



Harvard Park Policies and Procedures:  
**Attendance, Punctuality and Absences**

## **8. Attendance, Punctuality and Absences**

### **Aim**

We aim to promote good attendance and punctuality in partnership with parents/carers in early years, ensuring that good habits are formed early so that children are school ready. We recognise the importance of monitoring attendance and will encourage families to participate in early education by ensuring that children take advantage of their funded entitlement hours, if eligible.

### **Rationale**

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, 2025) defines that providers must work in partnership with parents/carers to promote learning and development of all children in their care and ensure they are ready for school. As stated in Inspecting safeguarding in early years, educators and skills settings, Ofsted expects Early years providers to promote good attendance within their settings.

Regular attendance has a positive impact on all aspects of a young child's learning and development:

- Regular attendance and good punctuality are important for maximising achievement and obtaining the greatest benefit from education.
- Good relationships with children and their families are vital in encouraging regular attendance and punctuality.
- Children settle well and want to attend settings when they feel valued and have a sense of belonging.
- Good habits of attendance and punctuality are skills for adult life.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

We promote good attendance and punctuality by:

- Ensuring children attend for the expected hours, arriving and leaving at the stated session times.
- Recording arrival and departure times on the paper signing in sheet.
- Recording late arrivals or early collections on the register, including the reason.
- Requiring parents/carers to inform the setting if they are going to be late or absent. This can be via online communications or calling.
- Communicating with parents/carers and following up on non-notification of absences and poor punctuality as part of promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Following up consistent poor attendance and punctuality, making record of it as appropriate.

We take into consideration patterns and trends as well as their personal circumstances to make professional judgement when deciding if an absence is considered to be prolonged.

Consideration is also given to the child's vulnerability, parent's/carer's vulnerability and their home

life. Any concerns we may have will be referred to local children's social care services and/or a police welfare check requested.

### **Absence Procedures**

Attendance records will be monitored regularly. This attendance policy supports and should be used in line with our safeguarding policy if a child's attendance is becoming a concern. The following will commence:

- We will inform parents/carers about this process and discuss how their child's attendance can be improved.
- Ensure children are signed in and recorded on the registers promptly.
- Manager's will listen to absence calls, read absence emails and check ParentMail for registered absences.
- Bring together registers, lates, absence calls - produce the list of children absent with no explanation (we will double check in rooms before we start calling).
- On the first day of absence, we will start by calling families with those children who are absent without explanation; we will call everyone on the contact list until we get an answer. We will leave messages if there is a voicemail option. However, we will not leave it at that.
- We will message via electronic email to any given email address, use the ParentMail messaging system encouraging registered numbers to get in contact with us as soon as possible and use our EyLog system to send an email to any registered email address.
- We might get an overseas ring tone and consider if the family are taking a holiday, they haven't informed us about.
- We will call the contact list at least twice.
- By this stage, if we have a good contact list (4 numbers minimum) we will probably have a reply.
- If we have been unsuccessful at receiving a reply, we will consider whether any children have additional agency support, such as a social worker, and we will contact them.
- We will explore any internal intelligence within the setting to find out if anyone knows the family.
- Make a prompt home visit where possible and if required.
- If we cannot get an answer, we will refer immediately to Hounslow Children's services Front Door/ Police and request a welfare call (if we can see family inside the home avoiding our knock, we will not refer - unless we think the children are at risk of significant harm).
- All records of absences are recorded in our Absence Record folder, this includes single day absence as well as weekly absences and holiday dates, even if we have been informed prior.

### **Children / Families accessing free entitlement places**

*What should I do if a child registers for a free entitlement place and they do not show up on the first day?*

If you have claimed the free entitlement for a child who does not attend on the first day contact the parent/ carer to ask if the child will still be taking up the place. Find out the date they intend to start instead, if at all, and then make the appropriate adjustment via the claims process later in the term.

However, if the parent/ carer keeps giving you a start date (or you are unable to contact them) and they do not show up by the end of the second week, you must write to the parent/ carer to inform them that their free entitlement place has been withdrawn. Copies of all correspondence should be kept in the child's records (in compliance with United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR)). Ensure that an adjustment is made via the claims process.

*What are the steps we will take for unnotified absences of children with a funded entitlement place?*

In addition to the procedure above

1. Ask the parent/carer for the child's expected return date.
2. If the child still does not return on the expected date, we will follow up with another telephone call and if the family are known to services, we will inform the support worker that the child has still not returned.
3. Work with the support worker to try and re-engage the child again.
4. If the child still does not return, we will agree with the support worker what the funding end date should be. This is to give services any additional time they need to try and re-engage the family. Once the date has been agreed, we will send a letter to the family to inform them that the free entitlement place has been withdrawn.
5. If we do re-engage with the parent, we will discuss/ consider a reduction in the number of sessions per week or a change in the session times if it would help with the child's attendance. We will make every effort to encourage and support improved attendance.
6. The parent/carer will be advised that any further absences may result in the funding being withdrawn. We will continue monitoring attendance and contact the support worker if the absence continues or the attendance remains low.

**NB:** If you are aware that the child's place was brokered via the 2-Year-Old Early Learning Officer please contact her and follow the steps above. Contact information can be found on the last page of this policy.

*If no support worker is in place a provider should take the following steps:*

1. Contact Hounslow Children's Services Front Door to check if the child is involved with any service that you might be unaware of.
2. If you find out that the child is involved with a service, contact their support worker and discuss their attendance and follow the steps above.
3. If there is no support worker, contact the parent/carer by telephone on the first or second day of an un-notified absence.

4. If there is no response to your telephone call keep trying to make contact at regular intervals both via email and phone calls.
5. If there is still no response, please contact the Early Years Entitlement Officer to discuss the funding end date – contact details can be found on the last page of this policy.
6. You will then need to write to the parent/carer to advise them on the funding end date.
7. You must add this child to the adjustment form.
8. If there is a response to your telephone call, ask the parent/carer the child's expected return date.
9. If the child does return the parent/carer should be advised that any further absences may result in the free entitlement place being withdrawn. Please keep monitoring attendance and if it continues to be poor, send a letter to the family to advise them that the free entitlement place will be withdrawn if they do not attend regularly. (The Early Years and Childcare Service can send a letter on your behalf, if you would prefer this then please contact the Early Years Entitlement Officer).
10. If absence continues, please contact the Early Years Entitlement Officer to discuss the funding end date.
11. You will then need to write to the parent/carer to advise them on the free entitlement place end date.
12. You must add this child to the adjustment form.

If funding is withdrawn- we will be paid for a 2-week notice period from when a decision has been made to withdraw the entitlement.

*What is an acceptable number of weeks a child may take a holiday and still receive the entitlement?*

**Term time, Pre-School (non-stretched offer)** – It is not acceptable for a child to take a holiday during term time just as it is in schools.

**All year round, Day Nursery (stretched offer)** – it is acceptable for a child to take up to 6 weeks holiday over a 12-month period.

If there is an exceptional circumstance, please contact Early Education Funding Team to discuss.

### **Supporting Families**

We recognise that sometimes families may need extra support with attendance and punctuality, therefore good communication is essential between them and their child's keyperson and setting. We will work with parents/carers to support a child's good attendance and punctuality.

We have an attendance policy which we share with parent's/carer's. It includes our expectations for reporting child absences and the actions we will take if a child is absent without notification or a pro-longed period of times, for example, implementing the setting's safeguarding procedures

following up with the parent's/carer's and contacting emergency contacts if parent's and/or carers are not contactable.

### **Safeguarding**

We all have a duty to keep children safe. If we are concerned about the welfare of a child who is absent, we reserve the right to contact Children's Services.

Children's Services:

- If the child/ren are open to Children's Services and have an allocated Social Worker- **020 8583 6600** (option 2 followed by option 1)
- If worried about a child, to report concerns- **020 8583 6600** (option 2 followed by option 3)
- Email: [childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk)

Out of hours (after 5pm weekdays or weekends)- **020 8583 2222**.

For further information please contact:

Early Education Funding Team

[earlyyearsandchildcare@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyearsandchildcare@hounslow.gov.uk)

**020 8583 6421**

Free Entitlement and Brokerage Support Officer: Nicola West [nicola.west@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.west@hounslow.gov.uk)

**020 8583 2635**

This Policies and Procedures pack was adjusted by Harvard Park.

Date meeting was held on **30/04/2026**

Signed on behalf of the Directors and Proprietors

**Nicki Saunders and Tracey Milstead**