Managing Staff Absence and Contingency Arrangements Policy

Policy Statement

Bradpole Preschool maintains contingency arrangements to ensure that appropriate staffing levels and staff-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework.

Where staff are absent due to illness or other authorised circumstances, suitable cover arrangements will be put in place to ensure the safe and effective running of the preschool.

If suitable cover cannot be arranged from within the existing staff team, the Preschool Leads will contact the Committee Chairperson to discuss alternative arrangements.

If suitable cover still cannot be found, the Preschool Leads may contact all parents and carers by email to ask whether any families who do not require childcare that day would be willing to keep their child at home.

Although this would be entirely voluntary and would help us maintain safe staffing levels and continue to provide care for children who need it most, we hope that parents and carers will understand that we have a legal responsibility to maintain the required staff-to-child ratios. If insufficient families are able to keep their children at home, there may be no alternative but to close the preschool for that day.

When considering any temporary reduction in the number of children attending, we will take individual circumstances and needs into account, giving particular consideration to:

1. Children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
2. Safeguarding concerns and children's welfare.
3. Children who are considered vulnerable or have additional needs.
4. Parents and carers who rely on childcare to attend work or meet other essential commitments.

Any decisions will be made fairly, taking account of children's individual needs, safeguarding responsibilities and our duty to provide inclusive care.

The Preschool Leads are responsible for arranging staff cover and implementing contingency arrangements. In their absence, this responsibility will be delegated to one of the Deputy Leads.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy has due regard to the following legislation, statutory requirements and guidance:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers (effective from 1 September 2026).
- Childcare Act 2006.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026).
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- Ofsted registration requirements and guidance.

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This policy was adopted by the Bradpole Preschool Committee

During the Autumn Term 2026

Date to be reviewed Autumn Term 2027