

FLYING START CARMARTHENSHIRE

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ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE

Flying Start Attendance Guidance

Introduction

This guidance has been produced on the basis of supporting good practice within Flying Start in Carmarthenshire in relation to attendance. By offering a wide variety of hands on experiences the children develop at their own pace meeting their unique potential. Flying Start childcare setting's goal is to develop an environment that invites children to explore, question, investigate, create and imagine.

Children who attend pre-school childcare develop better intellectually and are better prepared for school and in the longer term.

Children make friends and develop improved social relationships, having fun, and learning from each other.

Purpose of Guidance

In Flying start we believe **good attendance is essential to enable** children to settle and benefit from the learning opportunities available to them. At a young age continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. Also we believe regular attendance at Flying Start can set a precedent for statutory school.

Background

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to ensuring that all children have a 'Flying Start in life'. Under this commitment Local Authorities via the Family Information Childcare and Play have been given a specific grant with an aim to make a difference to the life changes of children aged under 4years. This includes offering free part-time childcare to children aged 2years – 3years within 17 designated Flying Start areas in Carmarthenshire.

Childcare is offered to all eligible children from the term after their 2nd birthday until the term following the 3rd birthday. Each child is offered 5 sessions per week for 2 ½ hours. Childcare sessions are offered bilingually, through the medium of English and Welsh.

Process

Registration in a Flying Start Childcare Venue

During registration at a Childcare setting, parents will complete the attendance agreement (see **Attendance Agreement**, pg). A copy of this agreement will be given to the Flying Start Childcare Co-ordinator and a copy will be kept in the Child's Record File at the setting. Parents are made aware of the expectation that they are to inform a member of staff at the childcare setting as soon as possible if their child will not be attending childcare on that day (see **Attendance Guidance** flow diagram, pg).

A flexible approach to the number of sessions attended is often required to cater for parents' needs. For example, if a parent decides to bring the child for three sessions only, then this should be accommodated. However, providers should encourage parents to take up their full entitlement where possible (WG FS Guidance - Annex 2 2013). Parents are made aware that they are entitled to increase their number of sessions at any time, provided that there is availability within the setting due to adult/child ratios.

Outcomes

Welsh Government emphasise the importance of good attendance in Flying Start. In Carmarthenshire, we aim for 80% - 90% attendance at all settings.

Who is Responsible?

It is the responsibility of all Flying Start settings and childcare staff to encourage good attendance and to support families.

Staff should be proactive in contacting families with children who are eligible to attend Flying Start childcare, to secure parents' support and children's attendance at the settings. Tenacity and initiative may be needed to engage some parents, especially from 'hard-to-reach' groups, so that their children receive their full allocation of childcare (WG FS Guidance - Annex 2 2013).

The Childcare Leader collates and monitors attendance information for all children each month. A copy of this information is sent to the Flying Start Performance Team who then sends it to Welsh Government every term.

The following guidance is to be followed by all childcare settings and does not replace the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. It does, however, help to safely manage risk.

Register Codes

These will be the register codes that will be used by the Childcare Managers to record absence.

- **X** - cross in each box on the days the child actually attended for this period,
- **A** - for authorised absence
- letter **O** - for unauthorised absence.

If you are open, please ensure that each box is populated with an X, A

Authorised absence:-

This can include sickness, medical appointments, holidays, heritage breaks, etc. This is when a member of staff at the childcare setting has been informed by the parent / carer, before hand or on the morning of the absence.

Unauthorised absence:-

The childcare staff have not been informed by the parent/carer that the child will not be attending.

(As set out in the diagram below)

Flying Start Attendance Agreement

This is an agreement between _____ (nursery name) and
_____ (parent/guardian name).

Flying Start Childcare is provided to benefit your child. Attendance is monitored by the nursery and reported to Welsh Government every month. With this in mind, it is vital that the parent/guardian informs the nursery as soon as possible when their child is absent due to illness, holidays, etc.

It is your responsibility as the parent/guardian to contact the nursery by the end of the session to inform them why your child has been absent. Good attendance is key to getting your child ready for school and encouraging your child's development.

I am aware that my child is entitled to five 2.5 hour sessions of Flying Start Childcare per week, and that this Childcare is funded by Welsh Government for up to 210 sessions a year.

CHILD'S NAME: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

The above named child will attend _____ (nursery name) for _____ sessions a week, which is what the nursery have agreed they are able to offer. The sessions my child will attend are:

	a.m.	p.m.	notes
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			

If not taking the full entitlement at present, the number of sessions may be increased (if places are available) upon discussion with the Childcare Leader or child's key person. A new Attendance Agreement will be completed when an increase or reduction in sessions is agreed.

I have read and understood the above and been given a copy of the Attendance Agreement.

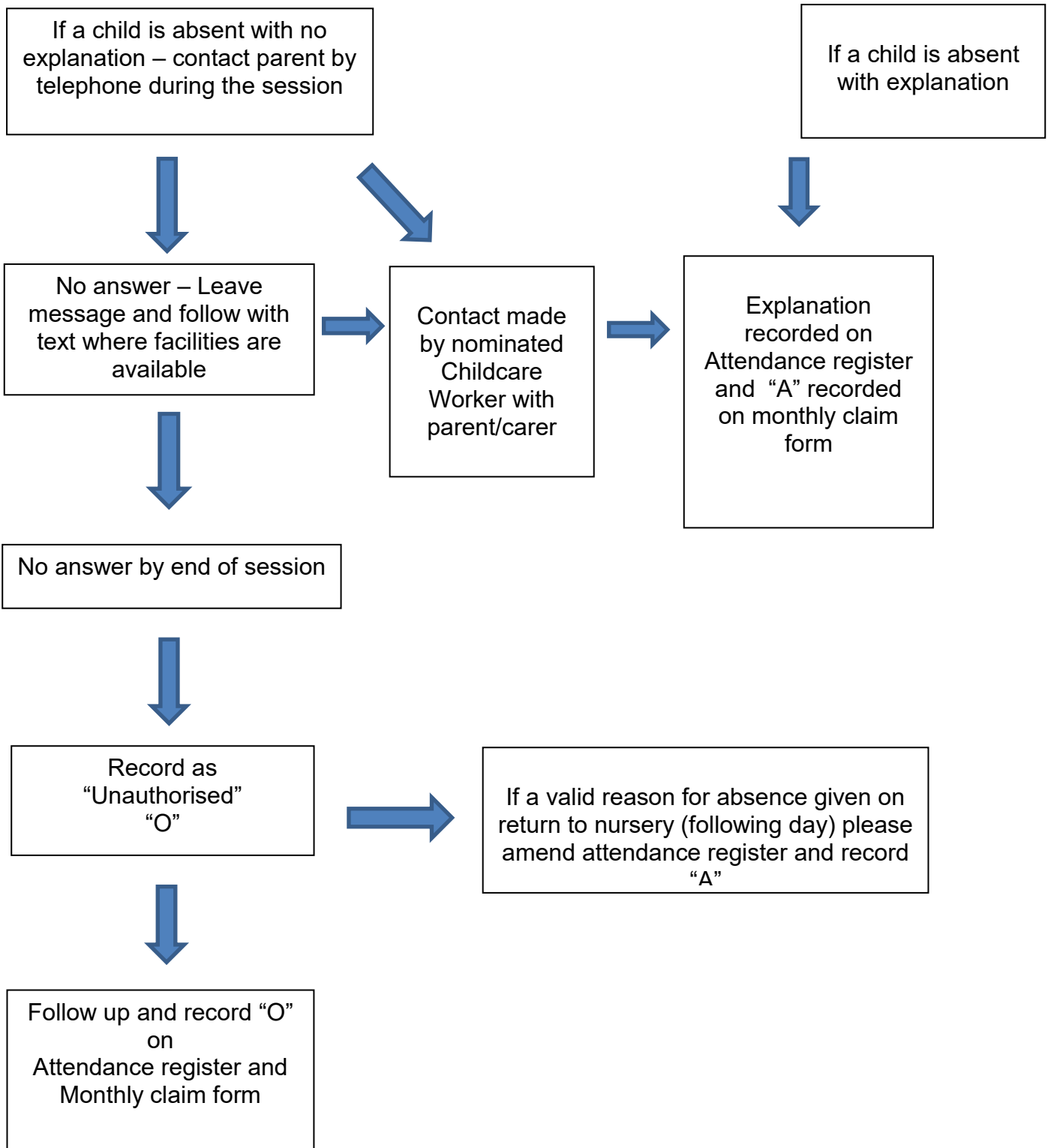
SIGNED: _____ (parent/guardian) DATE: _____

SIGNED: _____ (Childcare Leader/Worker)

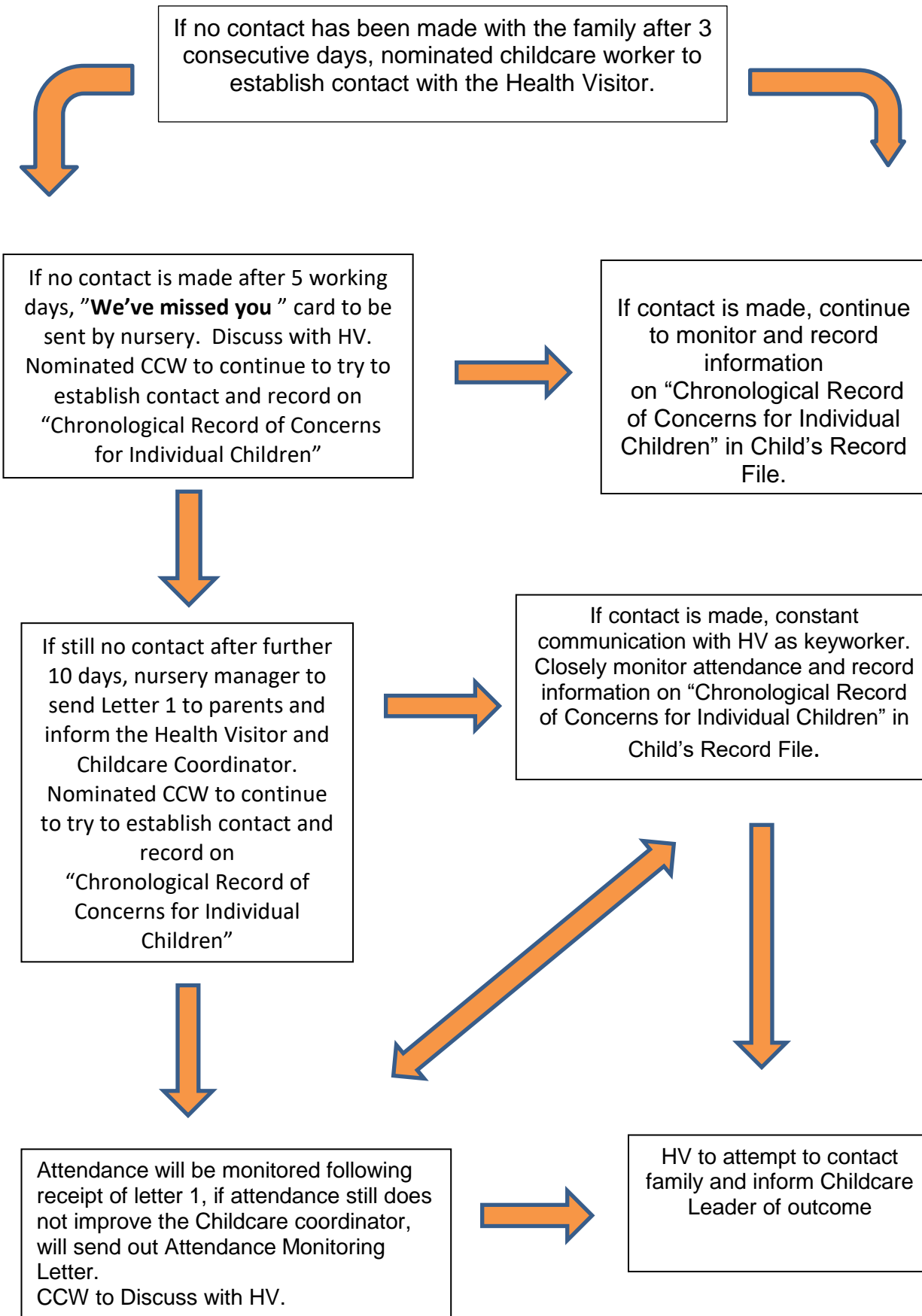
NAME: _____ (Childcare Leader/Worker)

For office use only					
Checked by:		Date:		Signed:	

Flying Start Childcare Attendance Guidance



Managing Absence 1



We've missed you card



We've missed you!

All the staff and children atare missing you and would love to see you back here with us, playing and having fun.

Please call us as soon as possible on

Protocol for sending an Attendance Letter

**Month
1**

If the Childcare setting has sent letter 1 after 15 days; initiate home visit by H.V, claim form to be checked for the following month and if the child's attendance is below 80% an Attendance monitoring letter to be sent out.

At this point, the Childcare Coordinator will liaise with both the Health Visitor and Childcare Setting.

**Notice
period**

If the Childs attendance does not increase following receipt of attendance monitoring letter, the child will be deregistered and a deregistration letter will be sent to the family (Copy given to Health Visitor and Childcare Setting). The letter will initiate the months' notice period with both the child and childcare setting; date given on letter.

If the child's attendance does improve the month following letter; attendance will be monitored

Managing Absence 3 For Children with Safeguarding Concerns*

* Identified as a Child in Need or Child Protection

