First Steps (Bath)

Attendance policy and procedure

Policy statement
First Steps is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that children attend nursery regularly. The non-statutory nature of nursery attendance does not diminish the expectation that children will regularly attend their sessions. First Steps believes that good attendance is essential to ensure that children settle and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them at nursery. At this young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progression. Research has shown that children aged three and four, who attend pre-school sessions for over 11 hours a week all year round are more likely to achieve good outcomes.

We aim to

- **create a culture where good attendance is standard and valued**
- **value each individual and be socially and educationally inclusive**
- **be consistent in the implementation of our policy and procedures**
- **ensure that every child has full access to the curriculum.**

Procedure
First Steps will:

- Keep a regular and accurate record of attendance for all children, using nursery management software. This information will be retained in line with data protection requirements.
- Encourage good attendance by providing a welcoming atmosphere for children and parents.
- Provide a considerate response to any adult /child concerns.
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of the range of communication methods they can use to notify nursery staff about their child's absence from nursery.
- Regularly review attendance data to identify trends or concerns.
- Consider known vulnerabilities when following up on any child's unplanned absence from the nursery
- Explore parents'/carers concerns and/or difficulties regarding attendance promptly and make sound judgements on how to best support the parent/ carer.

Where the nursery has not been informed of a child's absence, practitioners will:

- Contact parents/carers and if necessary, alternative emergency contacts to ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Inform social care if a child has a child protection or child in need plan.

Where attendance is inconsistent and generally poor, the manager will:

- Contact the parent/carer to explore the reasons for this and monitor future attendance

- Contact the health visiting service and/or early help service to ascertain if family support may be needed.

In urgent cases, social care may be informed.

B&NES council expect a child in receipt of Early Years Entitlement to attend for the funded hours regularly. Where a child has recurring absences or is absent for an extended period without agreement with the provider, Bath and North East Somerset reserves the right to withdraw the funding.

Parents and Carers will;
Ensure that, whenever possible, their child arrives in the nursery in a timely way to join their booked sessions.

Parents must inform the nursery if their child will be absent, and work with nursery practitioners to improve the situation where attendance is a concern.

Policy link too:

Terms and conditions of payment of fees.

Policy reviewed by SMT January 2025, part of the EYFS safeguarding reforms.
Policy reviewed by SMT May 2025.
Policy reviewed by SMT May 2026