



Uncollected and Lost Child Policy

At The Little Magpies Nursery, the safety, security, and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. We understand the distress that can be caused by a child being uncollected or going missing, and we have clear, thorough procedures in place to respond promptly and appropriately in such situations.

This policy is in line with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework** and is part of our commitment to safeguarding all children in our care. It also complements the expectations outlined in our Parent Contract and Safeguarding Policy.

Uncollected Child Procedure

Children must be collected promptly at the end of their agreed session. If a child is not collected within **10 minutes** of their designated time, the following actions will be taken:

Immediate Actions (within 10–30 minutes)

- The child will be reassured and supervised by their Key Person or another familiar member of staff in a safe and calm environment.
- Staff will check the collection records and attempt to contact the parent/carer using all available telephone numbers.
- If no response is received, staff will begin contacting the **emergency contacts** listed on the child's registration form.
- The child will **never be left alone** and will not be released to anyone other than an authorised adult unless written permission or agreed password verification is provided.

If No Collection After 30 Minutes

- The **Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager** will make a decision on the next steps and contact **Gateshead Children's Services** or the **Emergency Duty Team** for guidance and support.
- The incident will be recorded in full, including the time of attempted contacts, advice received, and actions taken.
- Once the parent/carer is located, they will be reminded of the importance of timely collection and the nursery's safeguarding responsibilities.
- **A late collection fee** may be applied, as outlined in the Parent Contract.



Lost or Missing Child Procedure

Despite high levels of supervision and security, in the rare event that a child goes missing during nursery hours or during an outing, staff will act immediately and decisively.

Immediate Actions (first 5 minutes)

- The staff member noticing the child's absence will alert the **Room Leader and Nursery Manager** without delay.
- A **headcount** will be carried out and all children accounted for.
- The premises (including gardens, toilets, cupboards, and exits) will be searched systematically by designated staff.
- If off-site, the group leader will coordinate a headcount, check surrounding areas, and alert venue staff/security.

If the Child is Not Found Within 5 Minutes

- The **police** (by calling 999) and the **child's parents/carers** will be informed immediately.
- The child's name, description, clothing, and last known location will be provided.
- Staff will continue to search under the direction of the Manager until the emergency services arrive.

Follow-Up Actions

- The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** will be informed immediately and will record the incident in full.
- The incident will be reported to **Ofsted** within **14 days**, as required by EYFS standards.
- A **full internal investigation** will be carried out, including reviewing risk assessments, staff deployment, and procedures.
- A written report will be compiled, and relevant external agencies may be involved if safeguarding concerns are identified.
- Support will be offered to the child, family, and staff involved.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually** or sooner if an incident occurs, or if there are changes in legislation or best practice. All staff will receive training on these procedures as part of their **induction** and ongoing **safeguarding training**.

Feedback from staff and families is welcomed to ensure this policy continues to support the safety and wellbeing of all children at The Little Magpies Nursery.