



Play Days Absent Child Policy Sept 2026

At Play Days, we are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, & consistent development of every child. Regular attendance is vital for children to fully benefit from the experiences we offer. This policy outlines the expectations & procedures surrounding child absence from the setting & our requirement under the EYFS 2026

REPORTING AN ABSENCE

If your child is unable to attend nursery on their scheduled day, you must notify us **by 9:30am on the first day of absence** & continue to inform us **daily** for the duration of the absence. You can report absences via:

- Telephone- 0116 225223 -Nursery
- **Telephone 0116 2788782 Academy**
- Nursery in a Box - Parent Portal
- Email play.days.academy@outlook.com
Playdaysnursery1234@outlook.com

UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES

Children's attendance is monitored closely & is a pre-requisite of early years funding, & most importantly safeguarding requirements.

If we do not receive an **explanation for your child's absence by 10:00am for a morning or Full day session or by 2:00pm for an afternoon session, we will contact you** first, then **work through your emergency contacts** in the order you have given them on our Emergency Contact Record, **until we know your child is safe.**

If we cannot reach you, or any of your emergency contacts, **by the end of the first day of absence & still have no explanation, the Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will notify Children's Social Care, or ask the Police to carry out a Welfare Check, in accordance with the Children Act 2004.**

Where we already have a concern about a child, or a child has an **Emergency Contingency Risk Assessment** in place, the DSL **will not wait until the end of the day; they will act as soon as it is clear that no-one can be reached.**

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews have highlighted cases where a child came to serious harm because a parent was taken ill, or there was an emergency at home, & no-one followed up the child's absence.

The sole purpose of this policy is to protect the safety & welfare of the child & their family.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

The EYFS requires us to hold emergency contacts for every child & recommends that we hold more than two. At Play Days we require:

- a **minimum of three emergency contacts** for every child, recorded on our Emergency Contact Record (PD-ECR-SEP26)
- **at least two of these contacts must live or work within 30 minutes of the setting & be able to come & collect your child**

- every contact to have agreed to be named, with mobile, home & work numbers (including extension numbers) given where they have them
- contact numbers are test-called when the form is checked & reviewed with you each term
- you must tell us straight away if any contact's details or circumstances change

If you cannot give us two local contacts, please speak to the Manager. We will complete an **Emergency Contingency Risk Assessment (PD-ECRA-SEP26)** with you straight away, so there is an agreed plan in place before an emergency happens, not during one.

In the **event of a serious incident in or around the setting, including evacuation or invacuation (lockdown)**, or if you were to have a medical emergency, or had no way of getting to us or letting us know, & we could not reach any of your emergency contacts, **we are legally obliged to contact Children's Social Care and/or the Police so that your child is kept safe & cared for. This is not a judgement on your family; it is our duty of care to your child.**

POLICY AIMS & PRINCIPLES

This policy aligns with the vision & aims of Play Days by:

- Encouraging parents, carers, & staff to prioritise attendance to maximise children's learning & development.
- Outlining clear procedures for parental involvement & attendance communication.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Regular & punctual attendance is crucial for children's learning & wellbeing & an **audit requirement for Early Years Funding allocation by the Local Authority**
- Children should aim to arrive on time every day the setting is open, unless absence is unavoidable-
- Unjustified or unexplained absences will be marked as **unauthorised** & may result in withdrawal of funding
- Open communication between parents & nursery is essential to ensure the very best outcomes for children.
- All absences will be classified by the setting, not the parent/carer.

Our Ofsted registration, the EYFS 2026 & Early Years Funding Agreement with the DfE, all require detailed tracking of children's attendance, which contributes to our overall setting evaluation.

Your support in maintaining strong attendance is vital & we thank you in anticipation of your co-operation!

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Notify the nursery of your child's absence by 9:30am am session or Full day / 2:00pm for an afternoon session** on the first day and each day following.
- Use telephone, email, or the Parent portal on Nursery in a Box, to report absence.
- Work in partnership with the nursery to address any barriers to regular attendance.
- Attend meetings arranged to discuss ongoing or frequent absences.
- Give us at least three emergency contacts, two of them local, & keep their details up to date.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- Complete registers at the beginning of each morning & afternoon session.
- Follow up on unexplained absences by contacting the parent by **10:00am**.
- If the parent cannot be reached, work through the emergency contacts in order & record every call on the Child Absence Log.
- Mark absences as **unauthorised** if no explanation is provided.
- Report persistent or concerning absences to the Manager & Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Children with an Emergency Contingency Risk Assessment are flagged on the register; **any unexplained absence for these children goes straight to the DSL**.
- Check at registration & each term that every child has three emergency contacts, two of them local; if not, tell the Manager the same day.
- The Manager will take appropriate action and may contact Children's Services if necessary.

TYPES OF ABSENCES

- **Authorised Absences** may include illness, religious observance, or holidays (agreed in advance).
- **Unauthorised Absences** include no explanation or unjustified reasons.

Attendance records are regularly monitored. If your child's absence rate reaches **15% or more**, a meeting with the Nursery Manager will be arranged to discuss the situation.

ARRIVAL TIMES & COLLECTIONS

To help prepare children for school and support their routine:

- Morning registration & circle time is at **9:00am, we are open from 7.45**
- Afternoon registration & circle time is at **1:00pm**

Late arrivals can disrupt the rooms, unsettle children & cause them to miss out on valuable activities such as registration & circle time. Please ensure your child arrives promptly for the start of their session.

Play Days Nursery & Academy is required to meet all Statutory Requirements under the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2026)**

This policy was produced by Imelda Rylatt
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