

Partnership with Parents and Safeguarding: Sickness and Absence Policy

All children are expected to attend the playgroup and procedures are in place to monitor their absences so that funding is being accessed appropriately and any patterns or prolonged absences are acted upon to safeguard the child and support their families. We will treat both fee paying and funded children in the same manner in line with the London Borough of Hounslow Guidelines.

Procedure for Reporting Sickness/Absence (including holiday during opening times):

- On the first day of absence the parent/carer should call the nursery before 10am in the child attends in the morning and before 12pm if they attend in the afternoon. At that time that parent/carer should say what is the matter with their child, if they are going to see a doctor and when they think their child may return.
- We expect our parents to inform us verbally of why their child is absent unless there are reasons why they cannot do this.
- If the parent is taking their child to the doctors or hospital then please ask them to inform us as soon as they can with an update.
- The parent communication book to be updated with any conversations or emails from the parents and the safeguarding face sheet filled in.
- If a child does not attend then it is the responsibility of their key person to call them on the first day of absence at 10am for a morning child and 12pm for an afternoon child. If you cannot reach the parent (use both parent contact numbers if available) then leave a message asking for a return call as soon as they can.
- If the child does not attend for a second day and you have not had any contact from them then try calling again and leaving a message. Record this as before. Again do the same for the 3rd day.
- If by the 4th day you have had no contact from parent/carers then call the emergency contacts explaining why you are calling and checking that the contact details you have for them are correct. If they are incorrect then update and call immediately if they are correct then please ask the emergency contact person if they can contact the family and get them to call back or if they can call you back with an update. Record as previously.
- By the 5th day if you have not been able to contact anybody and have had no update then try contacting by email/text etc. Record this as before.
- By the following week if there has been no update then send a letter to the parent carer explaining why you are writing to them and that they must contact you by the end of the week or you may have to withdraw their child from the setting/report to social care as you have concerns regarding the child. If there is a support worker involved with the family i.e. the Social Worker, Early Intervention Team etc. to inform them of the child's absence. They may be aware of the reason why the child is not attending and should work with the setting to re-engage the child and to arrange an expected return date.
- Work with the support worker to try and re-engage the child again.
- If the child still does not return we will agree with the support worker what the end date for the funding should be. This will give them time to try and re-engage the family. Once the date has been agreed, we will send out a letter to the family to inform them that their place has been withdrawn.

- If the child is receiving funding then we will contact the Entitlement officer to discuss the funding end date. This must be added to the adjustment funding form.
- If a child does return the parent/carer will be advised that any further absences may result in their place (both fee paying and funded) being withdrawn. Attendance will be monitored and contact will be made with the support worker if they are involved if absence continues or attendance remains low. Continued absence of funded children will be discussed with the funding team to decide on an end date and this will then be given in writing to the parent.
- If we are aware at this time that a 2 year old funded place was brokered via the 2 Year Old Early Learning Officer we will contact them and still follow the steps outlined above.
- **If there is no support worker involved we will in addition take the following steps:**
- Contact Early Help Hounslow (EHH) to check if the child is involved with any other service that they might be aware of and to gain advice on next steps with regards to safeguarding and child protection procedures (see child protection policy and flow chart)
- If we find out there is another agency involved we will contact them to discuss their attendance and follow the steps above.
- If there were any concerns regarding the family before they left on holiday or we were not informed of them leaving we would follow the **prevent guidance** and call our contact Joan Conian (display in office)

HOLIDAYS WHEN THE SETTING IS OPEN:

- The nursery should be informed in advance of all planned holidays.
- For funded children the maximum period of holiday to be taken in one block is **2 weeks**. If a family inform us that they intend to be away for longer than 2 weeks then we will call the Early Education Entitlement Office for further advice.
- If the child is fee paying then similarly a 2 week absence will be accepted and fees will have to be paid in advance for the time the child is away (stated in the contract). If the family wish to be absent for a longer period of time it is up to the discretion of the Manager and will depend on the circumstances. This will be discussed with the child's family on an individual basis, however it is not the settings policy to encourage long absences as it effects the development of the child. Also we are an equal opportunity setting and believe that every child and family should be treated on an equal basis whether they are paying for their fees or are funded.

POOR WEATHER CONDITIONS AND ATTENDANCE

- If the nursery is open and your child cannot attend due to poor weather conditions you will still be charged.

CONTACT NUMBERS:

- Early Help Hounslow: 020 8583 6600
- Early Years Entitlement Officer: 020 8583 266 email: parmjitgthoray@hounslow.gov.uk
- 2 Year Old Learning Officer: 020 85836 2635 nicola.west@hounslow.gov.uk

Date Policy in Place: _____

Signed: _____