



## 7 – Collection, Late Collection and Non-Collection

*At Roots for Life, the safety and welfare of every child is our highest priority.*

Roots has a clear and consistent procedure for the safe collection of children, including arrangements for late or non-collection. We understand that delays and emergencies can occasionally happen, and our procedures are designed to ensure that all children remain cared for safely and calmly until they are collected by an authorised adult.

### **Authorised Collectors and Password System**

As part of the enrolment process, parents and carers are required to:

- Provide details of all persons (over 16y) authorised to collect their child, including names, contact numbers, and relationship to the child.
- Provide a unique password for collection security.

### **New or Unfamiliar Collectors**

When a new or unfamiliar person is due to collect a child, parents must inform the setting in advance, providing:

- The person's name and relationship to the child.
- A photograph (via email or in person).
- The collection password.

Staff will verify the password and identity before releasing the child. Once this person has been introduced and added to the collection list, future collections will not require a password or photo check.

### **One-off Collectors**

Parents may nominate someone as a one-off collector without adding them to the permanent collection list, provided they:

- Inform the setting ahead of time.
- Share the person's photo.
- Ensure the nominated person has the password.

### **Verification of Parents**

If staff are familiar with only one parent, and the other parent arrives unannounced, we may:

- Ask for photo identification.
- Request the collection password.
- Verify details with the primary contact before releasing the child.

## Safeguarding and Child Protection

This procedure ensures children are not released to anyone without confirmed parental consent or legal authority.

### **Late Collection Procedure**

We understand that delays can happen. To maintain consistency and fairness we ask that if a parent/carer expects to be late, they contact the nursery as soon as possible to inform staff of the delay and expected arrival time. The child will be cared for safely by two qualified staff members until they are collected.

If late collection becomes frequent or prolonged, management will discuss with this with the parents and review arrangements to see if any support is needed.

Please note that late collection fees may apply to cover staff time beyond the agreed session hours. This will be charged by the hour, using our standard hourly rate.

### **Non-Collection Procedure**

If a child is not collected at the agreed time and no contact has been made:

- Two staff members remain with the child at all times.
- The child's file and contact details are checked for any updates or alternative arrangements.
- Staff will call the parents/carers using all contact numbers provided.
- If unsuccessful, a message is left where possible.
- Staff then contact all nominated authorised adults listed on the child's registration form.
- All reasonable attempts are made to contact parents and nominated collectors.

If after one hour no contact has been made and the child remains uncollected:

- Staff will contact Oxfordshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 050 7666 for advice and support.
- The child will remain safely at the nursery in the care of two staff members until a MASH representative or social care professional with official ID arrives.
- MASH will work to locate the parents or relatives. If this is not possible, the child may become 'looked after' by the local authority.
- A full written record of the incident will be completed and kept in the child's file.
- Ofsted will be informed of the incident in line with statutory requirements.

*Depending on circumstances, parents may be charged for additional staff hours.*

### **Safeguarding Considerations**

At no time will a child be left alone or unsupervised on the premises. Staff will always act in the child's best interests and follow local safeguarding procedures. Any concerns about a child's welfare or repeated non-collection may result in a referral to MASH or other safeguarding agencies.