

# St Marychurch Pre-school

## Attendance Policy

### **Statement of intent**

It is our intention to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted and they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities provided by the setting.

### **Aim**

We aim to ensure that all children maintain good attendance at the setting, in order to achieve good outcomes for their wellbeing and learning. We are also aware that in some cases good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family.

### **Methods**

St Marychurch Pre-school expects parents/carers to inform the setting as soon as possible, or in the case of appointments and holidays to give adequate notice (at least 4 weeks) of a child being absent from the setting. Parents will be asked to complete a Holiday form and are made aware of the local authorities procedures with regards to claiming back funding and any charges that may apply. Parents are required to contact the setting within one hour of the time the child would have been expected to advise of their absence or leave a message on the answer phone or email. The Designated Safeguarding leads will also adhere to Torbay Safeguarding Children's Partnership (TSCP), requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from the setting.

We understand there are a number of reasons that a child may be absent from a setting but should a child who normally attends fails to arrive and no contact has been received from their parents, the designated person, takes immediate action to contact them to seek an explanation for the absence and to be assured that the child is safe and well. Throughout the session attempts will be made to contact the child's parents or named carers on the first day of absence.

The setting keeps a log of the attempted contact and if no contact is made with the parents/carers and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence, such as when seeking information from the named contacts on the child's registration form, then this will be recorded as an unexplained absence on the child's personal records and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made.

The setting will contact children's services for advice if contact has not been made within three working days and a referral may be made. Other relevant services maybe contacted as per TSCP procedures.

The reason for the absence of a child, the expected duration and any follow up action taken or required with timescales will be recorded on the child's personal file. The absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.

Should further information be made known that gives cause for concern, then this will give rise to a safeguarding or child protection concern and is immediately followed.

### **Safeguarding vulnerable children**

The designated safeguarding lead, manager or key person will attempt to contact the parents to find out why the child is absent. If contact is made and a valid reason is given, the information will be recorded in the child's file.

Contact will also be made with any relevant professional involved with the child such as social worker/family support worker on the day of the absence to keep them informed.

If the safeguarding lead is concerned that the child is at risk after contact is made, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. All conversations, events and any follow-up action will be recorded. The relevant professionals will also be informed by the designated person that no contact has been made.

The social worker will also be notified on the day of the unexplained absence should the child have current involvement with Childrens Social Services.

If at any time information comes to light that gives cause for concern, Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures are followed immediately. Please see the Childrens Safeguarding policy for further details..

### **Safeguarding**

The designated safeguarding person will also call Social care and make a referral if advised, regarding a child missing three consecutive sessions without the setting making contact.

If the child has a child protection plan in place, or there has been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns the designated person will immediately attempt to contact the child's parent/carer. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged on the Safeguarding incident reporting form and social care will be contacted immediately and all safeguarding procedures will be followed.

### **Poor/irregular attendance**

The setting understands that attendance at an early year's setting is not mandatory, but regular poor attendance and absences may be an indicator of a safeguarding and welfare concern and should be followed up.

The absences will be recorded on a welfare log and the manager will discuss a child's attendance with their parents to find out whether there are any barriers such as parents working patterns, transport or medical/health conditions in order to support them where possible.

The manager will review the child's attendance and if it continues to be poor and the strategies put in place to support have not had an impact, then it may be decided to make a referral to a multi-agency team as appropriate. However, where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan in place and poor or irregular attendance continues at the setting then this is reported to the child's Social Care worker without delay.

The setting is also aware of the local authority policy on notifying and reclaiming funding/refunds when a funded child is absent from a setting.

In the case of funded children, the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, taking into account the reason for the absence and impact on the setting.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Position Chairperson

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

We aim to provide a safe, stimulating, caring, happy Pre-school where all children and their families are welcome. We provide a curriculum based on the Early Years Foundation Stage using individual children's interest and needs.