Drop-Off, Collection and Settling-In Policy

Policy owner	Nursery Manager
Applies to	All children attending the nursery from two years of age
Approval date	_____
Review date	_____

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's safeguarding, attendance, admissions, fees, equality and uncollected-child procedures.

1. Purpose

Jubilee Childcare Centre is committed to providing a safe, secure and welcoming arrival and departure process for every child. This policy explains how children are supported when joining the nursery, how children are handed over to staff, when children may be admitted, who may collect a child, and how late or non-collection is managed.

The policy is informed by the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework for group and school-based providers, including requirements relating to safeguarding, secure premises, supervision, attendance records, the key person and the safe release of children.

2. Settling-in arrangements

Before beginning their normal booked attendance, each child will be offered settling-in sessions. These will normally take place on the two nursery operating days immediately before the child's first full day, unless an alternative arrangement is agreed with the Nursery Manager.

- help the child become familiar with the nursery environment;
- begin forming a secure relationship with their key person;
- allow staff to understand the child's routines, interests and individual needs;
- support a calm and gradual separation from the parent or carer; and
- allow parents and staff to exchange relevant care, medical and safeguarding information.

The length and structure of each session may be adjusted according to the child's age, needs and emotional wellbeing. Every child will be assigned a key person. Where the key person is unavailable, another suitably authorised practitioner will receive and support the child.

3. Designated arrival and collection times

Each child will be allocated a specific drop-off and collection time based on their booked session. Parents and carers must arrive within their designated time slot so that the

nursery can maintain safe staffing, supervise children effectively, provide an appropriate handover and minimise disruption to children's routines.

When a child arrives outside their designated drop-off slot, staff may ask the parent and child to wait until it is safe and operationally appropriate to complete the handover. The nursery reserves the right to delay admission until an appropriate member of staff is available.

A child must remain under the direct supervision of their parent or carer until a nursery practitioner has clearly accepted responsibility. A child must never be left unattended outside the nursery entrance or safety door.

4. Drop-off procedure

Children will be received outside the nursery safety door at the designated entrance.

1. The parent or carer brings the child directly to the nursery entrance.
2. A nursery practitioner greets the family and confirms the child's arrival.
3. Where reasonably possible, the child is handed directly to their assigned key person.
4. Relevant information is shared, including information about health, medication, sleep, emotional wellbeing, injuries or changes to collection arrangements.
5. The practitioner accompanies the child through the safety door and into the nursery.
6. The child's arrival time is recorded on the daily attendance register.

Responsibility for the child passes to the nursery only when a member of nursery staff has clearly acknowledged and accepted the child.

5. Parents and carers entering the nursery

Parents and carers will not normally be permitted beyond the safety door or into the nursery rooms during routine drop-off and collection. This arrangement supports safeguarding, secure access, the privacy of other children and uninterrupted supervision.

Parents may enter only when this has been agreed in advance with the Nursery Manager or when invited by an authorised member of staff, for example for an arranged meeting, an agreed settling-in arrangement, a nursery event, a medical or SEND-related requirement, or an emergency.

All visitors must follow the nursery's visitor, identification and safeguarding procedures. Reasonable adjustments will be considered for disabled parents, carers and children.

6. Collection arrangements

Children must be collected promptly at the end of their booked session. Parents and carers must provide written details of all adults authorised to collect their child, including the person's full name, relationship to the child, contact details and the agreed collection password where used.

Children will only be released to a person with parental responsibility, a person named on the authorised collection list, or another person explicitly authorised by the parent or carer in accordance with the nursery's procedure.

7. Changes to the person collecting

Where a different person will collect the child, the parent or carer must contact the nursery directly before collection. The nursery may request the collector's name, relationship to the child, a description, the agreed password and photographic identification.

Messages passed through another parent, a child or an unauthorised third party will not normally be accepted. Where staff cannot confirm identity or authorisation, the child will remain safely supervised while the nursery contacts a known parent or emergency contact.

8. Collection by a person under 18

The nursery will not normally release a child to anyone under the age of 18. Any exceptional arrangement must be agreed in advance by the Nursery Manager, confirmed in writing by a person with parental responsibility and supported by an individual risk assessment. The Nursery Manager may refuse the arrangement where it is not considered safe or appropriate.

9. Court orders and restricted collection

Parents must inform the nursery of any court order or legal restriction affecting collection and provide a current copy of the relevant documentation. The Nursery Manager will seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, local authority or police where necessary.

10. Concerns about a person collecting

The nursery will not knowingly release a child to an adult who appears unable to care for the child safely because of alcohol, drugs, illness, extreme distress, threatening behaviour or another circumstance presenting an immediate safeguarding risk. Staff will seek an alternative authorised collector and may contact children's social care or the police where necessary.

11. Late collection

Children must be collected by the end of their booked session. A parent or carer who expects to be late must telephone the nursery immediately, provide an estimated arrival time and arrange for another authorised adult to collect where possible.

Late collection charges will apply in accordance with the nursery's current Fees Structure. Parents and carers must read and sign the Fees Structure before their child

begins attending. Charges may apply from the end of the booked collection time, including where the nursery has been notified of the delay.

Persistent late collection may lead to a formal discussion, a written reminder, review of contracted hours, action under the nursery's payment terms or termination of the childcare agreement. The nursery will consider the child's welfare, the family's circumstances and any equality or safeguarding factors.

12. Child not collected

Where a child has not been collected, staff will:

7. continue to supervise and reassure the child;
8. check whether the nursery has received a message;
9. telephone the child's parents or carers;
10. telephone authorised emergency contacts if the parents cannot be reached;
11. inform the Nursery Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead;
12. record all calls, attempted contacts, decisions and relevant times; and
13. contact local authority children's social care, and if necessary the police, where no authorised adult can be contacted or there is an immediate welfare concern.

Staff will not leave the child unattended, take the child home or release the child to an unauthorised person.

13. Emergency closure or exceptional circumstances

In an emergency, severe weather event, building issue or other exceptional circumstance, parents may be required to collect their child earlier than usual. Parents must ensure that contact and emergency-contact details are kept up to date. Where possible, the nursery should hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child.

14. Recording attendance and handovers

The nursery will maintain accurate records of each child's arrival and departure times, the person collecting the child, late arrivals and collections, changes to authorised collectors, unsuccessful contact attempts, safeguarding concerns and action taken when a child is not collected. Records will be stored securely and shared only where necessary to protect the child, meet legal obligations or manage the setting safely.

15. Parental responsibilities

- follow the child's allocated drop-off and collection times;
- keep the child under supervision until formally handed to a practitioner;
- share relevant information at drop-off;
- collect the child promptly and notify the nursery of any delay;
- maintain accurate contact and emergency-contact details;
- provide details of every authorised collector;

- notify the nursery of court orders or safeguarding restrictions;
- read and sign the Fees Structure; and
- pay any late collection charges in accordance with that structure.

16. Equality and individual needs

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently. The nursery will consider reasonable adjustments for children and adults with disabilities, SEND, medical needs, communication needs or other relevant circumstances. Any alternative handover arrangement must be agreed with the Nursery Manager and must continue to protect the safety of all children.

17. Related policies and documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Missing Child and Uncollected Child Procedure
- Attendance Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Key Person and Settling-In Procedure
- Visitor and Site Security Procedure
- Fees Structure
- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy
- Parent Terms and Conditions

18. Parent/carer acknowledgement

I confirm that I have read and understood the Jubilee Childcare Centre Drop-Off, Collection and Settling-In Policy. I understand the nursery's designated arrival and collection arrangements, authorised collection requirements and late collection charges, and I agree to keep the nursery informed of any changes affecting my child's safe handover or collection.

Child's name	
Parent/carer's name	
Parent/carer signature	
Date	
Nursery representative	
Nursery signature	
Date	

Reference framework

Department for Education, Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers. The nursery should check this policy whenever the statutory framework or local safeguarding procedures are updated.