

Late Collection & Uncollected Child Policy & Procedure

Policy Statement

This policy outlines the steps to be taken when a child is not collected from the nursery at the agreed collection time or by the official closing time. It ensures the safeguarding and emotional wellbeing of every child, while also recognising the operational needs of the nursery.

We have a duty of care to children and parents to ensure prompt collection and to manage delays appropriately. Late collection not only causes staffing and financial pressures but can lead to distress and anxiety for the child.

We understand that unexpected delays can occur. In such cases, please contact the nursery as early as possible to inform us of the situation. A late collection fee may still apply unless explicitly waived due to exceptional circumstances.

Legal & Safeguarding Framework

This policy aligns with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, The Children's Act 1989 & 2004, and applicable local authority child protection guidance.

Admission & Contact Information

At enrolment, parents must provide and regularly update:

- Child's full name and session times
- Home address, phone number(s), and workplace contact (if applicable)
- Mobile numbers (parents/carers plus three other emergency contacts)
- Names and contact details of authorized collectors
- Details of individuals with no legal access, if applicable
- A secure password system for verifying unfamiliar collectors

Upon enrolment, parents/carers are informed of:

- Collection expectations
- Procedures in case of delay or uncollected attendance
- Associated fees

Parent Responsibilities:

- Always keep your contact information up to date, including emergency contacts.
- Ensure that anyone collecting your child is aware of the agreed collection password and notify the nursery in advance if the individual has not collected your child before.
- Inform the nursery as early as possible if you will be late or if someone different will collect your child.

Late or Unplanned Changes

If unable to collect your child on time, you must:

- Inform the nursery as soon as possible
- Provide the name, relationship, and contact info of the alternative collector
- Ensure the collector knows the child's password and can provide identification

General Collection Policy

- Children must be collected by the agreed time or by 6:00pm, the nursery's closing time.
- A minimum of two staff members, including at least one qualified person, will remain with the child until they are collected.
- Staff will provide care and emotional support to the child, addressing their individual needs and reassuring them throughout.

Late Collection Procedure and Charges

Grace Period:

A 5-minute grace period is allowed after your child's session end time without charge.

Late Collection Fees

Time Late Over Set Time	Action Taken	Fee Applied
5-10 minutes	Manager/deputy informed, child reassured by key worker or senior staff	£10
10-20 minutes	Parent/carer contacted via all listed numbers	£20
20-30 minutes	Emergency contacts called if no parent reached	£30
After 30 minutes	Social Services contacted if no one reached; incident logged	Variable*
After 6:00pm	Charged at £20 per 15-minute interval	£20+/15min

* Before 6pm Fees are charged at £10 per 10-minute interval or part thereof, depending on the severity and circumstances of the lateness. All charges will be added to your child's next invoice.

Escalation Procedure

If a child remains uncollected 30 minutes after the scheduled collection time and no contact can be made with any emergency contacts the Nursery Manager or Deputy will contact Social Services:

- ⇒ Folkestone & Hythe Area Safeguarding: 03000 423154
- ⇒ Integrated Front Door (Children's Services): 03000 411 111
- ⇒ Out of Hours: 03000 41 91 91
- ⇒ Immediate Danger: Call Police: 999

A formal incident report will be written and stored in the child's records.

Ofsted will be notified of any case where a child is left over 30 minutes without notification.

Persistent Lateness & Termination

- Continued lateness may result in a review of your booking.
- Persistent unreasonable delays may lead to termination of your child's place at the nursery.

If appropriate, concerns may be escalated to:

- Early Help
- Children's Social Services

Safeguarding & No Transport by Staff

- Staff must not take the child home or search for the parent personally.
- The child must not leave the premises with anyone other than the person(s) recorded or agreed with through proper verification

Documentation

All steps must be thoroughly documented: times, communications, people contacted, advice received, and actions taken. Incident reports are to be filed in the child's records and reviewed by senior staff afterwards

Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually and updated when necessary in response to incidents, updated legal guidance, or operational changes. Parents are encouraged to provide feedback to support continual improvement.