

Attendance and Absence Policy

Purpose

At Burren Sonas Kindergarten, safeguarding the wellbeing of all children is our priority. To ensure this, we ask that parents/guardians notify the Kindergarten in case of a child's absence. Regular attendance promotes stability, routine, and social-emotional development, enabling children to maximise their learning opportunities.

This policy outlines clear expectations for attendance, procedures for reporting absences, and steps to address persistent non-attendance. It aligns with our commitment to fostering an environment where every child reaches their full potential, as well as meeting statutory requirements.

Legislative and Quality Frameworks

This policy complies with the following:

- Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016
- Siolta Standard 10: Organisation
- National Standard 1: Information
- National Standard 2: Contract

Principle

1. Routine and Stability: Consistent attendance is crucial for young children's wellbeing, helping them connect with peers, adapt to daily rhythms, and access the curriculum.
2. Commitment to Attendance: When families enroll, they commit to ensuring daily attendance unless absences are unavoidable. Repeated absences without valid reasons disrupt a child's development and affect the Kindergarten's ability to operate effectively.

Attendance Procedures

Reporting Absences

Parents/guardians are required to:

- Notify the Kindergarten Management by 9:30 AM on the first day of absence via phone or email.
- Provide daily updates for ongoing absences.
- Schedule medical appointments outside Kindergarten hours, where possible. If unavoidable, proof of appointments may be requested.

Unexplained Absences

If parents/guardians fail to notify the Kindergarten Management of an absence:

- Management will make reasonable attempts to contact them via phone, messages or email on the day of absence.
- If no contact is established within 48 hours, the absence may be reported to Tusla in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991.

Persistent Absences

Persistent absenteeism (15% or more of scheduled days) will prompt a meeting with parents/guardians and the Kindergarten Manager to discuss and address attendance concerns.

Role of Staff

Staff will complete a daily attendance register at the start of each session

If a child is absent without prior notification by 10:00 AM, Management will contact the parents/guardians.

Any concerns regarding attendance will be raised with the Kindergarten Manager, who will take appropriate action.

Arrival Times and Punctuality

We understand that getting young children ready for school in the morning can be a slow process but we ask that guardians / parents make a concerted effort to be on time each day. If guardians / parents are running late, we ask that you notify a member of staff so that they can plan the session, adult to child ratio numbers and meals accordingly.

Pre-school is an opportunity to prepare young children for attending school and creating good morning routines which allow for punctuality to be a key step in preparing them for the next stages of education. The morning session begins promptly at 9:30 AM.

If parents/guardians anticipate being late, they must notify a staff member to facilitate session planning. Punctuality is essential to maintain the rhythm of the day and ensure staff-child ratios are met.

Developing morning routines that prioritize punctuality prepares children for school and instils lifelong habits.

Staff are available to support families struggling with time management and can offer practical advice to help establish efficient routines.

Reluctance to Attend

If a child is reluctant to attend, open communication between parents/guardians and staff is strongly encouraged. Together, we can develop a supportive integration plan. Persistent attendance difficulties may lead to a referral to Tusla for further support measures.

Withdrawal from the Service

Parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their child from the Kindergarten must:

- Provide four weeks' written notice.
- Pay any outstanding fees if the child leaves before the notice period ends.

If a child struggles to integrate into the Kindergarten and this affects their wellbeing, Management may request their withdrawal. Management will make an assessment on whether their attendance is having a detrimental effect on the child's wellbeing. In such cases, two weeks' notice will be provided.

Supporting Documents and Linked Policies

This policy is supported by the following:

- Fee Policy
- Drop-off and Collection Policy
- Outdoor Play Policy
- Settling-in Policy

Person Responsible: Blandine Mahfouf

This policy was adopted by Burren Sonas Kindergarten on:

03 December 2024

Signed by: _____



Chairperson on behalf of

Management Review date: