

Updated October 2026 | New or amended wording is shown in blue.

Smartkidz Play and Learn endeavors to ensure that all children are collected by a parent or carer at the end of each session. If a child is not collected, and the parent or carer has not notified us that they will be delayed, we will follow the procedure set out below

This procedure must be read alongside the Smartkidz Safeguarding Policy (updated September 2026). The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Adam Smart; Deputy DSLs are Nikki Henrywood and Sharon Howlett. Any immediate safeguarding concern must be reported to the DSL or a deputy without delay.

Up to 15 minutes late

- When the parent or carer arrives, they will be reminded that they must call the club to notify us if they are delayed.
- The parent/carer will be informed that late fees will be applied.
- Staff will check the child's welfare, remain with the child and make reasonable attempts to contact the parent or carer promptly where a delay is unexpected; staff must not wait for a time threshold if there is an immediate concern.

Over 15 minutes late

- The playleader on duty will attempt to contact the parents using the contact details provided on Magic bookings. If they cannot be reached a message will be left on their voicemail, explaining that they must contact club immediately.
- The manager will then attempt to ring the Emergency contacts listed on the child's registration form, Emergency contacts on the form will be asked to collect the child.
- While the child is in the care of Smartkidz Play and Learn they will be supervised by a member of staff.
- When the parent or carer arrives, they will be reminded that they must call the setting to notify the club that they are delayed.
- Before releasing the child, staff must verify that the collecting adult is authorised to collect them, following the child's registration and collection arrangements. Any uncertainty must be referred to the manager or DSL.

Over 30 minutes late

- If the manager has been unable to contact the child's parents or emergency contacts are unavailable or unable to collect the child, the manager will contact the local social care team for advice.
- The child will remain in the care of club's staff and within the club's premises, until the child is collected or placed in the care of the social care team.
- The manager must inform the DSL or deputy and follow advice from Children's Social Care. If there is immediate danger, call 999. Where urgent out-of-hours safeguarding advice is needed, contact the relevant local authority emergency duty service.
- If it is not possible for the child to remain at the club's premises, staff must seek and follow advice from Children's Social Care or the police about a safe location and transfer of care. The child must not be taken to a staff member's home or handed to an unauthorised adult. Do not leave the child's whereabouts or other personal information on a public gate or notice. A further message will be left on the parents telephone explaining the events.

Alternative provision – taxi transport

Some children attending Smartkidz Forest School Alternative Provision (AP) are transported to and from AP by taxi. If the taxi does not arrive at the agreed collection time, staff will promptly contact the taxi company as well as the child's parents or carers to establish the reason for the delay and agree safe collection arrangements.

The child will remain in the care of Smartkidz staff and be appropriately supervised until collected by an authorised person. The procedures and safeguarding escalation timescales above apply from the child's agreed collection time. Staff must verify any replacement driver against the child's authorised transport arrangements before releasing the child.

If a child travelling by taxi does not arrive at AP as expected, staff will promptly contact both the taxi company and the child's parents or carers to confirm the child's whereabouts and follow the Attendance and Absence Policy and safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding, welfare and records

Staff will reassure the child, provide appropriate care and supervision and avoid making the child feel responsible for the delay. Staffing and supervision must remain safe while the situation is resolved.

The manager will make a contemporaneous written record of the scheduled and actual collection times, attempts to contact parents and emergency contacts, persons spoken to, advice received, safeguarding decisions and rationale, and the identity and time of the adult or agency taking responsibility for the child. Any safeguarding concern must also be recorded and shared with the DSL in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

Where taxi transport is involved, contact with the taxi company and any revised collection arrangements must also be recorded.

Repeated late collection, unexplained failure to collect or other circumstances indicating possible neglect must be considered individually by the DSL, who will decide whether support, further enquiries or a referral to Children's Social Care is needed. A late collection alone does not automatically establish neglect.

Late fee charges

Up to 18:15	£5.00
Between 18:15 and 18:30	Full session fee
From 18:30 onwards	£25.00

Late charges do not delay or replace any safeguarding action needed to protect a child.

Managing persistent lateness

The manager will record incidents of late collections and will discuss them with the child's parent or carers. Parents and carers will be reminded that if they persistently collect their child late, they may lose their place at the club.

Before any decision to withdraw a place, the manager will consider the child's welfare, relevant individual circumstances and any safeguarding concerns, consulting the DSL as appropriate.

Policy information

This policy was adopted by:	Smartkidz Play and Learn
Date:	August 2025
To be reviewed:	To be confirmed on approval

Signed: _____

Review update prepared: October 2026. Formal approval, signature and next review date to be confirmed by Smartkidz management.

Written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2026): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Information for parents and carers [3.100].

Also to be read alongside the EYFS statutory framework effective September 2026, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (where relevant), Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Smartkidz Safeguarding Policy (September 2026).