GEMS TINEY HOME NURSERY

HOME FROM HOME CHILDCARE

Attendance Policy

Policy statement

Regular attendance at agreed sessions helps children settle, build relationships and enjoy continuity of care and learning. We work with families to understand absences and offer support. This policy explains how attendance is recorded and how unexplained or prolonged absences are followed up to safeguard children, in line with the current EYFS statutory framework for childminders.

Attendance at this early years setting is not compulsory school attendance. Ill children should remain at home in accordance with our Infection Control and Hygiene Policy. Absence is considered in the context of each child and family, rather than treated automatically as a safeguarding concern.

Recording attendance

Each child's actual arrival and departure times are recorded daily and accurately, with reasons for absence recorded where known. Records are stored securely and made available to tiney or other authorised bodies where required.

If the tiney app is unavailable, a secure written record is maintained and transferred when access is restored. Records are retained in accordance with our retention and data protection arrangements.

Parent responsibilities

Parents should tell Gemma as soon as possible, preferably before the booked arrival time, if their child will be absent or late. Please give the reason and likely duration and keep us updated if the expected return changes. For a same-day absence, use the tiney app or phone; urgent messages should be communicated directly.

Parents must keep contact details current and provide alternative emergency contacts. Where possible, we hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child. Changes to collection arrangements must be agreed in advance, in accordance with our collection procedures.

Unexplained absence

If a child has not arrived at the agreed time and we have received no explanation, we check messages and the booking arrangements, then attempt to contact the parents or carers promptly. We do not wait until the end of the session to follow up.

If parents cannot be reached, we contact the child's alternative emergency contacts to establish their whereabouts and wellbeing. The urgency of action depends on what is known about the child and family; any immediate concern is acted on without waiting for all contacts to respond.

If the child's whereabouts or safety cannot be established and there is a welfare concern, we contact children's social care and/or request a police welfare check according to the circumstances. Call 999 if a child may be in immediate danger. Tiney is informed as appropriate, but contacting the agency must not delay a necessary safeguarding referral.

Attempts to contact the family, responses received, advice sought, decisions and reasons are recorded. LADO is used for allegations about adults who work with children, rather than as the routine contact for a child's unexplained absence.

Prolonged absence and patterns

We review repeated, unusual or prolonged absences and discuss them sensitively with parents. We consider the child's normal attendance pattern, age, individual needs and vulnerability, any parental vulnerability, home circumstances and other information relevant to their welfare.

There is no single fixed number of days after which an absence is treated as prolonged. Gemma uses professional judgement and agrees appropriate contact with families during longer absences. Where needed, attempts are made to reach parents and alternative emergency contacts, even if earlier absence has been explained.

Any safeguarding concerns are referred promptly to children's social care and/or the police as appropriate, following our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Support may also be discussed with the family and relevant professionals where appropriate.

Planned absence and fees

Parents are asked to provide at least two weeks' notice of holidays or planned absence whenever possible and agree an expected return date. Fees, funding and the arrangements for retaining a booked place are governed by the contract, Fees Policy and funded-hours arrangements.

An absence does not automatically end a child's place. Any proposed change to the booking is discussed with parents and handled under the agreed contract. Funding-related attendance requirements are explained separately where applicable.

Sickness absence and return

Parents should explain an illness absence and update us about any relevant diagnosis or exclusion advice. Children must be well enough to take part comfortably in the usual routine before returning.

After vomiting or diarrhoea, children must remain at home for at least 48 hours after the last episode. Once this period has passed and they are well enough, they may return only at the start of their next usual booked session, not partway through the day. Any longer exclusion advised for a specific infection must also be followed. See our Infection Control and Hygiene Policy.

Punctuality and collection

Please arrive and collect within agreed booking times and let us know promptly about delays. Repeated lateness is discussed respectfully to identify practical support or adjustments. Late collection is managed under the collection procedures and any applicable contractual charges.

Safeguarding contacts and review

Surrey Children's Single Point of Access: 0300 470 9100 | cspa@surreycc.gov.uk. Out-of-hours Emergency Duty Team: 01483 517898. Immediate danger: 999. Tiney: use the current safeguarding route provided through the app or agency guidance.

This policy is shared with parents and reviewed annually, or sooner if EYFS requirements, local procedures or tiney guidance change. Attendance patterns and family feedback inform improvements. Reference: current EYFS childminder framework, particularly child absences and information about the child.

Policy owner: Gemma Bayley
Reviewed: November 2026
Next review due: November 2027