



Attendance Policy

Policy Code: FS-ADM-002

Version: 1

Effective Date: 27.03.2026

Review Date: Annually

Statement of Intent

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

1. Regular attendance is essential to:

- Build confidence
- 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.

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 09.00am 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

Whilst attendance at nursery is not statutory, regular attendance is strongly encouraged as it supports children's learning, development, wellbeing, social skills, confidence, and preparation for future education.



Attendance Policy

3. 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
- 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.

4. 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

5. Late Arrival and Collection 🕒

Late arrival may impact:

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

Where a child arrives late:

- Key safety information will be shared before participation



Attendance Policy

Late collection:

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

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

We recognise that access to suitable outdoor clothing may occasionally be a challenge for some families. Forest and Play will maintain a supply of spare clothing and waterproofs to support children where needed, ensuring that no child is excluded from attending or participating due to a lack of appropriate clothing.

8. Settling and Consistency 🌿

Regular attendance is important 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 & Play

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



Attendance Policy

10. Data Protection

Attendance records are:

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

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