Child Attendance Policy

Policy created	01.10.2025	Version number	1.0
Last reviewed	01.11.2026	Next review date	01.11.2027

1. Our Commitment to Every Child

At Plymtree Pre-school, we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life. Regular attendance is the cornerstone of early learning, helping children build strong relationships, develop routines and fully engage with the experiences we offer. This policy reflects our commitment to nurturing each child's development – whatever their age - through consistent, meaningful participation in our setting.

2. Our Aims

We aim to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where attendance is encouraged and supported. Our approach is guided by the following principles of:

Promoting consistency: by encouraging regular attendance to support children's emotional security and learning progress.
Developing healthy habits and routines for life: having expectations that turning up and being on time is important and matters.
Early Identification: recognising patterns of absence early to offer timely support.
Safeguarding: Ensuring that attendance monitoring contributes to the safety and wellbeing of every child.
Working Together: Building strong partnerships with families to overcome barriers and celebrate progress.

3. Attendance Expectations

We expect all children to attend regularly and on time. We understand that life is unpredictable, that illness and family circumstances may occasionally prevent attendance, and we ask parents to:

- Inform us of absences by email, text, whatsapp message or telephone by 9.15 on the day of absence.
- Share the reason for absence clearly and honestly.
- Let us know in advance about planned absences, such as holidays or appointments.

For further details on attendance expectations and how they relate to the Early Years Entitlement funding, please refer to Devon County Council's Provider Agreement on the importance of regular attendance and how it may affect funding if a child is attending another provision or is absent for extended periods.

4. How We Monitor Attendance

In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory requirements we will:

- Track attendance weekly to identify trends and offer support where needed.
- Review patterns of absence to ensure no child is missing out.
- Define 'prolonged absence' (PA): defined as 3 consecutive days or sessions without contact.
- Report persistent absence concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, if necessary, to Devon's Front Door.

If a child is absent and we haven't heard from the family:

- Staff will contact the parent/carer by phone message or call on the first day of absence by 10.00am
- If no contact is made, they will try again later that day, first by phone, then by other means including email, SMS and whatsapp
- If still unsuccessful, staff will contact listed emergency contacts on registration form.

Having made reasonable efforts to contact the parent/carer and still being unable to speak with anyone with parental responsibility we will:

Escalate to the DSL for a safeguarding review.

Should the child return to the setting and no credible explanation is given for the absence we will use our professional judgement as to whether we will refer to the Devon Front Door.

5. Safeguarding Through Absence

Attendance is more than ticking off a number of children on a register; it can be an indicator of wellbeing. Unexplained or frequent absences may indicate a child or family needs support. We will:

- Follow up on absences promptly.
- Escalate concerns to safeguarding partners when necessary.
- Keep clear, confidential records of attendance and actions taken.

6. Supporting Families

We know that every family's circumstances are unique. When attendance becomes a concern, our first action is always to listen. We will:

- Arrange a friendly, non-judgmental meeting to explore the issues affecting attendance.
- Offer flexible, helpful solutions where possible, such as adjusted hours or support with routines.
- Connect families with external services if additional help is needed.

Our goal is to work together to do what's best for the child.

7. Holidays and Extended Leave

We discourage families from taking holidays during term times, as they can disrupt children's learning and relationships. We understand, however, that some situations may require flexibility, so we encourage open conversations about any planned leave.

8. Review and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in line with EYFS and Ofsted guidance. All staff are trained to implement this policy and receive training to implement this policy with compassion.

Document history

Date	Details of changes	Reviewed by
1.10.25	Policy created in line with EYFS Sept 2025 by Clare Livingstone (Setting Manager) version 1.0	Clare Livingstone
1.11.26	Policy reviewed – no updates	Clare Livingstone