



Uncollected Child Procedure

Policy Statement

At Clare House Nursery, the safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. We recognise that occasions may arise where a child is not collected at the agreed time. In these circumstances, we will act promptly, calmly and in accordance with safeguarding procedures to ensure the child remains safe and well cared for until they are collected by a suitable adult or alternative arrangements are made.

This procedure should be read alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Procedure

If a child has not been collected by the agreed collection time the following procedure will be followed:

- Two members of staff will remain with the child on the premises if after closing times, one of whom should be the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager whenever possible.
- Staff will reassure the child, ensuring they feel safe, comfortable and supported. Age-appropriate explanations will be given without causing unnecessary worry.
- The child will remain supervised at all times and will be offered a drink, snack (where appropriate) and quiet activities while waiting to be collected.
- Every effort will be made to contact the child's parents/carers using all available telephone numbers.
- If parents/carers cannot be contacted, staff will immediately begin contacting all emergency contacts listed on the child's registration records.
- Telephone calls will be made away from the child wherever possible to avoid causing unnecessary anxiety.
- All contact attempts, including times and outcomes, will be recorded.

If no contact can be made

If parents/carers and emergency contacts cannot be reached within 30 minutes after the set collection time the Nursery Manager (or person in charge) will seek advice from Children's Social Care or the Emergency Duty Team, in line with local safeguarding procedures.

If at any point there are concerns about the child's welfare or the circumstances surrounding the non-collection, Children's Social Care may be contacted immediately without waiting for the 30-minute period.

Staff will provide:

- the child's full name and date of birth;
- parents'/carers' details;
- emergency contact information;
- details of all attempts made to contact the family;
- any relevant safeguarding information.

Children's Social Care will advise on the next steps and, if necessary, make arrangements for the child's care.

Staff Responsibilities

While waiting for advice or collection:

- Staff will remain calm and reassuring.
- The child's emotional wellbeing will remain a priority.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.
- Staff will not discuss concerns in front of the child or other families.
- Staff will not leave the premises to search for parents/carers.
- Staff will not transport the child home or take the child to their own home under any circumstances.
- Staff will remain with the child until they are safely collected or alternative arrangements have been made by Children's Social Care.

Recording

A detailed written record will be completed, including:

- the child's name;
- agreed collection time;
- actual collection time;
- all attempts to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts;
- advice received from Children's Social Care or other agencies;
- actions taken;
- names of staff involved;
- the name of the person collecting the child;
- the final outcome.

The record will be stored securely on the child's file in accordance with our Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy.

Repeated Late Collection

Where late collection becomes a repeated occurrence, the Nursery Manager will discuss the matter with the family to identify whether additional support is required.

Where appropriate, the nursery may:

- agree strategies to prevent future incidents;
- review emergency contact details;
- consider an Early Help Assessment (EHA) with parental consent if additional support would benefit the family;
- seek advice from Children's Social Care if there are safeguarding concerns.

Our Commitment

At Clare House Nursery, we are committed to safeguarding every child in our care. We will always act promptly, professionally and in the best interests of the child, ensuring they remain safe, cared for and emotionally supported until collected by a suitable adult or alternative arrangements are made in line with safeguarding procedures.

