

Attendance Policy

Reviewed: 18 September 2026 · Next review due: 18 September 2027

At Circadian Nest Nursery we believe good attendance plays a fundamental role in supporting children's learning, wellbeing and safety. Establishing regular routines for young children supports the settling-in process and strengthens their sense of security and belonging. Where a child holds a part-time place, regular attendance matters especially.

This policy sets out how we promote and monitor attendance, and the procedure we follow when a child is absent. We want to create a culture in which good attendance and punctuality are valued, and we will work with parents to remove barriers to attendance.

We recognise that families sometimes need extra support. Open communication between parents and the child's key person is essential, and we may be able to offer advice, or a referral to other services such as the health visiting team, portage, or early help.

Promoting good attendance

To promote good attendance we will:

- Share our attendance expectations with parents before admission, making clear that regular attendance and punctuality are expected, are in the child's best interest, and that unexplained absence will be investigated.
- Keep accurate records of attendance so that patterns can be monitored and emerging concerns addressed.
- Respond promptly to a child's absence, while also recognising and celebrating good and improving attendance.
- Work with families where attendance has become an issue, agreeing strategies to support improvement.

Authorised absence

Attendance at nursery is not statutory. Absence will be treated as authorised in the following circumstances, provided parents inform the nursery before, or on the first day of, the absence:

- Illness of the child.
- Illness of a sibling or parent.
- Bereavement.
- Health service appointments.
- Holidays, including extended visits to family overseas.
- Religious observance.
- Emergency or exceptional circumstances.

Where a child is absent because of illness or infection, parents should also refer to our Sickness and Illness Policy, which sets out exclusion periods for contagious conditions.

Monitoring attendance

Records of children's attendance are accurately kept and regularly monitored so that we can identify patterns and potential concerns.

All managers and staff are alert to the possibility that a child who stops attending may be at risk of abuse or neglect. Although attendance is not statutory, we recognise that non-attendance can be an indicator of wider concerns, and appropriate action will be taken. We are particularly attentive to the attendance of children who may be vulnerable.

Where attendance gives rise to a safeguarding concern, staff must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Recording, monitoring and following up non-attendance

Registration is completed at the start of each session, within 10 minutes of the session start time, recording attendance or non-attendance.

Where a reason has been given

If a child is absent, the reason is recorded on Baby's Days, whether the parent told us in advance or we found out by calling.

Where no explanation has been received

If a child is absent without explanation, we will telephone the main carer on both priority and secondary numbers to establish the reason. If no contact is made, we will follow this escalation:

- Contact any second main carer, on both priority and secondary numbers.
- Contact the first emergency contact.
- Contact the second emergency contact.
- If contact cannot be made by telephone, a home visit may be carried out and a contact card posted through the door if there is no response.
- If there continues to be no contact and there is cause for concern, we will contact the health visiting service and/or Children's and Family Services to establish whether family support is needed.
- In urgent cases, the police may be asked to carry out a welfare check.

We hold at least two emergency contacts for every child. Parents must inform us immediately of any change to contact details.

Prolonged absence

Where a child is absent for a prolonged period, the Nursery Manager will contact the family to establish the reason, offer support, and agree a plan for the child's return. Where a prolonged absence is unexplained, or where there is any concern for the child's welfare, the matter will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, where appropriate, to Children's Services.

Leaving the nursery

If you decide to withdraw your child, please refer to our Parent Contract and Terms and Conditions for the applicable notice period. This allows us to remove your child from our systems so that we do not expect them to attend.

If your child is moving to another early years provider or to school, please give us the details of the new setting so that we can transfer essential information, such as their unique reference number or funding eligibility code.

Related policies

This policy should be read alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, our Arrivals, Departures and Uncollected Child Policy, our Missing Child Policy, and our Sickness and Illness Policy.

Adopted (initial)	Reviewed	Next review	Signed on behalf of the nursery
1 February 2026	18 September 2026	18 September 2027	Suhail Farooq, Director