

Document No:	NU015
Issue No.	2
Issue Date:	2026-09-29
Review Date:	2027-09-29
Originator:	Nursery Manager
Responsibility:	Director of Student Services and Marketing

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY – COLLEGE NURSERIES

Leicester College Day Nursery
EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Absences.
Providers must follow up on 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.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. We take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted, and they do not miss their entitlements and opportunities. At the very least, good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family. There are several reasons why a child may be absent from a setting. In most cases it is reasonable to expect that parents/carers alert the setting as soon as possible, or in the case of appointments and holidays give adequate notice.

2. PROCEDURES

- 2.1. The nursery Designated Safeguarding Leads adheres to Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from the provision.
- 2.2. The Attendance and Absence Policy is shared with parents and carers, and they are advised that they should contact the setting within one hour of the time the child would have been expected, to advise of their absence.
- 2.3. If a child who normally attends the nursery fails to arrive and no contact has been received from their parents or carers, or if the child is absent for a prolonged period, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will assess the

situation based on the individual child's personal circumstances. The DSL will then decide when to initiate contact to seek an explanation for the absence and ensure the child is safe and well.

- 2.4. Efforts to contact the child's parents, carers, or other designated emergency contacts must continue until a satisfactory explanation for the child's absence or situation is obtained.
- 2.5. If no contact is made with the parents/carers and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence i.e. through a named contact on the child's registration form, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on the child's personal file and is followed up by the manager.
- 2.6. In cases involving a Leicester College employee or student, it may be possible to obtain information regarding their absence directly from a Leicester College source. However, any information received must still be recorded and followed up, in accordance with established procedures.
- 2.7. If contact has not been made, and we have any reason for concern about a child's wellbeing and welfare, children's services will be contacted for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services may be contacted as per LSP procedures.
- 2.8. All absences are recorded on the child's personal file with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.
- 2.9. Absence records will be monitored to identify patterns and trends in children's attendance. An understanding of the child's and family's individual circumstances will inform the setting's judgement in determining what constitutes a 'prolonged period of absence'.
- 2.10. Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.
- 2.11. **If at any time further information becomes known that gives cause for concern, nursery procedure 'Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns' is immediately followed.**

3. SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE CHILDREN

- 3.1. The designated safeguarding lead or key person attempts to contact the parents/carers to establish why the child is absent. If contact is made and a valid reason given, the information is recorded in the child's file.

- 3.2. Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
- 3.3. If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation and follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the designated person contacts the relevant professionals and informs them of the situation.
- 3.4. If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- 3.5. If at any time information becomes known that gives cause for concern, our nursery Safeguarding Children, Young people and Vulnerable adults procedures are followed immediately.

4. SAFEGUARDING

- 4.1. If a child misses three consecutive sessions and it has not been possible to make contact, and we have any reason for concern about a child's wellbeing and welfare, the designated person calls Social Care and makes a referral if advised. Contact with Social Care may be made sooner if there are concerns for a child's wellbeing or welfare
- 4.2. If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated person attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged on the nursery Safeguarding incident reporting form, and Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.
- 4.3. Leicester College DSL is informed and kept updated.

5. POOR/IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE

- 5.1. While attendance at an early years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up.
 - 5.1.1. In the first instance the nursery manager will discuss a child's attendance with their parents/carers to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parents/carers to offer support where possible.

- 5.1.2. If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the nursery manager must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.
 - 5.1.3. Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor/irregular attendance at the nursery is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.
- 5.2. In the case of funded children, the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, considering the reason for the absence and impact on the nursery. The nursery manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting.

6. COMMUNICATION AND REVIEW

- 6.1. This policy will be made available and Staff Net the College website and reviewed at least every three years.