

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Last Reviewed: 20/08/2025

Next Review: 20/08/2026

1.0 Policy Statement

At Shooting Stars Nursery, we believe that regular attendance and punctuality are essential for children's learning, wellbeing, and development. Consistent routines help children to feel secure, build strong relationships, and fully benefit from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum.

While we recognise that children may occasionally be absent due to illness or family circumstances, poor attendance or frequent lateness can disrupt a child's progress and may also raise safeguarding concerns. This policy sets out how we monitor and respond to attendance issues in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework (2025).

2.0 Our Legal Obligations

This policy is based on:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (DfE, 2025), section 3 – Safeguarding and Welfare
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2023)
- Local Authority procedures for children missing education

3.0 Procedures

Attendance is recorded on Famly at the start of each session. Parents inform us of absence via Famly, phone or email; the reason is logged on Famly the same day. Where a child has not arrived by session start and no message has been received, we attempt contact within one hour of expected arrival and make a second attempt if needed. If we receive no contact from parents during our attempts, emergency contacts will be called promptly. Registers and any contact notes are maintained on Famly and retained in line with our Data Protection Policy.

If absence is unexplained for three consecutive days, or a pattern of irregular attendance/frequent lateness emerges, the DSL reviews the case. We contact parents to understand barriers and agree supportive steps; this may include a calmer start routine, a brief key-person handover at the door, or a short-term settling plan. Where concerns persist or we cannot make contact and the child's welfare may be at risk, the DSL follows safeguarding procedures and may consult Duty and Advice.

We do not use sanctions for attendance. Our approach is relational and supportive; we reinforce positive routines with clear communication and praise. Fees during absence are charged in accordance with our Fee Policy.

Records kept on Famly include:

- The child's name, hours of attendance and key person (daily)
- Absence reason provided by parents
- Attempts to contact and outcomes
- Any actions agreed with parents and, where applicable, advice from Duty and Advice/Local Authority.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Nursery Manager: Makes sure registers are completed accurately; oversees contact attempts for non-arrival; agrees any attendance support plans; liaises with the Local Authority for funded places/irregular attendance; checks records are kept properly.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Reviews unexplained or persistent absence/lateness; links attendance to safeguarding; escalates to Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) where needed; records safeguarding actions.

All staff: Take registers on time; log absences and reasons the same day; try initial parent contact if a child hasn't arrived; flag patterns or concerns to the Manager/DSL promptly.

Parents/Carers: Tell us about absence before the session (Famly/phone/email); give the reason; keep contact details up to date; be reachable; work with us on any agreed support plan.