

# Lime Tree Nursery Attendance Policy

Date of Adoption: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

At Lime Tree Nursery we believe 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. When a child has a part-time place, regular attendance is especially important.

This policy outlines the procedures to promote and monitor attendance and those that will be followed if a child is absent from the setting. We wish to create a culture where good attendance and punctuality is valued by all and so will work with parents to work together to remove barriers to attendance. We recognise that sometimes families may need extra support with attendance, therefore effective communication is essential between parents and the key person, who may be able to offer advice and support or referrals to other agencies who may be able to help, such as the health visiting team or early help.

To promote good attendance, we will:

- Share our attendance expectations with parents prior to admission, including conveying clearly to parents that regular attendance and punctuality
  - Is expected
  - Is in the child's best interest, and
  - That unexplained absence will be investigated
- Keep records of attendance to enable monitoring and evaluation so that emerging patterns are addressed
- Foster a positive attitude to good attendance by quickly responding to children's absence while also recognising and celebrating, 'good' and 'improving' attendance. Recognition may include verbal praise, stickers, certificates, or sharing achievements with parents through our eylog app.
- Target attendance where there has been an issue and aim to set in place strategies and techniques to support improvement.

Whilst attendance at nursery is not statutory, authorised absence will be granted in the following circumstances, where parents inform the nursey on the first day of absence or prior to the first day of absence:

- Illness of the child
- Illness of siblings or parents
- Bereavement
- Health services appointments
- Holidays, including extended visits to family overseas
- Family time/days out
- Religious observance
- Emergency or exceptional circumstances.

## **Monitoring attendance**

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 stop attending. While we are aware that attendance is not statutory, we recognise 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 those who are considered to be vulnerable learners.

## **Parents**

Parents are required to record their child's absence by using our eylog app. There are 3 options:

- Holiday
- Sick
- Absent

Parents are requested to do this in the morning of the first absence, or in advance if it is a planned holiday. The dates must be added and the notes/description section completed with further details.

Nursery staff will then record this onto the register.

## **Procedures to record, monitor and follow up non-attendance**

Whilst we understand that children's drop off times will vary due to reasons including, parents work schedule, dropping siblings to school, transport means etc, it is important that children get to experience most of their nursery session. And therefore, children who come to nursery late, a discussion will be held with parents to establish reasons for lateness and will provide the opportunity to outline reasons for earlier starts to the session.

If a child is absent and we are informed of their reason for absence this will be recorded on the register.

## **Unexplained Absences**

If a child is absent without notification by the start of their session, we will attempt to contact the parent/carer using the primary contact number provided. If we are unable to reach the parent/carer, we will attempt to contact the secondary emergency contact provided. All contact attempts and outcomes will be recorded in the child's attendance record. If we are unable to make contact and have concerns about the child's welfare, we will follow our safeguarding procedures.

## **Prolonged Absences**

- A prolonged absence is defined as 2 consecutive sessions of absence without a valid explanation. If a child is absent for a prolonged period, we will:

- make repeated attempts to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts (we require **two additional emergency contacts** for your child)
- send written communication (e.g. text message, email, letter) to the parent/carer.
- undertake a home visit where necessary and a contact postcard will be posted through your door if there is no response.
- consult with our safeguarding lead if there are concerns about the child's welfare.
- If there continues to be no contact and there is cause for concern, the health visiting service and/or Birmingham Children's Trust will be contacted to ascertain if family support may be needed. In more urgent cases, the police may be contacted to carry out a welfare check.

### **Safeguarding**

Staff are trained to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns. Any concerns about a child's welfare will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead. We will follow our safeguarding procedures and work with relevant authorities as necessary.

### **Leaving the nursery**

If you decide to withdraw your child from the nursery, please see our Parent Contract and Terms and Conditions for notice periods. This will ensure that we remove your child from our systems and therefore will not expect them to attend.

If your child is transitioning to another early years provider or school, please provide us with the details of the new setting so that we can transfer essential information.