

Warwickshire County Council

Children Absent and Missing from Early Education

Guidance for Early Years Providers (April 2024)



Purpose of this guidance:

This guidance had been developed to support all Early Years Providers working with children aged from Birth to Five. It focuses on good practice in relation to children's attendance and the action to take if a child:

- has one or more unexplained absences from the setting
- has attendance patterns which cause a concern
- or a child cease to attend the setting

This good practice guidance also outlines ways to promote attendance of children in your care and during a young child's transition to school.

Whilst there is no national guidance for children of non-statutory school age, this guidance has been developed in line with the Statutory guidance within the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) 2024, DFE (Department for Education) Children Missing Education 2016 and the Ofsted Early Years Inspection Framework 2024.

The processes and procedures outlined in the guidance.

DO NOT replace safeguarding procedures.

If you have reason to believe a child is at risk of significant harm, you should contact WCC Children and Families Front Door in accordance with Warwickshire's procedures.

In being aware of and following this guidance you are helping to keep children safe and are ensuring that they receive an appropriate education.

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Why good attendance is important.

All children of non-statutory school age have the right to health and early years services to help them achieve their full potential.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Year Foundation Stage (2024) defines what providers must do, working in partnership with parents and/or carers, to promote the learning and development of all children in their care, and to ensure they are ready for school.

As stated in Early Years Inspection Framework 2024 practitioners should promote good attendance within their settings. In line with statutory guidance, Inspectors will gather evidence as to whether staff in all settings are sensitive to signs of possible safeguarding concerns. These include poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing from education.

Regular attendance and punctuality have many positive benefits for children. Regular attendance sets good habits for the next steps in children's education, it supports children to develop secure relationships and to build self-esteem. Regular attendance plays a key role in supporting children's learning and development and ensures they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities.

It is important that all staff understand why good attendance by children and good attendance practice among staff need to be maintained.

Attendance and Safeguarding

Regular attendance also plays a key role in ensuring children are kept safe and well.

Nationally there have been several child safeguarding practice reviews following the deaths of very young children who have attended an early year setting and subsequently failed to attend. The outcomes from these child safeguarding practice reviews indicate there is no room for complacency and stress the importance of recognising when a child might be at risk and taking prompt action.

All agencies and services, including Early Years Providers, are committed to working together to safeguard Warwickshire's children. Addressing attendance issues at the earliest possible stage is vital to ensuring children's safety and well-being. No child should be allowed to slip through the net and become a 'missing child.'

Children can be missing from a setting for a wide variety of reasons:

- Failing to make successful transition from home to setting.
- Breakdown of the relationship between parent/setting.
- Transfer to another setting.
- Frequent moves of house, including periods of homelessness or periods in a refuge.
- Transience / family mobility.
- Family breakdown.
- Family circumstances such as finances, unemployment, bereavement.
- Extended travel out of the country.

Certain groups of children are more likely to be vulnerable:

- Children of families suffering bereavement, trauma, domestic violence, homelessness etc.
- Children with Special Educational Needs.
- Children with English as an additional language.
- Refugee and Asylum-Seeking children.

- Gypsy, Roma, Traveller families.
- Children in Care.
- Teenage parenthood.
- Parents or children with mental health issues.

A good practice pathway for Early Years Providers

To develop a shared understanding of attendance within your setting is best practice and to have an attendance policy which is shared with parents at induction (an example policy framework is included with Appendix 1).

The Early Year's Provider, should be aware of and consider the following suggested processes, steps and procedures relating to monitoring, recording, and retaining records relating to children's attendance.

It is important that you:

- Ensure that parents/carers understand that if the child is going to be late or absent, they need to inform you. You should also inform them of the steps that the setting will take if they are not informed of the reason for their absence.
- Ensure you have clear and effective strategies and procedures for promoting, supporting, recording, monitoring, and retaining records in relation to children's attendance / non-attendance.
- Ensure that a daily record of children's attendance is kept and any reasons for absence are recorded onto this.
- Thoroughly follow up all absences for individual children and their siblings (if they are also at your setting). Keep accurate records of explanations and liaisons with schools or nurseries (if relevant).
- Undertake routine monitoring of attendance and look for any patterns of absence which may suggest that there is a need for support for the child and family.
- Keep accurate records of all actions taken, decisions made, conversations, agencies contacted, etc. when trying to locate children and their families.
- All staff should be aware where a child and family may benefit from Early Help support and inform parents of the locality offer to support attendance.

Contact information for children.

It is essential you hold accurate and up to date contact details for parents / carers and other wider family or friends (subject to individual family networks of support). Maintaining these records is vital so there is no delay in emergencies or when contacting families to support attendance.

The records should include:

- Personal mobile phone numbers and email addresses.
- Employment or training contact numbers and email addresses (if available).
- At least one emergency contact number in addition to the above and more contacts if possible.

Raising concerns and taking action

All Early Years settings will have their own policy and procedure for dealing with attendance issues and it is important that staff at all levels, including Managers / Committees, are confident in knowing how to respond to different scenarios that may arise.

Whilst it is not compulsory for a child to attend an Early Years setting staff should always discuss any instances when a family decides to withdraw a child from the setting with the family.

In our discussion it is important that we recognise the many factors which may influence parents to move their child from one setting to another. These may include preference for another setting, greater convenience of an alternative setting, house move, increased availability of parents / family members to provide free home-based childcare etc.

Following this discussion, actions should include the following:

- Try to find out which setting the child is moving to.
- Keep dated notes of any events or discussions with the families.

Where a child is withdrawn from the registered childcare by the parent, apply professional curiosity about the reasons and any previous or current concerns that could impact the child safety and welfare.

Is the change in setting an additional cause for concern?

Consider; deteriorating attendance, poorer emotional wellbeing, worsening relationship between setting and parent(s), changes or new health or physical condition/ welfare of the child, radicalisation.

Warwickshire safeguarding systems recognise the importance of a professionals building trusting relationships with children and families to notice changes. Professional curiosity and 'having eyes on the child' are actively encouraged to support effective safeguarding procedures in practice.

If as an Early Years Provider, you have immediate safeguarding concerns about a child, you should call Children and Families Front Door 01926 414144 (Monday to Thursday: 8.30am – 5:30pm / Friday: 8.30am – 5:00pm)

If there is an immediate risk of harm to the child, then call 999.

Outside office hours call the Emergency Duty Team on 01926 886922

Taking action for non-attendance:

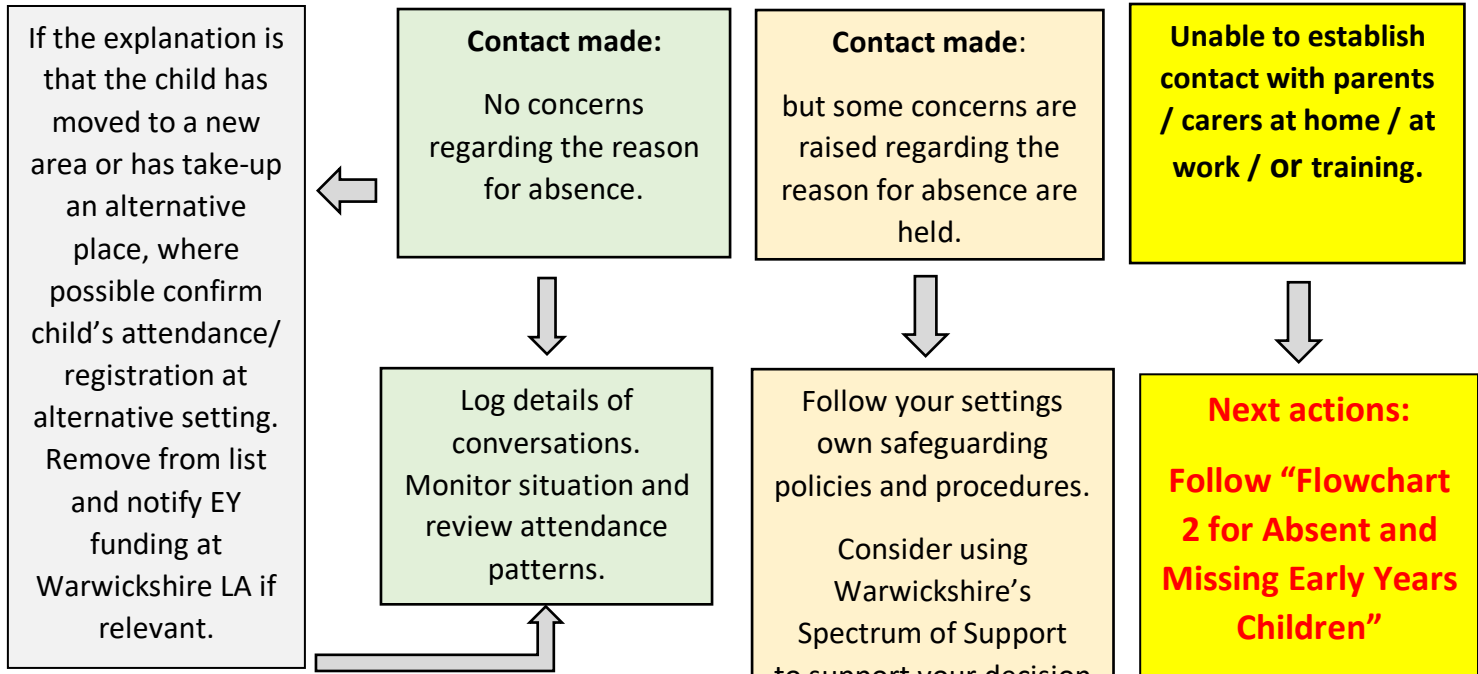
Early Years Providers should attempt to contact parents / carers on the child's first day of absence (see flow chart 1 on the following page for further guidance.)

Flow Chart 1: Actions to be taken if the child is absent with no explanation – a step by step approach.

Child is absent from the setting or
a child takes up place at your setting but fails to attend on their first day.

Check whether other staff have received a message or have information about the child's absence.

Attempt to contact parents/carers re: reason for absence. If Child in Care or with a Social Worker contact child's Social Worker (A Duty Social Worker is always available in each team for escalation if a child's social worker is unavailable).



If the explanation is that the child has moved to a new area or has take-up an alternative place, where possible confirm child's attendance/ registration at alternative setting. Remove from list and notify EY funding at Warwickshire LA if relevant.

Log details of conversations. Monitor situation and review attendance patterns.

Follow your settings own safeguarding policies and procedures.
Consider using Warwickshire's Spectrum of Support to support your decision making and guide your further actions.
Seek advice from the Children and Families Front Door where appropriate:
Tele: 01926 414144

Next actions:
Follow "Flowchart 2 for Absent and Missing Early Years Children"

Contact Made
Parents notify you that they have withdrawn their child- Log conversation.

If no safeguarding concerns are held:
Remove from registration list and notify EY Funding at Warwickshire LA if relevant.

If safeguarding concerns are held

“Flowchart 2 for Absent and Missing Early Years Children”

At this point you should constantly assess the vulnerability of the child involved.

There is no set time frame to the actions set out in the flow chart below as each individual child will have their own risk factors to consider. Please use the Vulnerability Assessment section within the referral form (Appendix 3, section D) to support you in doing this.

**If at any time the child is at risk of significant harm, contact the Children and Families Front door.
01926 414144.**

Child is absent. Initial attempts to contact parents/carers have been **unsuccessful**.
Vulnerability Assessment **is completed**.



Undertake Initial Actions:

- Call other emergency contacts to try to establish the whereabouts of the parents/carers and child.
- Email above contacts if relevant.
- If the child has sibling in school, another Nursery, or with a Childminder, contact the Manager/ Lead DSL/ Head Teacher of the setting or school or Childminder to check if siblings are in school/ Nursery / in their care and enquire about siblings' whereabouts.
- **If you have existing relationships with other agencies*** for this child, consider contact to explore any possible risks to child safety or contact they have had? (* Health Visitors, GP, IDS, Speech, and Language)



**Contact is made and/
or whereabouts of
child is known:**

No further concerns regarding reason for absence.



Log details of conversations.

Monitor situation and review attendance patterns.



No further actions required at this point.

Unable to establish contact through the initial actions above.

Step 2:

Assess the possibility of a visit to the family home if it is safe and practical to do so. Remember ratios and personal safety.

If there is no answer post a card or letter (appendix 2) through the family's letterbox asking them to contact you, as soon as possible.

Review the following actions.

- The vulnerability assessment.
- Child's chronology with reference to the Spectrum of Support.
- All reasonable actions taken to contact the family and their Network of support (named contacts and other agencies).

Are you concerned? Why?



Phone the children and Families Front Door to share concerns and seek advice.

Document the conversation with Front Door and their assessment of the risks.

If still concerned use escalation procedure.



If the child is believed to be missing the DSL should complete a Children Absent and Missing from Early Education Referral Form and email to

Warwickshire Early Years Quality, Standards and Safeguarding Team
earlyyearsadvisors@warwickshire.gov.uk. Telephone: 01926 42549

Transition into School

APPLYING FOR A FIRST TIME AT SCHOOL PLACE & EDUCATING CHILDREN OUT OF YEAR GROUP

The Local Authority (LA) co-ordinates the allocation of all first-time school places **on receipt of parent/ carers applications**. All schools, including those that have their own Admissions Authority follow the agreed coordinated LA process working with the LA Admission Team.

It is the LA's position that it is in the child's best interest to be educated in their correct chronological year group, except in exceptional circumstances. It must be noted that any agreement made between a particular school, parents, and the LA, which allows a child to be educated out of their chronological year group should be reviewed annually by the school to ensure the provision remains in the child's best interests. No other school or LA is required by law to honor any such agreement for a particular child.

The majority of children will start school, and attend on a full-time basis, from the September following their fourth (4th) birthday. In Warwickshire, children will start their education at this point in the Reception year group.

In some rare cases, it may be more appropriate for a child with exceptional abilities to be educated out of year group attend school 1 year earlier than is normal for their chronological year group. This is referred to as **'Accelerated Entry.'**

However, in some other cases it may be more appropriate that a child starts school on a part-time basis initially or starts later in the school year. For example, in the Spring or Summer Term. This is referred to as **'Deferred Entry.'**

There are many reasons that it may be appropriate for the child to start on a part-time basis or later in the Reception class. These could concern medical issues which a child has, special educational needs which are either confirmed or being assessed, or other exceptional circumstances.

For some children, it is appropriate to request that the child starts school an entire year later. This is referred to as **'Delayed Entry.'** This may include some children who have medical issues, or special educational needs which are either confirmed or being assessed, or other exceptional circumstances. Or some children that are summer born (born between the 1st of April and the 31st of August) that have some other considerations (such as being born prematurely, before 37 weeks' gestation).

The Law states that children must be in full-time education by the start of the term following their fifth birthday. This is referred to as 'compulsory school age.'

DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE DIFFERENT APPLICATION PROCESSES- please see Appendix 5 which outlines different scenarios to show what happens.

Children who are due to start school but will not be attending.

If a family notifies you that their child will not be attending school or if a child continues to attend your provision despite being of the age where they could be in the reception class of a school, ensure:

- Both you and the child's parents/carers are clear about the reasoning behind this (e.g., wishing to delay / defer entry into school, appealing against the school place offered, not aware their child could be in school and have not applied for a place).
- Parents/carers are advised to contact School Admissions on 01926 414143 or admissions@warwickshire.gov.uk if they have any questions.
- The child's prospective school (if known) is made aware.

If a family notifies you that they intend to home-school their child, be aware that parents/carers of non-statutory school age children do not legally have to notify anyone.

This guidance actively encourages professional to consider the holistic needs of the child and motivations to home education. Professionals should encourage parents and carers considering home education to consult with the elective home education team at the earliest opportunity and keep the Local Authority informed of their decision so they can be offered additional guidance and support.

The Elective Home Education team can be contacted 01926 736323 or ehe@warwickshire.gov.uk

Promoting Good attendance in your Early Years Setting

Working with families to promote good attendance.

When promoting attendance in your Early Years Provision, the importance of good attendance and your procedures for non-attendance should be shared with families before their children start with you. This may be through information on your website, prospectus, settling in meetings to explain to parents the benefits children gain from regular attendance along with the setting processes for monitoring attendance.

It is also important that as Early Years Providers we have a positive and welcoming atmosphere within our setting, and we ensure that good relationships are developed between children, families, and staff. Through being sensitive to and supportive of the differing cultural backgrounds of families, staff will also become more attuned the differing needs of families and any barriers they face such as EAL or learning difficulties. Staff can then support families in ensuring that appropriate means of communication are always used.

As a setting, you may want to consider how you are promoting attendance and arriving on time with families, to both celebrate and promote good habits.

Early Years Providers need to adopt rigorous systems to monitor attendance, so that can quickly to identify patterns of absence and act early to address patterns of non-attendance. Professionals should continue to be curious about attendance and barriers the families may face.

Whilst we may be sensitive in how we approach our conversation about unexplained absences we must ensure that we are also rigorous and persistent in seeking and recording explanations for absence. It is important that issues around attendance are identified and monitored early to prevent needs escalating.

Changes in attendance should always be considered by professional as an indication of the need for professional curiosity and further sensitive exploration.

Promoting the awareness of good attendance with staff

All staff should understand why children's attendance is relevant and could indicate needs that require explanation. Good attendance practice should be maintained by all staff.

Through induction and regular reminders Early Years Provider should ensure that all staff know what to do, and who to tell, if:

- A child is absent / late.
- A child has a changeable or deteriorating pattern of absence or lateness.
- A child goes missing from education.
- Where to turn for advice or support or whom to alert if concerns arise.

Appendix 1

This policy framework should be used as a starting point which is then developed to fit your setting's individual context. Prior to being adopted, each section should be reviewed to determine if it is appropriate for your setting and to ensure it reflects the procedures in your own setting.

All highlighted sections should be edited and if more or less information is required, it is the responsibility of the setting to make those amendments.

Draft Attendance Policy

Policy Statement:

Good attendance plays a fundamental role in supporting children's educational achievement, well-being and in keeping children safer. Establishing regular routines for young children supports the settling-in process and enhances their sense of security and belonging. Even if a child only has a part-time place, regular attendance is still especially important. Attending nursery helps children establish routines of going to school regularly and being on time, which can help them make a smooth and positive transition to reception.

This policy sets out the procedures in place to promote and monitor attendance within our Early Years Setting and the steps that will be followed if a child is absent from the setting. It also explains the importance and benefits of regular attendance.

Our Aims:

- To create a culture where good attendance and punctuality is 'normality' and valued by all.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.
- To be consistent in the implementation of our policy and procedures for recording and monitoring attendance.
- Work effectively with parents, children, and partners through building trusted relationships to work together to remove barriers to attendance.

To promote good attendance in our Early Years Provision we will:

- Convey clearly to parents and children that regular attendance and punctuality is essential and is in the child's best interest and that unexplained absence will be investigated.
- Keep records of attendance which provide accurate information on actual attendance and lateness to enable monitoring and evaluation so that emerging patterns are addressed.
- Build on existing good practice that fosters a positive attitude to good attendance by quickly responding to children's absence, recognising, and celebrating, 'good' and 'improving' attendance.
- Target attendance and lateness where there has been an issue and aim to set in place strategies and techniques to support and ensure improvement.

Working with parents:



The setting will make its policy on attendance clear to children through sharing information and expectations prior to admission.

The systems and procedures in place to promote children's attendance and punctuality will continue to be shared with parents at a universal level through **parents' newsletters, online apps, and emails.** Leaders, Manager, and staff will work with parents to address specific aspects of attendance or punctuality, which cause concern through discussion and **where appropriate standardised letters will also be used where a parental response and signature is required.**

Recognising the factors affecting attendance.

Whilst attendance at nursery is not statutory, authorised absence is only normally granted in the following circumstances:

- Illness of the child
- Illness of siblings or parents
- Health Services Appointments
- Holidays
- Religious observance
- Emergency circumstances

Where these circumstances arise parents should inform the nurse on the first day of absence or prior to the first day of absence.

Monitoring attendance and punctuality

Records of children's attendance are accurately kept and regularly monitored to ensure that we can identify any potential problems and look for patterns.

All managers and staff are alert to signs that children and learners who are missing might be at risk of abuse or neglect, and appropriate action is taken when children and learners stop attending.

In our Early Years provision, we are aware that attendance is not statutory, but that non-attendance could be an indicator of other concerns.

All managers and staff are particularly aware of the need to monitor groups such as children who are in receipt of two-year-old funding, and those for whom we receive Early Years Pupil Premium, as these groups are considered to be vulnerable learners.

Procedures in place to record, monitor and follow up non-attendance.

Daily Registration

Registration will be completed at the start of each session within 10 minutes of the start time.

Children attendance or non-attendance will be recorded along with any lateness.

Nonattendance

If a child is absent and we are informed of their reason for absence this will be recorded on the register.

If a child is absent without an explanation a telephone call will be made to the parents to establish the reason for the absence.

If no contact is made, then the following process will be followed.

- 1) A telephone call to parent's carers work or training provider will be made.
- 2) An email to parents will be sent.
- 3) Calls to other emergency contacts, including other family members listed as emergency contacts, will be made to try to establish why the child is absent.
- 4) Calls to the siblings' schools, nurseries or childminders will be made to establish if they or the sibling can confirm the child's whereabouts.

If contact cannot be made by telephone call a home visit may be carried out and a contact post card will be posted through your door.

If following this no contact is made, and there is cause for concern that the child whereabouts remain unknown, the health visiting service, your child's GP and Children and Families services will be contacted to ascertain if family support may be needed. In more urgent cases, the Police may be contacted to carry out safe and well checks.

Children and Families Front Door 01926 414144 (Monday to Thursday: 8.30am – 5:30pm / Friday: 8.30am – 5:00pm)

If there is an immediate risk of harm to the child, then call 999.

Outside office hours call the Emergency Duty Team on 01926 886922.

Monitoring, evaluation and use of attendance and punctuality data

Children's attendance patterns will be monitored and reviewed regularly. Concerns which arise through the settings monitoring activities will be discussed with the parent or carer.

Attendance figures will be published each half term and will be shared with parents, staff and the Governing Body / Committee or the Owner.

Children's good and improved attendance will be celebrated in the setting through stickers and praise notes home.

Absence will also be monitored for the health and well-being of children, for example so that we are aware of outbreaks of illness which need to be investigated, or to warn parents of infections such as German measles.

Monitoring attendance and use of government funded hours may also be passed on at the Local Authority's request.

Funded places

Two-, three- and four-year-old funding is provided through the local authority. This is public money, and we feel that we have a duty to ensure it is used appropriately. If a place has been reserved but is being used for less than 75% of booked session, we reserve the right to offer that place to any child who may be on our waiting list, for example, a child who has been allocated two-year-old funding but cannot take up a place because sessions are full. This way we can be sure to use the funding to its best effect.

We would discuss reasons for absence with parents before retracting the funding offer and will make every effort to work with them to encourage them to increase attendance. Funding would only be withdrawn as a last resort.

Date agreed: _____

Signed by: _____

Policy Review Date: _____

Appendix 2 Children Absent and Missing from Early Education: Request for contact template.

This template has been designed to protect confidentiality if the parent / carer and family no longer reside at the address on the setting records.

The highlighted sections of template below should be edited to include the setting's logo, address, contact number, email address, name of manager DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and include the date of contact.

Settings may wish to hand deliver the request for contact or alternatively it can be emailed to the parent/carer email address that the setting has on file.

INSERT SETTING LOGO

NAME OF SETTING

ADDRESS OF SETTING

TELEPHONE No.

Email address

INSERT Date

Dear Parent/Carer

I/We have tried to contact you today to discuss an important matter.

Please contact **INSERT NAME OF CHILDMINDER/MANAGER or DSL** as soon as possible.

If I/we do not hear from you by **INSERT date and time** (this would normally be the nextday)

We will continue to attempt to contact you and involve other agencies as we are concerned about your safety.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 3

Warwickshire County Council
Children Absent and Missing from Early Education Referral Form
CONFIDENTIAL

Please complete this form when you have followed all the appropriate steps in this guidance, and you have been unable to make contact with the child and family.

If you have concerns that the child may be at risk of harm or significant harm, please contact Children and Families Front Door 01926 414144 or Police 999 without further delay.

Child's Details			
First Name:		Last name:	DOB:
Early Years Pupil Premium: Yes / No	Gender Male / Female	Ethnicity:	NHS Number if known:
Last known address.		Health visitor:	
Postcode:		GP:	
Telephone number:			

Family Information:			
Name of Parent/carer name(s).	Relationship to child.	Parental responsibility.	Contact telephone numbers and email address if known.
		Yes / No	
Name(s) (Siblings):		School / Setting (Siblings):	

Other agencies/services involved. Please tick any that apply.						
Social Worker.	Health Visitor.	Front Door.	IDS.	Ethnic Minority Traveller Service.	Virtual School.	Early Help.
Please tick any that apply:						
Child in Care (CIC).	Child Protection Plan (CP).	Child in Need (CIN).	SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).	EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan).		

Early Years Provision:	
Early Year Provision attended (contact details).	Date started.
	Date of last attendance.
	Please comment upon attendance.

Section B

Initial actions taken by the Early Years Provider/Referrer:	
Please ensure that all these actions are completed before making this referral	
Action.	Outcome (Include date completed).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call parent(s)/carer(s). • Call emergency contacts. • Email above contacts if relevant. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post a letter/note through the door of the property. (check! Does the property appear to be occupied?) 	

Section C Agency Checks

Agency checks taken by early years provider/referrer:		
Please ensure that any relevant agencies have been contacted before making this referral		
Agency.	Date of check.	Outcome.
Social workers (linked with family).		
Siblings School(s).		
Other early years provision (e.g., PVI (Private, Voluntary, and Independent) provider, childminder.		
Health Visiting team, Family GP.		
IDS, Speech and Language and others.		
Children's Centre.		
Early Years Funding.		
Services for mothers/fathers/carers.		
Other e.g., housing.		

Section D Vulnerability Assessment:

Vulnerability Assessment: Please complete the table below to support you in assessing vulnerability

	Vulnerabilities, Warning Signs & Risk Indicators.	Yes, No or Unknown (Y/N/U)?	Current, Historic or Unknown (C/H/U?)	Child, Family or Both (C/F/B?)	Comment.
1.	Subject to a Child Protection Plan.				
2.	Breakdown of living and/or family relationships.				
3.	Bereavement or loss.				
4.	Social and/or learning difficulties.				
5.	History of abuse / neglect.				
6.	History of sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse.				
7.	History of Mental Health difficulties.				
8.	History of Domestic Abuse / Violence.				
9.	Evidence of poverty and/or deprivation.				
10.	Goes missing from School, Home, or Care.				
11.	Exclusion and/or unexplained absences from setting / school or not engaged in education/ employment/ training.				
12.	Migrant / Refugee / Asylum seeker.				
13.	Low self-esteem / Emotional Health issues (including anxiety related issues, suicidal ideations self-harming, or eating disorders).				
14.	Isolated from peers / social networks (not mixing with their usual friends).				
15.	Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviours.				
16.	Aggressive behaviour towards others.				
17.	History of being bullied or being a bully.				
18.	Involvement in criminal activities (Possible offending patterns in the family).				
19.	At risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) (known or suspected).				
20.	Drug / alcohol and/or substance misuse.				
21.	Gang member or association.				

Based on the above indicators, if there are any safeguarding concerns or worries, have you:

- Made a referral to Social Care? Yes / No.
- If so, did you gain consent from parents? Yes / No.

Refer to the completed Vulnerability Assessment table (Section D).

Now use your professional judgement to reflect upon the indicators you have ticked and consider the health, welfare, and safety of the child in question.

Rating scale: On a scale of 0-10 how concerned are you about this child?

No concerns

Very concerned

0

10

Please indicate this on the line above.

If you have reason to believe a child is at risk of significant harm, you should contact The Children and Families Front Door on 01926 414144 in accordance with the Warwickshire's safeguarding procedures.

Section E Professional Judgement – Re: vulnerability of child

Referrer Details:	
Name or referrer:	Position / Job title:
Setting name:	Leader / Manager's name and details if different to above:
Address:	Ofsted Registration:
Phone number:	
Email address:	
Date of referral:	Signature:

Due to the highly sensitive nature of this documentation, it should only be returned to Warwickshire Early Years Advisors via email. Please ensure the document is password protected and that the password is sent in a separate email.

earlyyearsadvisors@warwickshire.gov.uk

Appendix 4 Attendance Scenarios:

Child A.

Child A has a funded place attended your setting for term time sessions only. After half term child A does not return to your nursery. You contact the parents, and they share that they have relocated to London. The parents explain that they are yet to find a new nursery place for their child and in the meantime, they will care for him at home. You do not hold any safeguarding concerns for the child or the family.

Suggested action to take:

- During contact with parents the Manager should verify with the family their new details and ask to be kept informed when the child attends a new setting. In the conversation, confirm dates of the relocation and the reasons for this.
- The Manager should consider reasonable contact through email or calls depending on parents' preference, with the family until the new setting is known. This will allow them to be aware of the recent changes in contact information.
- Once confirmed the Manager should contact the new setting to verify child's attendance/ registration at the provision and arrange for the child's information to be transferred securely, using transfer receipts or recorded/ tracked delivery (as per settings policy).
- The Manager should record conversations with the family and new settings and any other correspondence with dates and times and log this on the child's chronology. This should then all be added to the child's file.
- Remove the child's details from the registration list and notify EY funding at Warwickshire LA if relevant.
- Carry out the transfer of child's information securely to the new setting (as per setting policy).
- In line with the EYFS 2024 the setting should retain a copy of the child's safeguarding file for a reasonable period of time (as stated in the settings policy).

Please note: The above steps are suggested guidance only and for illustrative purposes only. In all instances Early Years providers must follow their own setting policies and procedures in relation to attendance and safeguarding and if you hold any concerns that the child is at risk of harm contact the children and Families Front Door immediately.

Child B.

Staff have met with parents to discuss their child's attendance and the non-payment of nursery fees.

Following this meeting, the parents tell you that they are going to take their child out of the setting.

Suggested action to take:

- Make every effort to discuss and resolve the matter with the family using restorative problem-solving tools.
- If the payment is the barrier, consider consultation with the Family Information Service alongside direct support through a payment plan and work with the family to encourage continued attendance.
- Keep notes of any actions, conversations and meetings held including who attended and dates. This demonstrates your early intervention support.
- If a resolution cannot be reached and the family maintains the intention to remove the children from the setting, then record all communication and outcomes including dates.
- Use the flow charts 1 and 2 and the **Vulnerability Assessment** within Appendix 3, section D to determine if further action is needed to safeguard the child or wider family.
- Log all actions taken on the child's chronology and add to the child's file.
- Remove the child's details from the registration list and notify EY funding at Warwickshire LA if relevant.
- In line with the EYFS 2024 the setting should retain a copy of the child's safeguarding file for a reasonable period of time (as stated in the settings policy).

Please note: The above steps are suggested guidance only and for illustrative purposes only. In all instances Early Years must follow their own setting policies and procedures in relation to attendance and safeguarding and if you hold any concerns that the child is at risk of harm contact the children and Families Front Door immediately.

Child C has attended your nursery for 6 months, during which time their attendance has been sporadic. When contacting the family, they are always able to provide a reason for absence which usually relates to the illness of the child or a family sickness bug.

A member of staff has informed you that Child C has not arrived today and attempts to contact parents via telephone, text and email have been unsuccessful.

You contact the local Primary School where the child's siblings attend and speak to the Headteacher, who confirms the siblings are in school and that they saw the youngest child being pushed in the pushchair that morning when mum dropped the older siblings at school.

Suggested action to take:

- The Manager has queried the sibling's attendance in school, as the parent and all known contacted are unavailable to verify the safety of the nursery child.
- The Manager of the setting should record the school's response that the nursery child has been seen and continue to attempt to contact parents.
- Once contact is made plan a discussion with the family to understand the individual needs of the family and barriers to ensure that the child attends regularly.
- Keep notes of any actions, conversations and meetings held including who attended and dates. This demonstrates your early intervention support.
- Use the flow charts 1 and 2 and the **Vulnerability Assessment** within Appendix 3, section D to determine if further action is needed to safeguard the child or wider family.
- Continue to develop positive relationships with the family and consider Early Help support to dissolve barriers and improve early years attendance. Reinforce positive attendance and the value of learning through attendance.

Please note: The above steps are suggested guidance only and illustrative purposes only. In all instances Early Years Provider must follow their own setting policies and procedures in relation to attendance and safeguarding and if you hold any concerns that the child is at risk of harm contact the children and Families Front Door immediately.

Child D.

Staff have met with parents to discuss their child's attendance. At the meeting, the parents state they intention to improve their child's attendance, but in practice there is little, or no improvement and attendance remains a concern. On all occasions of absence, you have been able to contact the parents and reasons for absence are given.

Suggested actions to take:

- The Manager and setting staff should consider the child's individual interests, strengthen, and build on relationships with parents and key person. Directly seeking the voice of the child and their feeling about nursery can include things they like or dislike. For example, an all about me leaflet.
- The Manager should maintain brief, up-to-date, records of contacts or attempted contacts with the family and the date when each action was taken. This should be recorded on the child's chronology and kept within the child file.
- At the meeting, the Manager or key person presents a visual or written reflection of the attendance to demonstrate the impact on the child's learning. There can be a reflective conversation on the reasons given and adjustments in hours or a support plan agreed to navigate the issues. This could include an Early Help pathway to change.
- At any time during the process if the manager or any staff become concerned about the child's safety and welfare, they should follow the flow charts 1 and 2 and the **Vulnerability Assessment** within Appendix 3, section D to determine if further action is needed to safeguard the child or wider family.

Please note: The above steps are suggested guidance only and illustrative purposes only. In all instances Early Years Provider must follow their own setting policies and procedures in relation to attendance and safeguarding and if you hold any concerns that the child is at risk of harm contact the children and Families Front Door immediately.

Child E. *You care for a child whose attendance pattern previously caused concern alongside other issues in the home, but attendance has recently improved. You also know that the child has siblings at the local school. The child has not arrived at Nursery today as agreed with the Social Worker and family and there are safeguarding concerns about the child if they were to miss nursery. The child is on a Child in Need plan, but this is due to close at the end of the month.*

Actions to take:

- The Manager should contact the family for reason of absence (following flow chart 1) and if no contact is made the Manager should contact the child social worker immediately.
- The Manager should then follow the guidance with flow chart 2 - going through the initial actions to take, including contacting the local school where siblings attend.
- The Manager should maintain brief, up-to-date records of contacts or attempted contacts with the family, social worker and other initial contact calls made and the date when each action was taken. This should be recorded in the child's chronology and kept within the child's file.
- If there are additional safeguarding concerns relating to the child being at risk of significant harm the Manager should contact the Children and Families Front Door immediately, to speak to the Duty Social Worker if the child's Social Worker is unavailable, for support and guidance.

Please note: The above steps are suggested guidance only and illustrative purposes only. In all instances Early Years Provider must follow their own setting policies and procedures in relation to attendance and safeguarding and if you hold any concerns that the child is at risk of harm contact the children and Families Front Door immediately.

Scenario 1 Applying for a Deferred Entry into a Reception class.

Parents make an application for a 'first time at school' place and the admissions authority offers a place. Parents accept the place in Reception which is the correct chronological age group for their child, but they want a Deferred Entry in the Reception class, which means they wish the school to hold the place for their child to start school at any point after September in that academic year. They must have started school by the term after their 5th birthday.

Process:

- Parents complete the application form for a Reception place.
- The LA Admissions Team allocates a Reception place to the child, specifying the school.
- Parent accepts the Reception place allocated.
- If the parent wishes to request to start later in the school year, rather than September, or their child to attend part-time, this must be negotiated with the school, and they must complete a Deferred or Part-Time Entry form provided by the school. For:
 - A Deferred Entry, the form should state which term the reception year the child will begin school. This can be either the spring or the summer term.
 - A Part-Time Entry, a part time timetable must be agreed by the school. The child must attend school full-time by the summer term.

Outcome:

The child is allocated a Reception place at school and will start school in Reception in the correct chronological cohort for their age, in either the spring or summer term or any other date later than the September, on an agreed part time timetable.

Support the family to contact School Admissions to discuss Deferred or Part Time Entry to Allocated School.

Scenario 2 Applying for a Delayed Entry into a Reception class, to be educated out of year group, 1 year later than the normal age group.

Parents of a summer born child, or a child with exceptional circumstances (i.e., medical issues), wish their child to start school a year later than normal.

This is a Delayed Entry request into the Reception class, which means they would be educated 1 year below their chronological age.

Process:

- At the normal reception admissions period (September) for the child's chronological age, parent's complete application form for a school place. If they want their child to start 1 year later, they must also complete a second form, applying for a **Request to be educated out of year group** - Delayed Entry, provide reasons to support their request and have an agreement from the schools they are

applying to, to educate their child out of year group.

- If the schools do agree to the parent's request for the child to be educated out of year group, this does not guarantee a place at any of the schools for the following year, *for example the secondary school may only offer the place from the child's birth year not the cohort they were in at primary.*
- LA send the delayed application request to the Educating Out of Year Group Panel, which meets before the offer day in March. The Panel comprises representatives from the Admissions Team, the Assessment Team, the Early Years Team and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team.
- The panel consider the application and assess the reasons provided for a **Delayed Entry**. This entire process takes place before the school place offer day in March.

Outcome:

- Panel **APPROVE** application:
 - Child is granted their request to be Educated out of year group - Delayed Entry and may start school in Reception, the following school year, which is 1 year below their chronological age.
 - Parents will need to apply for a Reception place in the following September, stating that their child has been granted a Delayed Entry. The schools they are applying to must agree to accept a delayed entry.
- Panel **DO NOT APPROVE** application:
 - Parents will be sent a letter explaining the reasons their application was not approved. This will be before the offer day in March. - Parents will receive a Reception class offer on offer day in March.
 - Parents may decide to take up the Reception place offered, but request for their child to start on a part-time basis or later in that academic year. This is the process as explained in Scenario 1.
 - Parents can decide not to take up the Reception place and apply in the next admissions round for a Year 1 - First Time School Place. See scenario 4. 15 (Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.)

Support the family to contact School Admissions to discuss the request to be Educated Out of Year Group – Delayed Entry

Scenario 3 (Officially an in-Year application according to the Admissions code) Applying for a First Time School Place in Year 1 (compulsory school age). The child will be educated in their normal chronological year group. Parents apply for a first-time school place in Year 1 (compulsory school age) and are happy for their child to be educated in Year 1, with their correct chronological cohort.

In this scenario, the nursery/early years setting will have delivered the Early Years curriculum and made all the Early Years Profile assessments and data returns to the local authority to be forwarded to the DfE (Department for Education). The Early Years Foundation Stage is complete.

Process:

- Parents complete the application form: **Year 1 - First Time at School Place**. Parents indicate on the form as to whether they are accepting the Year 1 chronologically allocated place.

Outcome:

- Parent is offered a Year 1 - First Time at School Place, and the place is accepted.
- A letter will be sent to parents and the school by the Admissions Team informing them of the outcome of the application.

Support the family to contact School Admissions to applying for a First Time School Place in Year 1.

Scenario 4 (Officially an in-Year application according to the Admissions code) Applying for a First Time School Place in Year 1 (compulsory school age).

The parent wishes the child to be educated in the reception class (Delayed Entry). The child will be educated out of year group, 1 year later than the normal age group. Children who were refused a **Delayed Entry** request in the previous year's admissions round, will be applying for **First Time at school place for Year 1**, which is the correct year group for their child's chronological age. However, parents want their child to start school in Reception for their first-time school place, although this means they will be educated out of year group 1 year below their chronological age. **This is a Delayed Entry.**

Parents must complete the Late Request for Children to be Educated Out of Year Group – Delayed Entry**Process:**

- Parents complete application form for **Year 1 – First Time at School Place**, indicating on the form that they would like their child to be given a Delayed Entry place in the reception class and be educated out of year group for their 16 chronological ages. They must have an agreement from the schools they are applying to for their child to be educated out of year group.
- LA sends the Delayed Entry application request to the Panel, which meets before the offer day in March.
- The panel consider the application and assess the reasons provided for a Delayed Entry to the Reception class rather than Year 1. This entire process takes place before the school place offer day in March.

Outcome:

- **Delayed entry request is approved.** A reception place is offered. A letter will be sent to parents and the school by the Admissions Team informing them of the outcome of the application before the school place offer day in March.
- On the offer day, parents will be allocated a place in the reception class.
- **Delayed entry request is not approved.** The child is offered a Year 1 place, which means they are being educated in the correct year group according to their chronological age.

Support the family to contact School Admissions to discuss the Request for Children to be Educated Out of Year Group – Delayed Entry.