GEMS TINEY HOME NURSERY

HOME FROM HOME CHILDCARE

Failure to Collect Policy

Purpose

Children remain safe, supervised and reassured if a parent or authorised adult does not collect them on time. At Gems tiney Home Nursery, we follow up missed collection promptly and act according to the child's welfare and the circumstances. This policy is used with our Dropping Off and Collection, Safeguarding, Attendance and Fees policies.

Information and parent responsibilities

Parents must provide current telephone numbers, authorised collection details and alternative emergency contacts. Where possible, we hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child. Please tell Gemma promptly about changes and ensure contacts know they may be called.

Parents must collect within agreed times and call as soon as they expect a delay. A message through the app is helpful, but urgent delays should be communicated directly. Any alternative collector must be authorised and their identity verified under the collection policy.

If a child is not collected

At the agreed collection time, check for a message or previously agreed change and contact the parent promptly if there is no explanation. We do not wait an hour before starting enquiries. Ask for the reason, the child's collection arrangements and an expected arrival time.

If the parent cannot be reached, try the other parent or carer and authorised emergency contacts without unnecessary delay. Record call times, messages and responses. We

use contact details already held, rather than accepting an unknown caller's instructions without verification.

One adult maintains safe care and supervision while enquiries are made. The child is reassured calmly, given appropriate comfort and essential food, drink or care as needed, and is not blamed or made to feel responsible. Other children remain safely supervised.

Escalating a concern

If no authorised adult can be reached or safe collection cannot be arranged, contact Surrey Children's Single Point of Access, or the Emergency Duty Team out of hours, for advice and follow their instructions. The urgency depends on the child's circumstances, information received, vulnerability and the welfare of the parent or carer.

There is no fixed waiting period that must pass before seeking help. If the child or another person may be in immediate danger, call 999. Contact police where appropriate if the circumstances suggest a missing parent, accident or another urgent welfare concern.

Tell tiney as appropriate, without delaying emergency or social care contact. If safe care is becoming impossible, make this clear to the services contacted and seek further urgent assistance. We never leave a child alone, take them to an unverified address or transfer care to an unauthorised person.

Concerns about a collector

If a collector appears unable to care safely because of alcohol, drugs, illness or another concern, we explain our observations calmly and seek an alternative authorised collector. We do not knowingly hand a child into an immediate risk of harm.

If the adult insists on leaving with the child, becomes threatening or the risk cannot be resolved, seek police or children's social care assistance according to urgency. Call 999 for immediate danger and avoid confrontation that increases risk. Decisions respect parental responsibility and legal restrictions while prioritising safety.

LADO deals with allegations about adults who work with children; it is not the routine route for a missed collection or a parent's apparent impairment. Any separate allegation involving a relevant professional is handled under the allegations procedures.

Handover and records

A child is handed only to a verified authorised person, or in accordance with a clearly recorded statutory safeguarding arrangement. Record the adult's identity, actual departure time, relevant advice and acceptance of care. Update parents as appropriate, following agency advice if information sharing could increase risk.

Keep a factual record of the missed collection, child's wellbeing, contact attempts, observations, advice, decisions and actions. Store this securely and share information with relevant agencies where necessary for safeguarding. A secure written record is used if the app is unavailable.

Repeated lateness and fees

We discuss repeated late collection with parents to understand the cause and agree practical changes. Agreed contractual late fees may apply under the Fees Policy; charges do not replace safeguarding action or authorise open-ended late collection.

Persistent difficulties may lead to a review of booking arrangements or the childcare agreement, handled fairly and with appropriate notice. Any welfare concerns are considered separately under safeguarding procedures.

Contacts and review

Surrey Children's Single Point of Access: 0300 470 9100. Out-of-hours Emergency Duty Team: 01483 517898. Police emergency: 999; non-emergency: 101. Tiney: use the current safeguarding route held in the setting.

Gemma ensures assistants know these procedures and reviews the policy annually, after a significant incident or when contact details or guidance change. References: current EYFS statutory framework for childminders and Surrey safeguarding referral arrangements.

Policy owner: Gemma Bayley
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