



MELISSA'S CHILDCARE

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CHILD ABSENCE POLICY

This policy outlines our approach to monitoring, recording and responding to child absences in line with statutory requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It aims to promote good attendance, safeguard children's welfare and ensure parents/carers understand procedures for reporting and managing absences.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all children enrolled at Melissa's Childcare, their parents/carers, and all staff working within the setting.

Definitions

- **Absence** – A child not attending a planned session.
- **Unauthorised Absence** – Absence without notification from a parent/carer.
- **Prolonged Absence** – An absence of concern due to length or pattern which may require further action. Providers must use *professional judgement* when deciding whether an absence is prolonged, considering individual circumstances.

EYFS Requirements

Our setting adheres to the EYFS statutory framework which requires:

- Accurate attendance registers are maintained for all children.
- An **attendance/absence policy** is in place and shared with parents/carers.
- Absences are followed up *in a timely manner*, particularly if a child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period.
- Patterns or trends in absences and the personal circumstances of the child and family are considered.
- Emergency contact details, including more than two contacts where possible, are held for each child.

Registration and Recording

Daily Register

Registers will be completed at the start of each session with the child's arrival and departure times.

Recording Absence

Parents/carers must notify the setting *before* the beginning of the session if their child will be absent, stating the reason and expected return date/time.

Reporting Absence

Notification by Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers should notify us via *phone/email/WhatsApp* by 9:00 AM on the first day of absence.



- If the absence continues, parents/carers should provide updates daily.

No Notification

- If no notification has been received by 9:00am on the day of absence, staff will attempt to contact the parent/carer promptly.

Follow-Up Procedures

Contact Attempts

- If no contact is made by *[time]*, we will attempt to contact the parent/carer and, if necessary, additional emergency contacts.

Escalation

- If we cannot make contact and are *concerned for the child's safety or welfare*, we will follow safeguarding procedures, which may include contacting:
 - Local Children's Social Care
 - The Police for a welfare check

These actions align with EYFS expectations that settings act if absences are unexplained or prolonged.

Patterns and Trends

We monitor and review data on attendance and absences. Where patterns or repeated absences emerge, the setting will:

- Discuss concerns with the family.
- Offer support or signpost additional services where appropriate.
- Consider if safeguarding or early help referrals are required.

Safeguarding Considerations

Attendance and absence monitoring are part of our safeguarding duty:

- We recognise that unexplained or prolonged absences can be an early indicator of *wider welfare issues*.
- Staff are trained to apply professional judgement in interpreting absence data and to escalate concerns appropriately.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Parents/Carers** must:
 - Notify the setting of absence promptly.
 - Keep contact information up to date.
 - Provide details of at least *two emergency contacts*.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will oversee attendance tracking and decide on any safeguarding referrals.

