

# DROP OFF AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN POLICY

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**Policy: Children are in the care of the Pre-School until they are handed over into the care of their parent/carer. The Designated Person for Child Protection must consider the arrangements for drop off and collection of the children, so that effective safeguarding measures can be taken. Safeguarding arrangements should include consideration of the procedures for dealing with children who are late to be collected or are not collected at the end of a session or authorized activity. It also applies where staff have concerns about effective care by the person collecting the child and the impact of this on the child's safety outside of Pre-School, in line with Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, DfES 2007 and Working Together to Safeguard Children, DCSF 2010.**

## Procedures

The times and procedures for collection of children are made clear to parents in the information given to them prior to their child starting at the Pre-School.

Regular attendance and timely arrival at Pre-School is encouraged in the Welcome Pack and underlined regularly in Pre-School information and by Key Persons. Good attendance is essential if children are to settle in and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. Continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress.

We also emphasise the importance of collecting children on time. It is upsetting to a child to be left uncollected when all the other children have gone home. It is made clear to parents that Pre-School staff are responsible for the children during Pre-School opening hours, but that they have other commitments once the session has ended.

- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child is dropped off and collected by a responsible adult.
- No child may be collected by a person under the age of 14 years.
- Parents/carers are required to inform the staff which adults will usually bring and collect their child. Adults who are not close family members will be required to sign the collection book.
- Parents/carers must notify the Supervisor if another person will be picking up their child. If this person is not known to the staff, the person concerned must give an agreed password, or show identification to the Pre-School staff, and sign the collection book.
- If a childminder regularly picks up a child, parents may sign a permission form for the year, which will be kept with the collection book.

## Safeguarding

Staff need to be aware of factors which can compromise a parent/carer's ability to offer safe care to their child. The use of drugs/alcohol or the presence of mental health difficulties does not in itself necessarily mean that the parents/carers are uncaring, incompetent or unable to offer safe care to their child/ren. However, if the

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extent of a parent's own needs mean that they cannot keep the child safe from harm, then a safeguarding referral to Children's Services is required.

If an adult with parental responsibility presents at school and staff are concerned that their presentation suggests they are unable to offer safe care, steps must be taken to clarify the situation and assess the risk to the child, bearing in mind both staff safety and the safety of the children in the building. Staff will need to consider:

- How is the adult presenting? Are they staggering or incoherent?
- Do the adult's needs compromise their ability to meet the child's basic physical and psychological needs?
- How do they intend to get home? Are they driving and are they fit to do so?
- Can the adult identify another Parent or supportive adult to be with them and the child?

If Staff are concerned for the adult's ability to care for the child based on the factors above, then a safeguarding referral will be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Pre-School will aim to retain care of the child until advice has been received from Social Services.

If there is risk from dangerous behaviour, then an emergency call (999) will be made to the Police.

### Collection

Parents and carers share in the responsibility to ensure their children are safe and in the care of a responsible adult. It is made clear to parents/carers that Pre-School must be notified immediately it becomes apparent that the person collecting the child may be late.

If a child is not collected when the Pre-School session finishes, the parent/carer will be contacted by telephone. If there is no response, the emergency numbers given to staff will be contacted.

A record will be kept of persistent late collection with no good reason. The parent/carer will be invited in to be informed of the arrangements to be put in place if the lateness continues, or to discuss their specific circumstances with the Supervisor, if appropriate. A late charge can be applied, which will be £1 for each minute that the child has been left waiting. This would be billed to the parent/carer with their general invoice.

Concerns about a child's safety and welfare associated with late collection will be dealt with according to our Safeguarding policy and procedures.

In the event of a parent failing to collect a child at an appointed time, with no response from the parent/carer or the emergency telephone numbers given to staff, and if staff have not been informed of the reason for the lateness, the Pre-School staff will follow child protection procedures. The Police will be informed and a safeguarding referral to Children's Services will be made. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take detailed, timed notes of the actions taken.

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