

# Attendance and Absence Policy

Key information about this policy:

|                  |                              |
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| Policy Reference | ECCC-004                     |
| Version Number   | v2.0                         |
| Date Issued      | April 2026                   |
| Date of Review   | April 2027                   |
| Approved By      | Isabel Ruddick - Co-Director |

## Policy Purpose

Easton Community Children's Centre believes that good attendance at our setting is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. Continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress.

We also have a responsibility to follow up on unknown or unexpected absences to ensure that the child and family are safe and well, which forms part of our safeguarding commitment. This is detailed in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

## Scope, Application, Access

- Policy applies to: all staff, parents/ carers, children, volunteers and students.
- Policy applies at all times and all from all locations where children are in our care.
- Policy available to: All staff, current parents/carers, public.

## Policy / Procedure

### Reasons for Absence

We acknowledge that there are a number of reasons why children might not attend our setting when they are expected e.g. illness, holidays, religious/cultural observance. As part of our agreement with parents/carers, they have been advised that they need to inform us of any instances when a child might not be attending. We have a procedure in place and parents/carers are asked to follow this (see below and the parent/carer agreement).

Where there are instances of a child being absent and no reason has been provided in advance by the parent/carer, this would be deemed to be an unknown or unexpected

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absence and as stated in our policy aim, we will follow up on this absence to ensure the child and their family are safe and well.

### Record Keeping

We are required to maintain a register of attendance for our setting and these will be reviewed for patterns and to support increased attendance where needed.

All registers will be held securely in line with our Data Storage Policy and processes and will be kept in accordance with our Retention of Records Policy.

We will hold contact details for the child's parents/carers and will seek to have at least 2 other emergency contacts for any registered family. Where these cannot be provided, we will work with the parents/carers to identify who could act as an emergency contact.

All contact details will be re-verified on at least an annual basis through our registration forms and we request in our parent/carer agreement that we are informed of any changes to these as soon as possible.

### Collaboration and Support

We will delegate responsibility for monitoring absence to the Room Leader in each room. They will work to ensure our attendance policies and our absence support are in place and will work with the manager/leader and DSL where appropriate to support families.

Monitoring of absence records will take place regularly and the manager will contact parents/carers regarding absence either in writing, by telephone or in person, as appropriate.

We believe in the importance of building positive relationships with parents/carers and working together to support attendance. Part of discussions we might have may focus on whether the family might need some extra support and this may include a referral to other agencies in partnership with the parent/carer (e.g. social worker, Family Help, health visitor etc.).

As a setting we will also do all we can to support parents/carers with attendance issues as we believe that regular attendance is crucial for a child's development, including access to the curriculum, building relationships and developing positive self-esteem.

### Procedure for Absence – Parents/Carers

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to contact the setting either by telephone or via email if their child is unable to attend on a nominated day. This notification must be on the first day of absence and on any following days by 10am for a morning/all day session and by 2pm for an afternoon session.

If the absence will be for a specific period of time e.g. for a holiday or religious celebration that might be more than one day, the parent/carer should inform the

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setting in advance by contacting the Office Manager or Room Leader who will record this on the Famly as an absence.

If the child fails to return to the setting after the specified period, we will follow the procedure for unknown or unexpected absences.

### Procedure for Unknown/Unexpected Absence – staff

Staff complete a register on Famly at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. If parents/carers have not explained the reason for absence by 10am/2pm then staff will phone the parents/carers of the child. It will be recorded as 'Absent' on the Famly attendance register.

If the staff member is unable to get hold of the parent/carers at the first attempt, they will try again later that day and in the morning of the following day. If no contact has been established the staff member will call the emergency contact/s for the child. All children must have two emergency contacts assigned to their Famly account. If an answer phone message is unable to be left, email contact can be attempted via the Office.

If a staff member is unable to contact the parents/carers within 48 hours of the original absence and there is no satisfactory explanation for the absence from the emergency contact/s, the staff member will inform a Senior Manager or DSL/DDSL who will contact Family Help /First Response for advice, the family's social worker if they have one, and may also contact the police. If it is known that the family is experiencing challenges or if the child has SEND the setting may act more swiftly than the 48 hours detailed above.

Records will be kept of contact and attempted contact with parents/carers and/or emergency contacts in the room diary (time and details of contact). If other agencies need to be contacted, this information will be recorded on a Concerns Form. Monitoring of absence records will take place regularly. If any concerns are identified, these will be recorded on a Concerns Form.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- **Co-Director of Practice:** Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for overseeing all safeguarding and child protection matters.
- **Practice Lead and Senior Room Leaders:** Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads
- **Operations Manager:** Responsible for overseeing record keeping.
- **Office Manager:** Responsible for keeping records up to date on Famly.
- **All Staff:** Responsible for adhering to the policy and procedures at all times.