

2.4. Late collection and uncollected child



Policy statement

This policy is to protect children who have been left at the nursery over the agreed collection time or after closing hours. We understand that, from time to time, parents are held up or run late, in these cases we ask that parents/carers inform us as soon as they are able, so that we can reassure their child(ren). Tiddley Tots Nursery have a duty of care to the children and parents to ensure that collection of young children is made at the agreed time or within normal opening hours. Late collection causes unnecessary distress to a child.

Introduction

- In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult by their expected collection time, we put into practice agreed procedures.
- We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.
- Children remaining in our care after the agreed collection time, or after normal opening hours must be supervised by a minimum of two members of staff, one of whom must be qualified.
- Our opening hours are 8am-6pm for our East Finchley and Stoke Newington Branches; and 7.30am-6pm for our Hoddesdon Branch.
- There will be a **late collection fee of £1 per minute** if your child is not collected on time and vacated the premises by 6pm or 1pm if AM sessional care is provided.
- The late collection fees are payable on the day in cash and the money will go directly to the extra members of staff that have had to stay after hours (at least two staff must be present).
- Our Ofsted registration and planning regulations restrictions and our insurance policy prevent us from working after 6pm.
- Parents are asked to provide the following specific information when their child starts attending our setting, which is recorded on our Registration Form:
 - Home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.
 - Place of work, address and telephone number.
 - Mobile telephone number.
 - Names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
 - Who has parental responsibility for the child.
 - Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.
 - Collection password.
- On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they inform us in writing of how they can be contacted.
- On occasions when parents, or the persons normally authorised to collect the child, are not able to collect the child, they provide us with details of the name and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child.
- Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures.

Procedures

If a child is not collected at their expected collection time (6pm or 1pm if AM sessional care is provided), we follow the procedures below:

- The child's file is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
- If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
- If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form - are contacted.
- All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
- The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.
- **Late collection fee of £1 per minute will be charged for every minute the parent/carer is late.**

If no-one collects the child within 30 minutes of their expected collection time and there is no named contact who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children as follows:

- If we have any cause to believe the child has been abandoned, we contact the local authority children's social care team.
- If the children's social care team is unavailable [or as our local authority advise] we will contact the local police.
- After an additional 15 minutes if the child has not been collected, we will contact the above statutory agencies again.
- The child stays at the setting in the care of two of our fully-vetted workers, one of whom will be qualified, until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker, or by another person specified by social care.
- Social care will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- Under no circumstances will we go to look for the parent, nor leave the setting premises with the child.
- We ensure that the child is not anxious and we do not discuss our concerns in front of them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked.

Escalation

- Ofsted will be notified on **0300 1231231** in the event of collections after 30 minutes where no notification was given.
- Late fees will be added to your child's account and you will be expected to pay these via cash next time your child will be in.
- Unreasonable and / or persistent lateness may regrettably result in the nursery terminating your booking.
- Please note that if the manager/deputy manager sees fit she/he may contact the local authority's Duty Assessment Team earlier than it states in the set procedures for advice if necessary.