



Within The Wood

Uncollected Child Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures to follow if a child is not collected at the end of a Forest School session. The aim is to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing while maintaining clear communication with parents/carers.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students, and visitors responsible for dismissing or supervising children at the end of Forest School sessions.

Prevention Measures

To reduce the likelihood of a child being uncollected:

- Parents/carers are required to provide up-to-date contact details, including emergency contacts.
- Staff ensure all parents/carers know the correct collection times and location for Forest School sessions.
- Parents must inform staff if someone else will collect their child.
- Any changes to session times will be communicated in advance.

Definition of an Uncollected Child

A child is considered uncollected when:

- They remain on site 10 minutes after the agreed collection time, and
- No contact has been made by the parent/carer to explain a delay.

Procedure When a Child Is Not Collected

Step 1: First 10 Minutes After Collection Time



- The child remains supervised by a qualified member of staff.
- Staff check sign-out information to confirm the expected collector.
- Staff attempt to contact the parent/carer using all available phone numbers.

Step 2: 10–30 Minutes After Collection Time

If no contact has been made after initial attempts:

1. Staff contact all emergency contacts listed for the child.
2. The child remains calm and reassured, kept in a safe space.

Step 3: 30+ Minutes After Collection Time

If no parent/carer or emergency contact can be reached:

1. The session leader contacts Children's Social Care and/or the police.
2. Staff continue to supervise the child until authorities arrive.
3. Staff do not take the child home or transport them in a private vehicle.

If a Parent/Carer Arrives Late

When a parent/carer arrives:

- Staff explain the actions taken and the importance of timely collection.
- Persistent lateness may result in withdrawal of place.
- Staff remain calm and prioritise the child's wellbeing.

Recording the Incident


A full Incident Report must be completed, including:

- Date and time of late collection
- Times of attempted contact
- Who was contacted
- Child's wellbeing
- Actions taken



Staff Responsibilities

- Session Leader: Manages procedure and communication.
- Support Staff: Assist with supervision and documentation.
- Safeguarding Lead: Follows up on concerns or ongoing lateness.

Signed: 

Date: 26/11/2025

This policy will be reviewed in November 2026