



Attendance Policy

Policy Code: FS-ADM-002

Version: 1

Effective Date: 27.03.2026

Review Date: Annually

Statement of Intent

Nurture & Grow Forest & Play recognises that good attendance plays a fundamental role in supporting children's learning, development, well-being, and safety.

Regular attendance is essential to:

- *Build confidence in the outdoor environment*
- *Develop resilience and independence*
- *Establish routines and a sense of belonging*
- *Ensure continuity of learning and safety*

This policy outlines the procedures for promoting, recording, monitoring, and following up on attendance within our Forest School provision, taking into account the additional safety and operational considerations of an outdoor environment.

Regular attendance is essential for children attending Forest School to:

- *Build confidence in the outdoor environment*
- *Develop resilience and independence*
- *Establish routines and a sense of belonging*
- *Ensure continuity of learning and safety*

1. Forest School-Specific Considerations 🌳

Due to the outdoor nature of provision, attendance has additional implications for:

- *Safety and supervision in a large outdoor environment*
- *Staffing ratios for higher-risk activities (e.g. fire, tools, climbing)*
- *Planning and risk assessments for sessions*
- *Weather-dependent operation*

Irregular attendance or unexpected absence can impact:

- *Staff deployment and safety ratios*
- *Planned activities and supervision levels*



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- *The child's ability to engage safely in sessions*

2. Expectations for Parents/Carers

Parents are expected to:

- *Inform the setting of any absence before the session starts, wherever possible*
- *Notify the setting by 9:00am for unexpected absences*
- *Provide clear reasons for absence*
- *Inform the setting of any changes to collection arrangements*

Communication methods include:

- *Phone*
- *Email*
- *Agreed communication systems*

3. Authorised Absence

Authorised absences include:

- *Illness of the child*
- *Medical appointments*
- *Family emergencies*
- *Religious observance*
- *Exceptional circumstances*

Due to the nature of Forest School, consideration will also be given to:

- *Severe weather conditions affecting safe travel*
- *Medical or sensory needs impacting outdoor participation*

4. Monitoring Attendance and Safeguarding 🧠🧠

Attendance is monitored closely as part of safeguarding responsibilities.

Staff will:

- *Record attendance accurately for each session*
- *Monitor patterns of absence*
- *Identify concerns relating to vulnerable children*



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- Share concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Unexplained or persistent absence may indicate a safeguarding concern and will be followed up in line with safeguarding procedures.

5. Forest School Absence Procedure

If a child is absent without notification:

1. Attempt to contact parent/carer
2. Attempt secondary contact numbers
3. Contact emergency contacts
4. Check with known sibling settings (if applicable)

If the child's whereabouts cannot be established:

- Escalate to DSL immediately
- Consider referral to Children's Social Care
- Police may be contacted for a welfare check if required

6. Late Arrival and Collection 🕒

Late arrival may impact:

- Safety briefings
- Group supervision
- Participation in higher-risk activities

Where a child arrives late:

- Staff will assess whether it is safe for the child to join the session
- Key safety information will be shared before participation

Late collection:

- Must be communicated as soon as possible
- Will follow the setting's Late Collection Procedure



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7. Weather and Attendance 🌀

Forest School operates in most weather conditions; however:

- Parents must ensure children attend with appropriate clothing
- The setting reserves the right to cancel sessions in extreme weather

Non-attendance due to lack of appropriate clothing may be recorded and followed up with parents.

8. Settling and Consistency 🌿

Regular attendance is particularly important in Forest School as children need time to:

- Build familiarity with the environment
- Develop risk awareness
- Form secure relationships with staff and peers

Where attendance is inconsistent:

- Additional support may be offered
- A review discussion may take place with parents

9. Withdrawal from Forest School

If a child stops attending:

- Parents must inform the setting in line with contractual notice periods
- The setting may follow up absence as a safeguarding measure

10. Data Protection

Attendance records are:

- Stored securely
- Managed in line with GDPR
- Shared only where necessary for safeguarding purposes



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11. Related Policies

- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
- *Missing Child Procedure*
- *Health and Safety Policy*
- *Forest School Risk Assessments*

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following:

- *Safeguarding concerns*
- *Operational changes*
- *Updates to Forest School provision*