



09 Early Years Absence Policy and Procedure

09.2 Attendance and Absence

Attendance and Absence Policy for Parents/Carers

We take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted, and they do not miss their entitlements and opportunities. At the very least, good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family.

There are several reasons why a child may be absent from a setting. In most cases it is reasonable to expect that parents/carers alert the setting as soon as possible, or in the case of appointments and holidays give adequate notice.

It is important that parents and carers understand that the Pre-School has very specific safeguarding responsibilities to the children and are governed by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework.

We must act quickly and decisively if a child doesn't arrive on a day that they are expected. This means that we will need to contact you if your child isn't at Pre-School **within 30 minutes of their expected arrival time** and we haven't been informed of this absence.

If we are unable to contact parents/carers and their emergency contacts to establish a reason for any absence, Designated Safeguarding Leads **must** adhere to Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from the provision.

This means that we are legally required to involve the **police** and **social care** very quickly (the same day, usually within a few hours) if we are unable to establish why a child is absent and we are unable to contact the family.

A speedy response is required from us for a very good reason. There was an incident where a parent in the UK unexpectedly became unwell, meaning that their very young child was placed in a vulnerable position and had nobody checking in on them. Therefore, all providers **must have** an Absence Policy and Procedure to *safeguard your child*.

Absence Procedure for Parents/Carers

Unplanned Absence

If your child won't be coming in to Pre-School on a day that they are expected, please ensure you do the following:

- (1) Call or text us on [07542 285412](tel:07542285412) within 30 minutes of the time that your child is expected at Pre-School.
- (2) Tell us the reason for absence
- (3) Tell us when you expect your child to return to Pre-School.
- (4) Keep us updated via phone (or email: codicotepreschooloffice@gmail.com) if the absence is likely to persist beyond the time frame you initially expected it to be.

Planned Absence

If you are aware that your child will be needing some time off (such as for an appointment or a holiday):

- (1) Please email us on codicotepreschooloffice@gmail.com (marking the **subject on the email** as '**Planned Absence**') giving us as much notice as possible.
- (2) If at all possible, please also call us or send us a text message on [07542 285412](tel:07542285412) to remind us on the first day of absence.
- (3) Please tell us the reason for absence
- (4) Tell us when you expect your child to return to Pre-School.

Planned and Unplanned Absence

If a child is persistently absent, then we are required to follow our 'Persistent Absence' procedure as set out below.

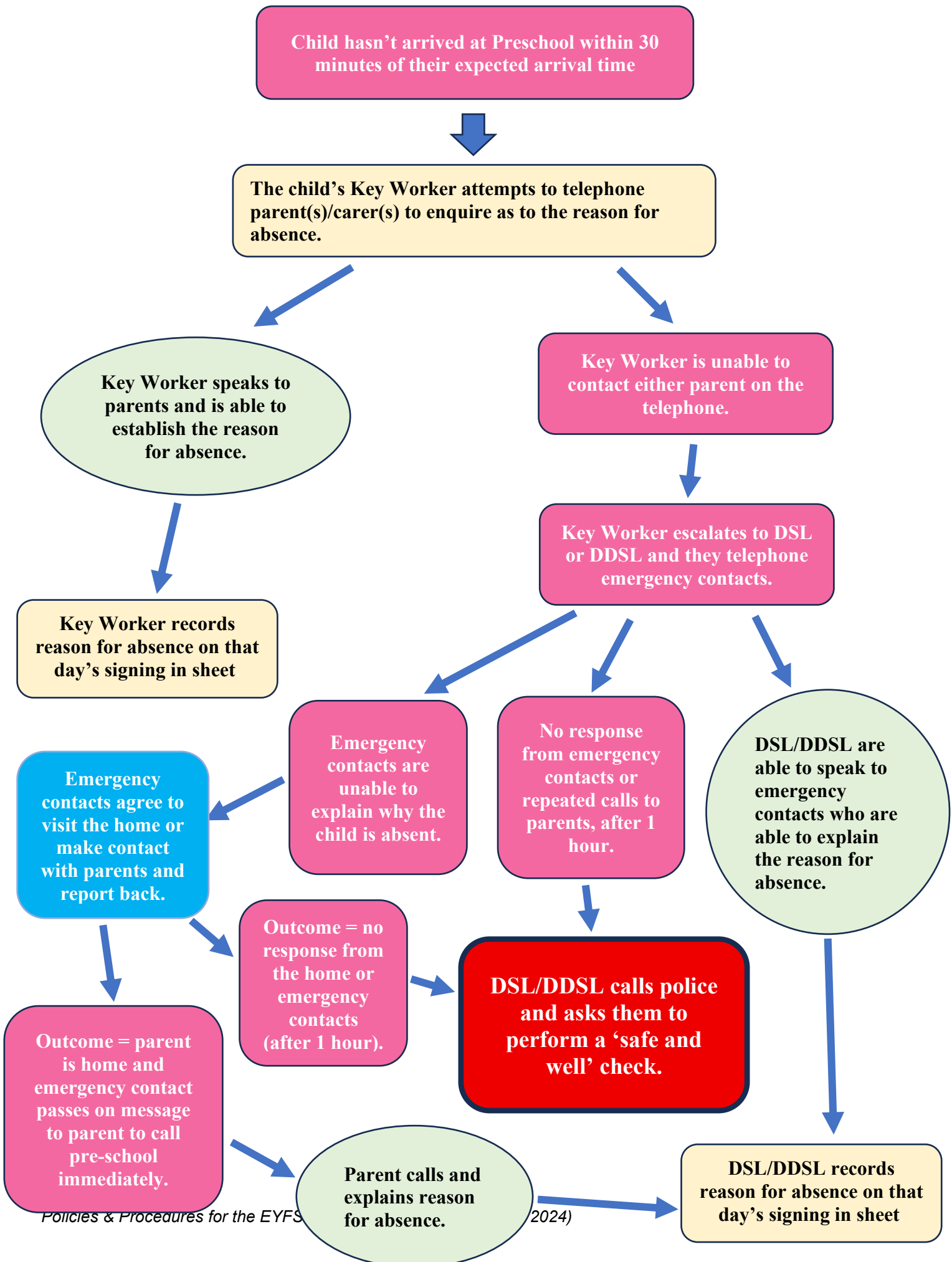
Please note that if your child is persistently absent or is absent for a prolonged period of time, the Local Authority have the right to withdraw funding and parents are obliged to pay the Pre-School directly for any contracted sessions, whether attended or not.

Also, if your child is persistently absent or is absent for a prolonged period of time, we are also obliged to consider following safeguarding procedures.

We **must have** at least two emergency contacts for each child attending our setting. These contacts must be willing to be contacted in an emergency, if we are unable to contact the parents/carers.

We must, by law, monitor and record all absences no matter what the reason for absence is.

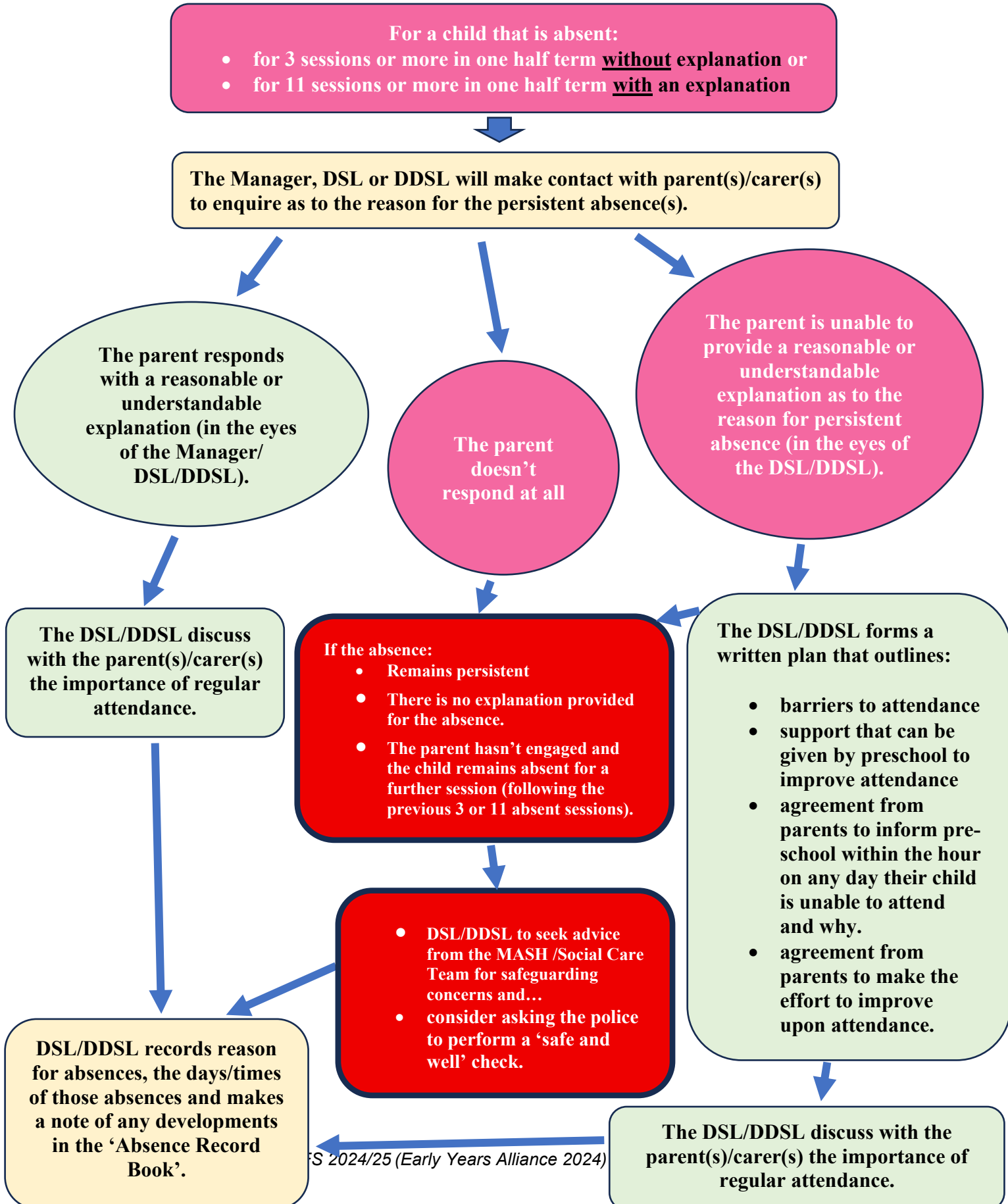
Intermittent Absence Flow Chart



Persistent Absence Flow Chart

Pre-School will follow the Intermittent Absence Flow Chart, as per normal, for any day of unexplained absence to establish the reason for absence in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.

This particular flowchart is to give guidance to staff on how to handle persistent absenteeism.



This is what KCSIE 2025 says:

From September 2025, providers must, follow upon absences in a timely manner, and if it is for a prolonged period of time, or without notification from a parent/carer they must:

- ***attempt to contact the child's parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts***
- ***consider patterns and trends in a child's absences and their personal circumstances, to make a professional judgement when deciding if the absence is prolonged***
- ***consider the child's vulnerability, parent's or carer's vulnerability, and their home life.***
- ***Any concerns must be referred to local childrens social care services and or a police welfare check requested***

Written procedure for intermittent absence (as detailed in flow chart)

- If a child who normally attends fails to arrive and no contact has been received from their parents/carers within 30 minutes of their arrival time, the key worker will attempt to call the parent/carer on the telephone.
- If no contact made, the key worker must inform the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy designated safeguarding lead, if DSL is unavailable).
- DSL/DDSL takes immediate action to contact the parent/carer to seek an explanation for the absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
- If no contact made with parent, the DSL/DDSL attempts to contact the listed emergency contacts to seek an explanation for the absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
- If emergency contact is unable to provide a reason for absence, the DSL/DDSL asks the emergency contacts to attempt to contact the family and asks the family to call Pre-School. Request that the emergency contacts call Pre-School back to let us now the outcome of their attempts to contact the family.
- If no response or explanation given for absence from the emergency contacts or family within the hour, the DSL/DDSL will contact the police asking them to perform a 'safe and well' check on the family.
- Attempts to contact the child's parents/carers continue during that time.
- If no contact is made with the parents/carers and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence i.e. through a named contact on the child's registration form, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on the child's personal file and is followed up by the DSL/DDSL.
- If the police are unable to assist or are unable to make contact with the family on that day, then children's services will be contacted by the DSL/DDSL for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services may be contacted as per LSP procedures.
- All absences are recorded on the child's personal file with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.

Policies & Procedures for the EYFS 2024/25 (Early Years Alliance 2024)

- Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.

If at any time further information becomes known that gives cause for concern, procedure 06.01 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns is immediately followed.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

- The designated safeguarding lead or key person attempts to contact the parents/carers to establish why the child is absent. If contact is made and a valid reason given, the information is recorded in the child's file.
- Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
- If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation and follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the designated person contacts the relevant professionals and informs them of the situation.
- If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- If at any time information becomes known that gives cause for concern, 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures are followed immediately.

Poor or persistent absence

Whilst attendance at an early years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up.

- If a child misses three sessions in one half term (without explanation) or 11 sessions in one term (with an explanation), the designated person follows the advice listed in the 'Persistent Absence Flow Chart'.
- In the first instance the setting manager, DSL or DDSL should discuss a child's attendance with their parents/carers to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parents/carers to offer support where possible.
- If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated person attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged on **06.01b Safeguarding** incident reporting form, and Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.

- If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the DSL/DDSL must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate and/or consider a police 'safe and well' check.
- Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor/irregular attendance at the setting is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.
- DSL/DDSL records reason for absences, the days/times of those absences and makes a note of any developments in the 'Absence Record Book'.

In the case of funded children, the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, considering the reason for the absence and impact on the setting. The setting manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting.