

Collection and non-Collection of children policy

At Mereside Farm Nursery we expect all parents to collect their children at the agreed time for the place that has been offered. We give parents information about the procedures to follow if they expect to be late. These include:

- Agreeing a password with the nursery in advance to be used by anyone collecting a child who is not the parent or other designated adult.
- Calling the nursery as soon as possible to advise of their situation
- Asking a designated adult to collect their child wherever possible
- Informing the nursery of this person's identity so the nursery can talk to the child if appropriate. This will help to reduce or eliminate any distress caused by this situation
- If the designated person is not known to the nursery staff, the parent must provide a detailed description of this person. The nursery staff will set a one-off password in this situation which the parent must give to this person. The telephone number that the parent is calling from must be verified when checked against our records and if anonymous we will call the parents number back to verify. We will accept emails advising of a change in collection person as long as it is from the email address we have on record.

If a child has not been collected by their collection time the parent will be called straight away to check all is ok and they are on their way. Following this if the child has not been collected, the nursery manager/owner/deputy will be informed that a child has not been collected

- They will check for any information regarding changes to normal routines, parents' work patterns or general information. If there is no information recorded, the manager will try to contact the parents on the telephone numbers provided for their mobile, home or work. If this fails, the manager will try the emergency contacts shown on the child's records.
- The manager/staff member in charge and one other member of staff must stay behind with the child (if outside normal operating hours). During normal operating times, the nursery will plan to meet required staff ratios. If the parents have still not collected the child, the manager will telephone all contact numbers available every 10 minutes until contact is made. These calls will be logged on iconnect.

- In the event of no contact being made after half an hour has lapsed, the person in charge will ring the local authority children's social services emergency duty team
 - The nursery will inform Ofsted as soon as convenient
 - The two members of staff will remain in the building until suitable arrangements have been made for the collection of the child
 - The child's welfare and needs will always be met and to minimise distress staff will distract, comfort and reassure the child during the process
 - In order to provide this additional care a late fee will be charged to parents. This will pay for any additional operational costs that caring for a child outside their normal nursery hours may incur.
-
- The nursery has an intercom on both entrances with cameras and speakers so anybody collecting that is not known or not recognised can be spoken to through this intercom to ask identity before the door is released. If this cannot be verified a staff member will go to the door to speak to the person directly and confirm identity with use of a password or ask them to come to wait outside while a parent is called to verify the person is allowed to collect.
 - If we have not been informed of a different person collecting, whether we have met them before or not, we will always make telephone contact with parents before releasing children. Whilst this may appear over cautious, unfortunately there can be disputes within families that occur away from nursery that we will not be aware of and we therefore need to ensure that we are not releasing a child to someone that the parents do not wish them to be going home with.
 - If you no longer wish for a person to collect your child (unless there is a court order in place granting access or it is a parent with parental responsibility, please see below) please inform us straight away and we will ensure all staff are informed and our registration form is amended.

N.B - Please note once we have been given the persons details on the registration form and they have been identified as Mother or Father and if they are noted as having parental responsibility, we cannot legally restrict that person collecting the child without some form of court order or other legal document to say otherwise. We cannot restrict access based purely on the verbal say so of either parent. If there is a dispute between parents we ask that an agreement is made between both parties as to how collection from nursery will work and that both parties respect each other's wishes and we as a nursery are informed of the arrangements.

- Staff must be informed that a child is being taken, if staff are talking to another parent for example, please ensure that they are aware you are leaving with your child.

- Every child must be signed out of our care.
- When being collected a brief account of the child's day will be given and any accidents or issues will be shared, for example difficulties with toileting or behaviour.

We will not release a child if:

- The person collecting is aged 16 or under (We will ask for proof of age if unsure)
- The person collecting is not known to us or we have not been informed as outlined above.
- The person collecting appears under the influence of alcohol or drugs or appears unfit to collect for any other reason for example being unwell. This is because we have a duty to safeguard all children in our care and we cannot release a child if we feel they may come to harm.

2-point check system for collection in place during outdoor collection – Covid measures

All parents have been emailed to request that a telephone call is made when they are here to collect their child and our signage also asks for this.

For all children being collected a 2-person check is in place and must be followed:

Therefore, either a call from the office to advise a child's parent is here plus the staff member taking the child out will be the 2 people to verify:

Or

If a parent is seen from the room, colleagues must be told which child is being taken out and at least one colleague must verify that is the correct parent also.

If there is any doubt no child is to be taken out until the parent's identity is verified - this may mean asking a parent to lower their mask when stood over 2m away.

REVISED: NOVEMBER 29TH 2021

REVIEW BY: APRIL 2022