



Early Years Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Even when you're very small, good attendance makes a BIG difference ...

Aim

Riverside Pre-school CIO aims to promote good attendance and punctuality in partnership with parents and carers in early years, ensuring that good habits are formed early so that children are school ready.

Rationale

Regular early years attendance is important for all children as it is only through regular, consistent routines that children build up the secure attachments they need for healthy development.

Research shows that regular part-time attendance from the age of two in a good quality early years setting has a lasting impact on children's social development and intellectual attainment throughout school. (Research Brief RBF15-03 The Effective Provision of Pre-school Education Project: Findings from the Pre-school Period. Sylva et al, IOE, 2003).

Regular attendance has a positive impact on all aspects of a young child's learning and development. A regular routine supports the young child to feel settled and secure. Unsettled children have higher stress levels which, in turn, prevent them from being able to benefit fully from the learning opportunities available.

We believe that:

- 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 key skills for adult life

Procedures

We promote good attendance and punctuality by:

- Ensuring children attend for the expected hours, arriving and leaving at the stated pre-school session times
- Recording arrival and departure times in Family and on the paper register (emergency roll-call)
- Recording late arrivals or early collections on the child's Family account and including the reason
- Monitoring late arrival and early collection via the paper register
- Requiring parents to call the setting if they are going to be late or absent
- Requiring parents to report sickness by 9.30am, which is then recorded in Family, on the paper register and in the setting's diary
- Requiring parents to complete a 'holiday request' via Family if they are planning a holiday during term time so this can be recorded accurately in our registers
- Monitoring children's attendance via Family
- Communicating with parents 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 and making a record of it as appropriate
- Making contact with parents/carers and, if appropriate, using the contact emergency details they have provided to try and establish why their child is absent

There will be no fee reductions or reimbursements for any child absenteeism.

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 key person. We will work with parents/carers to support a child's good attendance and punctuality. Where children's attendance is poor and not improving, we will talk to them about the available support from their local children's centre such as implementing bedtime routines or attending parenting classes.

Safeguarding

We all have a duty to keep children safe and protect them from harm and very poor attendance can be an indication of neglect and seen as a safeguarding issue. If we are concerned about the welfare of a child who is absent, we reserve the right to contact Children's Services.

Missed hours and absence for funded hours

Southampton City Council Funding Team is keen to ensure that families are correctly using all the entitlement they are claiming and are requesting that we monitor unattended sessions whether holiday, sickness or unexplained. Southampton City Council will only fund a child's place due to holiday for two weeks. For holidays of longer than two weeks parents/carers will be required to pay to cover any further missed sessions. We CANNOT keep a place open without this payment. If a funded child is continually absent from particular sessions, we will discuss this with the parent/carer and, if the situation does not improve, a reduction will be made in accordance with Southampton City Council's funding conditions.

Changes to sessions attended

If you wish to reduce the number of your child's sessions, or are leaving the pre-school, we require written notification at least four weeks before the end of any given term. Failure to give sufficient notice will result in pre-school losing vital funding for which the parent will have to pay.

Withdrawing a place

We will make every effort to support good attendance and punctuality, as suggested above. However, if there are no other indicators of concern or vulnerability and your child has failed to attend for four consecutive weeks or more without a justifiable reason, we may withdraw your child's place. The process for formally withdrawing a child's place is as follows:

- We will attempt to contact the family twice weekly to seek a justifiable explanation (by telephone or home visit and followed up by email), including, of course, first day calling
- We will send a recorded delivery letter during the third week to invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the situation and warning them of the action that will be taken after the fourth week
- We will continue to attempt twice weekly contact by phone and email
- We will send a recorded delivery letter in the final week, explaining that the place will be withdrawn on a specific date

Transition

If you decide to move your child to another setting, please inform us so that we can remove them from our register and send the records to the new setting to ensure a smooth transition.

Linked to

Safeguarding Children policy

Nursery Education and Fee policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Riverside Pre-school CIO held on.....6th January 2021.....

Review date.....January 2022.....

Signed on behalf of the pre-school..........

Role of signatory.....Co-chair.....

