

Late Collection

Policy



Approved by: Trust Safeguarding Lead

Date: April 2026

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Next review due by: April 2028

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Changes History

Issue No	Date	Amended by	Summary of Changes
1	April 2026	Jemma Lynch, Trust Safeguarding Lead Karen Davies & Laurel Parry, Nursery Managers	New Policy

Authorisation (Responsible Owner)

Name	Role	Approval Date
Karen Davies	Nursery Manager - Chalkstone	1 April 2026
Laurel Parry	Nursery Manager – Norton	1 April 2026

Distribution List – Once authorised (Informed)

Name	
Nursery Managers and Deputy Managers	For uploading to Family and distributing to parents and carers
Dave Gooderam	For uploading to the Nursery websites

Review Period

Date Document Reviewed	By Whom
April 2028	Nursery Managers

1. Policy Statement

At Unity Stars Nursery, the safety and welfare of all children are paramount. This policy outlines our procedures to ensure that children are safely collected at the end of their nursery session and that any delay or non-collection is managed promptly and in line with **EYFS 2025 statutory requirements, local safeguarding arrangements, and Ofsted expectations.**

Punctual collection is a fundamental part of safeguarding practice. Late or non-collection can cause significant distress to children and disrupt staffing ratios, operational routines and welfare supervision. The policy aims to balance empathy for unexpected parental circumstances with a clear safeguarding and accountability framework.

2. Session Time and Expectations

We operate a flexible collection model within each session, but all children must be collected **no later than the end of their booked session:**

- **All-day session:** 8:00am – 6:00pm (collection by 6:00pm)
- **Golden Ticket AM session:** 8:00am – 1:00pm (collection by 1:00pm)
- **Golden Ticket PM session:** 1:00pm – 6:00pm (collection by 6:00pm)

Parents and carers may collect their child earlier if needed; however, the full session fee still applies. The child's welfare remains the shared responsibility of parents and the nursery during the agreed session times.

3. Parent and Carer Responsibilities

Parents and carers are expected to plan collection arrangements carefully to ensure punctuality. If a delay is unavoidable, the parent must:

1. **Contact the nursery immediately** to advise of the reason for delay and give an estimated time of arrival.
2. **Arrange for an authorised adult** to collect the child wherever possible.
3. **Provide the nursery with the name, relationship, and (where known) date of birth** of the authorised adult.
4. Ensure that this authorised adult knows the child's **emergency password**, which must have been agreed in advance with the Nursery Manager and is valid for single-use only.

Parents remain responsible for ensuring that any adult collecting the child is authorised and fully briefed. The nursery cannot release a child to an unauthorised or unidentified person under any circumstances.

4. Procedure for Late Collection

If a child is not collected by the end of their session and no contact has been received, the following staged procedure will be implemented to safeguard the child and ensure clear documentation:

1. **After 10 minutes** – the Nursery Manager or designated senior member of staff is informed.
 - Existing information on any expected delay is checked.
 - Attempts are made to contact the parent/carers on all telephone numbers provided (mobile, home, work).
 - If unsuccessful, emergency contacts are called.
2. **Ongoing contact attempts** – if no contact is made, further calls will be made every 10 minutes.
 - All calls and actions will be logged on an incident record, including times, names, and outcomes.
 - The child will remain under staff supervision in a calm, safe environment and will be reassured at all times.

3. After one hour (or sooner if safeguarding concerns arise):

- The Local Authority Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team will be contacted via the Suffolk MASH out-of-hours number (0808 800 4005).
- A request for advice or immediate intervention will be made in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).
- The child will remain in the nursery with two staff members (including a senior practitioner) until suitable collection or transfer to the Emergency Duty Team has been arranged.
- If social care are unable to collect the child immediately, the police may be contacted to ensure the child's safety.

4. Ofsted Notification:

- Ofsted will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable following any incident of non-collection requiring referral to social care or police.

Throughout this process, the child's emotional wellbeing will remain our primary concern. Staff will use distraction, reassurance and nurturing interaction to minimise distress.

5. Late Collection Charges

Where a child is collected late but no safeguarding escalation is required, a **late fee of £20 per 10 minutes (or part thereof)** will be charged. This reflects the additional staffing and operational costs incurred by the nursery remaining open beyond its registered hours.

Persistent late collection may trigger a meeting with the Nursery Manager to review arrangements and, if necessary, an action plan to support improved punctuality. Repeated failure to collect on time may be treated as a **safeguarding concern** and referred to **Children's Social Care** in line with **Section 11 of the Children Act 2004**.

6. Non-Collection of a Child

Where it becomes evident that a parent or emergency contact cannot be reached and no authorised adult arrives to collect the child within one hour, the nursery will:

- Treat the situation as a **child protection concern**.
- Contact the **Local Authority Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team** (0808 800 4005).
- Follow all instructions provided by the duty social worker.
- Continue to provide care and supervision until arrangements are confirmed.

A full written record of the incident, including times, actions, decisions and communications, will be completed by the Manager and stored securely. All information will be handled in accordance with **UK GDPR (2018)** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**.

5. Safeguarding and Welfare Commitment

Late or non-collection incidents are reviewed regularly by the Nursery Manager as part of safeguarding quality assurance. Patterns of lateness, repeated failure to communicate, or parental behaviour causing distress to a child will be discussed with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead** and, where necessary, referred to the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** for advice.

This policy should be read alongside:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
- **Attendance and Absence Policy**
- **Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy**