

Late Collection and Missing Child Policy

Purpose

Aflah Nursery is committed to ensuring that every child remains safe, secure, and always appropriately supervised.

This policy outlines the procedures to follow when a child is not collected at the agreed time or is believed to be missing while in the care of Aflah Nursery.

Late Collection

Parents and carers are expected to collect their child promptly at the end of their agreed nursery session. If they are delayed, they should contact the nursery as soon as possible to inform staff and provide an estimated collection time.

Where somebody other than the child's usual authorised person will be collecting, parents must inform the nursery in advance and follow the nursery's agreed collection procedures.

If a child has not been collected, the child's Key Person or another member of staff will first check whether they have received a message about the delayed collection.

If the child has not been collected within 15 minutes of their agreed collection time, staff will attempt to contact the child's parent or carer using the contact details held by the nursery. If they cannot be reached, staff will contact the child's emergency contacts.

Throughout this time, the child will remain safely supervised on the nursery premises and will be reassured and cared for by familiar members of staff. The Nursery Manager, or person in charge in their absence, will be informed and will oversee the situation until appropriate arrangements have been made.

A child will only be released to a person authorised by their parent or carer or identified on the child's records, unless alternative arrangements have been confirmed directly with the nursery and the nursery is satisfied that it is safe to release the child.

Where No Contact Can Be Made

If all reasonable attempts to contact the child's parents, carers, and emergency contacts are unsuccessful, the child will remain safely supervised at Aflah Nursery.

The Nursery Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will assess the circumstances and, where appropriate, seek advice from Oxfordshire Children's Social Care/Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Any advice provided will be followed.

If there is an immediate safeguarding concern or emergency, the police will be contacted.

Under no circumstances will a child be left alone or released to an unauthorised person.

A written record will be made of the circumstances, including attempts to contact parents, carers and emergency contacts and any advice or action subsequently taken.

Late collection charges may apply in accordance with the nursery's current fee schedule.

Missing Child

The safety and welfare of every child is our highest priority. If a child is believed to be missing whilst in the care of Aflah Nursery, the situation will be treated as a serious safeguarding incident, and immediate action will be taken.

The Nursery Manager or person in charge will be informed immediately.

A thorough search of the nursery premises, including all rooms, toilets, storage areas, outdoor areas and other places accessible to children, will be carried out without delay. All entrances and exits will be checked.

The immediate surrounding area will also be searched where appropriate. Staff will continue searching whilst ensuring that the remaining children are appropriately supervised and that statutory staff-to-child ratios and children's safety are not compromised.

If the child cannot be located immediately, the police will be contacted without delay. The child's parents or carers will also be informed as soon as possible.

Staff will follow any instructions provided by the police or other relevant safeguarding agencies.

Following a Missing Child Incident

Once the immediate situation has been resolved, a full written record will be prepared detailing the circumstances of the incident, when the child was identified as missing, the searches undertaken, the people and agencies contacted, the actions taken, and the eventual outcome.

The Nursery Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake a full investigation to establish how the incident occurred.

Relevant risk assessments, security arrangements, staff deployment, supervision arrangements and nursery procedures will be reviewed immediately. Any necessary changes will be implemented to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident.

Where the incident meets the threshold for statutory notification, Ofsted and any other relevant safeguarding agencies will be notified in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and other statutory requirements.

Aflah Nursery will cooperate fully with any subsequent investigation undertaken by the police, Ofsted, the Local Authority or another safeguarding agency.

Information for Parents

Parents and carers will be made aware of the nursery's procedures for late collection and for dealing with a missing child.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that the nursery has accurate, up-to-date contact details, including appropriate emergency contacts, and should inform the nursery promptly whenever these details change.

Monitoring and Review

Any incident involving late collection or a missing child will be reviewed by the Nursery Manager to identify any lessons learned and ensure appropriate action is taken to protect children and reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, or nursery practice changes.

Date Approved: August 2026

Review Date: August 2027

Aflah Nursery