

ABSENT CHILDREN POLICY

WHY WE HAVE THIS POLICY

As childminders, we have a duty to safeguard every child in our care. If a child is unexpectedly absent, it could indicate a concern or emergency. This policy sets out how we respond if a child does not arrive when expected, and what parents/carers need to do to keep us informed.

EXPECTED ATTENDANCE AND COMMUNICATION

It's important that children arrive and leave at their contracted times, both for planning and safeguarding reasons. We understand that delays can happen, but we ask parents to communicate clearly and promptly.

- If you are running late for drop-off or collection, please **let us know as soon as possible**.
- If you arrive late during a school run or outing, you may need to **meet us at the location** or wait until we return.
- Regular lateness or unexplained absences may be recorded on your child's safeguarding file.
- Ongoing lateness or non-attendance may lead to a **contract review or termination** if no solution is agreed.
- Parents/carers must provide at least two emergency contacts for

their child prior to starting, and ensure these numbers are kept up to date.

IF A CHILD DOES NOT ARRIVE AS EXPECTED

If a child is scheduled to attend but does not arrive, and we have not been informed, we follow the steps below to ensure the child and family are safe.

- We will contact the child's **parents or carers 15 minutes** after their expected arrival time.
- If there is no answer, we will **continue calling and leave a message** (voicemail or text).
- If there is **no contact after 45 minutes**, we will begin calling the child's **emergency contacts**.
- If we still cannot reach anyone, and **between 1.5 and 2 hours have passed** since the child was expected, we will call the **police to request a welfare check and contact the local authority children's services**.
- This process is in place to ensure that both the child and parent/carer are safe — for example, if a parent has had an accident and the child is left alone or unaccounted for.

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