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Little Dukes: Late Collection of Children Policy

Policy adopted September 2024 - Version 1

1

Little Dukes Nursery Schools, 58 Buckingham Gate London SW1E 6AJ

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Little Dukes: Late Collection of Children Policy

Monitoring and review.

This policy will be continuously monitored, refined and audited by the Headteacher who will also review it annually to assess how efficiently duties have been carried out over the year. This review will take place no later than one year from the date shown below, or sooner if needed due to changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines.

Adopted September 2024

Reviewed by:

- Geoff Marston, Dukes Education: Group Compliance Director
- Rik McShane, Director of Operations Little Dukes Nurseries
- Nazish Usman, Principal of Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nurseries
- Ben Murray, Marketing and Admissions Director - Little Dukes Nurseries
- **Next review due: September 2025**

Please note:

This policy applies to all nursery schools within Little Dukes, including:

- Hove Village Day Nurseries
- Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nurseries
- Miss Daisy's Nursery Schools
- Miss Daisy's Nursery School Hyde Park Ltd
- The Kindergartens Nursery Schools
- Reflections Nursery and Forest School
- Riverside Nursery Schools
- Bright Beginnings (Twickenham) Ltd
- Twickenham Park Day Nursery Ltd
- Broomfield House School Ltd
- Pippa Pop-ins Nursery Schools

Any reference to 'Little Dukes' applies to all the nurseries named above.

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Statement of intent:

At Little Dukes, we expect all parents to agree to collect their child from the nursery at the end of their booked session.

If a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day, the nursery will follow agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified team member who the child knows.

We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care to cause as little distress as possible.

We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be appropriately cared for.

Responsibilities:

We ask parents/carers of children starting the nursery to provide the following specific information which we record in the child's file:

- Home address and telephone number
- Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable)
- Mobile telephone number (if applicable)
- Who has parental responsibility for the child
- Names and telephone numbers of at least two other adults (emergency contacts) who are authorised by the parents/carers to collect their child from the nursery e.g., a childminder or grandparent
- An agreed safe password to be used by these individuals if they do collect.

We give parents information about the procedures to follow if they expect to be late. These include:

- Agreeing a safety password with the nursery in advance to be used by anyone collecting a child who is not the parent (emergency contact).
- Calling the nursery as soon as possible to let us know what is happening.
- Asking an emergency contact to collect their child wherever possible, and informing the nursery of this person's identity, so the nursery can talk to the child, if appropriate.

If parents/carers or the child's listed emergency contacts are not able to collect:

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- The parents/carers must email us with a detailed description of an authorised adult who can collect, including their name, address, telephone number and date of birth of that person.
- We will agree with the parents/carers how we will verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child. We will usually ask for a photograph to be emailed to us (where possible).
- This authorised person must know the individual child's safety password for the nursery to release the child into their care. This is the responsibility of the parent.
- No-one under the age of 16 is allowed to pick up a child. If the Management Team believes it necessary, the person collecting may be asked to show identification (regardless of whether the parents/carers have informed us or not).

On occasions when parents/carers won't be reachable as usual they must let us know in writing how we can reach them instead.


We operate a strict policy on collection time so your child/children must be collected promptly by the end of their booked session (e.g., for a session ending at 6:00pm, 6:01pm would constitute a 'late' collection) otherwise parents/carers will be invoiced the relevant late fee as listed on their nursery fee sheet.

If parents/carers have more than one child to collect from the nursery, they must arrive with enough time to collect all children before the end of their booked session or they will be invoiced the relevant late fee as listed below.

Process for late and uncollected children:

If a child has not been collected from the nursery after 5 minutes has been allowed for lateness, we will initiate the following procedure:

1. If we have had no previous confirmation from the parents that they are running late, then at five minutes past the end of the booked session, we will phone the home, work and mobile numbers of each parent/carer. If this fails, we will phone every emergency contact given by the parent until we make contact.
2. We will leave a clear message, stating the parent's/carer's name and the phone number of the nursery, on all numbers for parents/carers and emergency contacts.
3. If this late collection is outside normal operating hours, the team member in charge and one other member of staff must stay behind with the child in the building until suitable arrangements have been made for the collection of the child.
4. If the parents/carers have still not been in contact or collected the child 10 minutes after these initial calls, the Headteacher or a team member will telephone all contact numbers available again and then every 10 minutes until contact is made.
5. All calls will be logged on a full incident record (notes on Family app), logging times of calls and any discussions that were had with parents/carers, emergency contacts, or other professionals.

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6. If contact is made, the child will remain safe at the nursery with two staff members until collection, and parents/carers will be invoiced the relevant late fee as listed on the nursery fee sheet.
 7. If no contact can be made after half an hour has passed, we will treat this as an uncollected child.
 8. At this point, the person in charge will ring the Local Authority Children's Social Services emergency duty team.
 9. Children's Social Care will advise on what further action to take. They will ask if any members of staff are able to continue caring for the child, either at the nursery or at another safe place, to minimise distress to the child, and discuss how likely it is that staff members will be able to stay with the child. If this isn't possible, the team members may be requested to take the uncollected child to an identified police station. The child's welfare and needs will be always met and to minimise distress, staff will distract, comfort and reassure the child during the process
 10. If the child is moved from the nursery premises, a message will be left on all contact phone numbers Informing parents/carers of the address and contact number where the child has been taken. A notice will be left on the door of the building stating who should be contacted to find out what has happened. A similar note will be left at the child's address if possible.
 11. In such cases, once the child is safe, parents will be invoiced the relevant late fee.
 12. Ofsted will be notified within 48 hours of the incident as this is a significant event.

Late fees:

After the first late collection, parents will be given a gentle reminder about our policy.

After the second late collection, parents will receive a letter and a copy of this policy as a reminder. For and after the third late collection, late fees will be charged.

These fees will be charged for any further late collections while the child/children are at the nursery, even if there has been a substantial period of time between instances.

The fees are:

- £15.00 for any part of the first 15 minutes after the end of a booked session (e.g. 6.01pm – 6.15pm)
- £15.00 for every additional 10 minutes (or part thereof) after that

- If there is persistent lateness, the Headteacher will review the situation. This could result in the family losing their place at the nursery.