.

The development of secure attachments and positive relationships with staff and other children. Young children find it easier to build and sustain a range of social relationships when they regularly attend their childcare setting, according to the pattern agreed with the family.

For some families, particularly at times of stress, the child's regular attendance allows parents/carers to concentrate on other things and helps them enjoy spending time with the child, when he or she is at home. It also gives the child a sense of security and stability which is invaluable to their emotional development.

Children who rarely miss sessions at their Early Years settings 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 staff 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. They may also miss vital information or activities.

Regular attendance, on time, helps many young children to separate from their parents/carers at the start of the session and settle more readily into daily life in their Early Years setting. Regular attendance will help with separation anxiety which commonly affects young children.

Practitioners 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 this is the next day or later in the week. If those sessions are missed this can exasperate gaps in learning and development.

Procedures:

Parents are asked to inform us on the day of absence if your child is sick or not attending for any reason. We ask that you let us know in person or by phone as emails or text messages may not be read in time.

If your child's absence is planned (e.g. holidays or medical appointments) we ask that you inform us a month in advance for holidays and 48 hours in advance for appointments.

If we have not heard from a parent/carer by the end of the day we will seek to contact you by phone. Where we are unable to make contact we will phone the first emergency contact on your child's registration documentation, this will be a discreet phone call where the emergency contact is not given any details of your child's absence but they will be asked to let you know that we are trying to contact you and to ask you to make contact with us as soon as possible.

If we are concerned about the welfare of any child, we will immediately follow our Safeguarding procedures on the first day of absence.

Monitoring Absences:

Where there are frequent absences, we will discuss this with you and aim to work with you to enable your child to attend as regularly as possible.

Please note that for funded children, children's attendance is monitored regularly by Plymouth City Council for the purpose of entitlement to Early Years funding and details and use of government funded hours may be passed on at their request.

Signed _____ Review date: _____