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Play, Learn and Grow Together – Our Passion is Their Future

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## Attendance Policy

### Policy Statement

At St Helen's Pre-School, we believe that regular and consistent attendance is essential for children to feel safe, build secure attachments with their key person, and make the most of their early education. This is especially important during the early stages of a child's development, where routines and relationships provide a foundation for emotional wellbeing and learning.

We work closely with parents to promote regular attendance and follow up on absences in line with our safeguarding responsibilities. We are also required to follow funding regulations and our own Charging Policy when children are absent from their agreed sessions.

### Aims

- To support children's wellbeing and learning by encouraging consistent attendance across all age groups.
- To respond promptly and appropriately to any absence.
- To monitor patterns of absence and work with families to understand and support any challenges.
- To fulfil requirements linked to Early Education Entitlement (EEE) and fee-paying sessions as outlined in our Charging Policy.
- To ensure safeguarding concerns linked to non-attendance are identified and escalated.
- To ensure all parents/carers have full knowledge of this policy and agree with the terms at the point of enrolment.

### Procedures

#### Reporting Absences

Parents must notify the setting by 9:00am (morning sessions) or 12:00pm (afternoon sessions) if their child will be absent for any reason.

Absences should be reported via phone (01603 749901), text (07745 810941), or email ([preschool.sthelens@gmail.com](mailto:preschool.sthelens@gmail.com)) with a clear reason (e.g. illness, family emergency, holiday, appointment).

Where no reason is provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised and followed up.

## Attendance Policy

### **First-Day Contact and Safeguarding**

If a child is absent without notice, staff will contact the parent/carer as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

If no response is received, we will try additional emergency contacts.

Where there are concerns for a child's wellbeing, we will act in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This may include contacting the Local Authority or other professionals. Regular attendance supports safeguarding, especially for children identified as vulnerable or with additional needs.

### **Absence Due to Illness**

Children must not attend the setting if they are unwell. We follow our Illness and Exclusion Policy, including a 48-hour exclusion for sickness or diarrhoea.

For prolonged or recurring illness, a healthcare plan or medical evidence may be requested to support continued absence and appropriate care planning.

We ask parents to keep in touch during periods of illness, especially when absence continues for more than three days.

### **Holidays and Planned Absences**

Families must notify us in writing if their child will be away due to holidays (Appendix A) or other planned absences.

Absence without contact or extended time off may lead to the child's place being reviewed.

### **Attendance Expectations and Charging**

Funded places (including working family entitlements) are subject to regular attendance. Excessive absence may be reported to the Local Authority and may result in funding being withdrawn.

Parents claiming funding entitlement are required to pay full fees for any absences, whether planned or unplanned, including sickness or holidays, in order to retain their child's place at the Pre-School. Parents who pay for their child's sessions and are not entitled to funding may request a session swap due to absence, subject to availability, within one calendar month. In addition, these parents may request a 50% deduction for planned absences when at least one calendar month's notice is provided; however, no refunds will be issued.

Where a child has both funded and paid sessions, absence will be monitored and charged according to the relevant agreement.

We do not guarantee the continuation of a place if a child is absent for more than two consecutive weeks without prior agreement.

### **Monitoring and Persistent Absence**

We regularly monitor attendance for all children (Appendix B).

Persistent absence is defined as missing more than 10% of agreed sessions over a given period. Where persistent absence occurs, we will contact parents to offer support and may arrange a meeting with the Manager/DSL or SENCO to identify any needs or challenges.

We understand that for some families, attendance may be affected by health, disability, or other circumstances, and we aim to work in partnership to find reasonable solutions.

## Roles and Responsibilities

- Parents/Carers: To inform the setting of absences promptly and support regular attendance.
- Key Persons and Staff: To record attendance, follow up absences, and escalate any concerns appropriately.
- Manager/DSL/SENCO: To oversee attendance monitoring, liaise with the Local Authority where needed, and ensure compliance with safeguarding and funding expectations.

## Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

This policy has been adopted by St Helen's Pre-School

Signed on behalf of the setting by:

..... Chairperson

..... Manager

Date: August 2025

## Related Policies

This policy runs in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Charging Policy
- Illness and Exclusion Policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy
- Admissions and Settling-In Policy

## Relevant Guidance and Legislation

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Children Missing Education (DfE)
- Local Authority Funding Agreement
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

**Appendices** – Please note appendices are held at the Pre-School, please ask to view

- A. Children's Holiday Form
- B. Child Log

**St Helen's Pre-School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, students and volunteers to share this commitment.**