

YMCA Stepping Stones Nursery Attendance Policy - September 2025

Introduction

Regular attendance is crucial for children's development and well-being in their early years. Establishing regular routines for young children enhances their sense of security and belonging and supports their learning journey.

This policy outlines our expectations for attendance, procedures for reporting absences, and the actions we will take in cases of unexplained or prolonged absences.

We are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children in our care.

Expectations for Attendance

We expect children to attend their scheduled sessions regularly and punctually.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child's attendance and we will work with you to support or signpost support with any issues you have with your child attending nursery. If a child is unable to attend, parents/carers must notify us as soon as possible.

Reporting Absences

Parents/carers must notify the nursery of their child's absence on the day of the absence. Absences must be reported as soon as possible and **no later than 30 minutes** after their official start time. Absences can be reported by telephone on: **01332 372245**, via email: steppingstones@ymcaderbyshire.org.uk or through the parenting app EYLog. When reporting an absence, please provide the child's full name, reason for absence (e.g. illness, appointment) and the expected duration of absence.

Unexplained Absences

If a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the parent/carer using the primary contact number provided. If we are unable to reach the parent/carer, we will attempt to contact the secondary emergency contact provided. All contact attempts and outcomes will be recorded. If we are unable to make contact and have concerns about the child's welfare, we will follow our safeguarding procedures and may need to contact Derby City Children's Services.

Prolonged Absences

A prolonged absence is defined as 2 consecutive sessions of absence without a valid explanation. If a child is absent for a prolonged period, we will:

- Make repeated attempts to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts.

- Send a written communication (e.g., email or letter) to the parent/carer.
- Consider a home visit, if appropriate and following internal procedures which could include the withdrawal of the child's nursery placement.
- Consult with our designated safeguarding lead and if necessary, Derby City Children's Services, where there are concerns about the child's welfare.

Illness

If your child is unwell, please keep them at home to prevent the spread of infection.

- * Please inform us of any contagious illnesses, such as chickenpox, measles, etc.
- * Children should not return to the setting until they are symptom-free or as advised by a medical professional.

Late Arrival / Early Collection

Please inform us if your child will be arriving late or collected early. Late arrivals and early collections can disrupt routines and the learning environment, so we encourage punctuality. Only authorised persons can collect children. Please inform us of any changes to collection arrangements.

Late / Uncollected Children

It is important that you arrive on time to collect your child. If for any reason or in exceptional circumstances, you are unable to, please arrange for a family member or friend (over 18 years old) to collect your child and inform the setting in advance and provide a description of the person and a password that they will use. If the team has any concerns regarding the person collecting he/she will contact the main parent or carer for confirmation.

If a child is not collected, and the parent or carer has *not* notified us that they will be delayed, we will follow the procedure set out below:

Up to 15 minutes late:

- When the parent or carer arrives, they will be reminded that they must call to notify us if they are delayed.
- The parent or carer will be informed that penalty fees will have to be charged - £15 for every 15 minutes late.

Over 15 minutes late:

- If a parent or carer is more than 15 minutes late in collecting their child, the team will try to contact them using the contact details on file. Messages will be left requesting that they contact us immediately. The team will then try to contact the emergency contacts listed on the child's registration form.
- While waiting to be collected, the child will be supervised by familiar staff.

- When the parent or carer arrives, they will be reminded that they must call us to notify us if they are delayed, and that penalty fees will have to be charged.

Over 30 minutes late:

- The Manager or Head of Service will be contacted at this point to support with the next steps.
- If the Manager has been unable to contact the child's parents or carers after 30 minutes, the manager will contact the local Social Care team for advice.
- The child will remain in the care of staff, on the premises, if possible, until collected by the parent or carer, or until placed in the care of the Social Care team.
- If it is not possible for the child to remain at our premises, a note will be left on the door informing the child's parent/carer where the child has been taken (e.g. YMCA Campus, another YMCAD site or into the care of a safeguarding agency) and leave a contact number. A further message will be left on the parent or carer's telephone explaining events.

The team will record incidents of late collection and will discuss them with the child's parents/carers. Parents/carers will be reminded that if they persistently collect their child late, they may lose their place.

Safeguarding

We recognise that circumstances may change which affect the collection of a child, we may ask for legal documentation or written confirmation if needed.

In order to maintain the welfare of all children attending our provision we will not allow a child to leave with someone who we believe to be adversely affected by alcohol and other substances.

Staff are trained to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns. Any concerns about a child's welfare will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead. We will follow our safeguarding procedures and work with relevant professionals as necessary.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant legislation.

Review: September 2026