59. Attendance Policy

Mini Adventures – Early Years Preschool

Applies to all children attending the setting, including children accessing funded early education entitlements.

Purpose and rationale

At an early age, continuity and consistency can contribute significantly to a child's sense of security, well-being, relationships and access to learning. Mini Adventures values regular attendance and punctuality and works with parents and carers to support children to attend consistently wherever possible.

Attendance at an early years setting is not compulsory in the same way as school attendance. However, where a child is registered with Mini Adventures, we expect parents and carers to support regular attendance in line with the sessions agreed in their contract and to notify us promptly of any absence.

Our aims

To promote regular and punctual attendance and help children develop routines that support their transition to school.

To create a culture in which attendance is valued while recognising children's individual circumstances and family needs.

To identify and respond promptly to unexplained, prolonged or concerning absence.

To work in partnership with parents and carers to identify and reduce barriers to attendance.

To ensure attendance is managed in an inclusive, non-discriminatory way and that reasonable adjustments are considered for disabled children and children with additional needs.

Reporting an absence

Parents and carers must contact Mini Adventures before the child's normal start time on the first day of absence, where reasonably possible. They should provide the reason for the absence and, where known, the expected duration. The setting will record the information and update the record if the expected return date changes.

Parents and carers should provide advance notice of planned appointments, holidays or other known absences. Planned absence may affect funded entitlement claims where this is governed by the relevant local authority funding agreement.

Where a child is absent without notification

If a child who is expected to attend does not arrive and no explanation has been received, staff will promptly attempt to contact the parent/carer.

If the parent/carer cannot be reached, the setting will use the emergency contacts recorded for the child, where appropriate.

Attempts to establish the child's whereabouts and welfare will be recorded, including the time and method of contact.

The setting will consider the child's individual circumstances, vulnerability, previous attendance patterns and any existing safeguarding information when deciding how urgently to escalate the matter.

If there is a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will follow the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures without delay.

Where appropriate, the setting may contact children's social care and/or request a police welfare check. The setting will not wait for a fixed number of days if the circumstances indicate an immediate safeguarding concern.

If the child has current involvement with children's social care or other relevant professionals, the setting will share information with the appropriate professional in accordance with safeguarding and information-sharing requirements.

Prolonged or repeated absence

There is no single number of days that automatically defines a prolonged absence for every child. Mini Adventures will use professional judgement, taking account of the child's vulnerability, the family's circumstances, the reason for absence and patterns or trends in attendance.

The manager/key person will discuss repeated or poor attendance with parents/carers to understand any barriers, such as illness, transport, family circumstances, anxiety or additional needs.

Where possible, the setting will work with the family and relevant professionals to identify practical support and reasonable adjustments.

Where attendance remains a concern, the manager and DSL will review whether an early help, multi-agency or safeguarding response is appropriate.

Where there are existing safeguarding concerns or a child protection plan, unexplained or concerning absence will be shared with the relevant professional without delay.

Punctuality

Children should arrive and be collected at the agreed times. Persistent lateness will be discussed with parents/carers because it can affect the child's experience,

routines and the safe organisation of the setting. We will seek to understand the reason for lateness and work with families where support is needed.

Attendance records and confidentiality

Mini Adventures maintains an accurate attendance record for all children.

Absence records will include the reason given, expected duration where known, contact attempts and relevant follow-up action.

Attendance and absence information is treated as confidential personal information and is handled in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and applicable data protection law.

Information will be shared where there is a lawful basis to do so, including where sharing is necessary to safeguard a child.

Funded early education

For children accessing a government-funded early education entitlement, attendance and absence will be recorded in accordance with the relevant Department for Education requirements and Leicestershire local authority funding arrangements. Funding may be affected by absence, changes to eligibility or other circumstances under the applicable funding rules. Parents/carers will be given information about the attendance expectations that apply to their child's funded place.

Safeguarding

Attendance monitoring is part of Mini Adventures' safeguarding arrangements. Unexplained, prolonged or changing patterns of absence may be an indicator that a child or family needs help or protection. Staff must report concerns to the DSL promptly and must not assume that absence is routine where there are safeguarding indicators.

Relevant legislation and guidance

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026 – particularly paragraphs 3.11 and 3.12 on child absences and attendance policies.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

Information Sharing to Safeguard Children and Young People – current statutory guidance and applicable information-sharing law.

Equality Act 2010, including duties relating to disability discrimination and reasonable adjustments.

Applicable Leicestershire County Council early years funding and provider guidance.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements or funding requirements change.

Mini Adventures | Adopted: 20/09/2026 | Review: 20/09/2027