little monkeyz

FUN ● FRIENDS ● ADVENTURE

Attendance, Unexplained Absence, Missing Child, Authorised Collection & Late/Non-Collection Policy

1. Purpose

Little Monkeyz is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child in our care. This policy sets out how we account for children, respond when an expected child does not arrive, act if a child goes missing, release children only to authorised people, and manage late or non-collection.

The procedures apply to all Little Monkeyz directors, managers, staff, volunteers and students working within Breakfast Club and After-School Club provision.

2. Legal and safeguarding framework

This policy should be read alongside the Little Monkeyz Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the setting's registration requirements. It has been written with regard to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework applying from 1 September 2026 for children within the EYFS age range, Department for Education safeguarding guidance for out-of-school settings, and local Birmingham safeguarding procedures.

For children within the EYFS, providers must have an attendance policy shared with parents/carers, follow up unexplained or prolonged absences promptly, track patterns of absence, contact parents and emergency contacts where concerned, and make safeguarding referrals or request welfare checks where necessary.

3. Responsibilities

Management / DSL

- Ensure accurate attendance and collection systems are in place at every club.
- Ensure staff understand the procedures in this policy and know how to contact the DSL or deputy.
- Review unexplained or repeated absence patterns and decide whether further safeguarding action is required.
- Liaise with the school, Children's Social Care, police or other agencies where safeguarding concerns require this.
- Ensure incidents, decisions, actions and outcomes are recorded securely.

All staff

- Know which children are expected at each session and maintain an accurate register.
- Never assume that another adult has checked a child's whereabouts.
- Immediately report discrepancies, unexplained absence, missing children or collection concerns to the Club Manager/Lead Supervisor and DSL.
- Release children only in accordance with the authorised collection arrangements.
- Make factual, timely records of safeguarding-related attendance or collection incidents.

4. Attendance and Registration

- A daily register must identify every child booked or expected to attend.
- Children must be signed/marked in when they enter Little Monkeyz care and signed/marked out when they leave.

- The staff member responsible for the register must know the number and identity of children present.
- Registers must be updated promptly when a child arrives late, leaves early or does not attend.
- Attendance information must be available during an emergency or evacuation.
- Parents/carers should notify Little Monkeyz in advance when a child will not attend a booked session wherever possible.

5. Unexplained absence - Breakfast Club

If a child is booked or expected at Breakfast Club but does not arrive and no explanation has been received:

1. Check the booking/register and any messages, emails or absence notifications received from the parent/carer.

2. Ask the responsible manager/lead whether an authorised change to the booking has been received.

3. Contact the parent/carer using the recorded contact details if the absence remains unexplained or there is any concern.

4. If the child is expected to attend school after Breakfast Club, ensure any relevant safeguarding concern or unexplained non-arrival is communicated to the appropriate school contact/DSL in accordance with information-sharing procedures.

5. If parents/carers cannot be reached, use the child's emergency contacts where appropriate.

6. If the child's whereabouts cannot be established and there is reason to believe the child may be at risk, contact the DSL immediately. The DSL will consider Children's Social Care and/or police involvement and whether a welfare check is required.

7. Record the absence, contacts attempted, information obtained, decisions made and outcome.

6. Unexplained absence - After-School Club

A child who is expected to transfer from school into After-School Club must be accounted for. If the child does not arrive at the agreed handover point:

1. Do not assume that the child has gone home or that plans have changed.

2. Immediately check the club register/booking information and any messages from parents/carers.

3. Check with the school's agreed handover contact, class/office or other designated school staff to establish whether the child attended school, was collected, left under an authorised arrangement, or is still on the premises.

4. Inform the Club Manager/Lead Supervisor immediately if the child's whereabouts are not confirmed.

5. Contact the parent/carer and, where appropriate, emergency contacts.

6. If the child's whereabouts remain unknown, treat the situation as a missing child/safeguarding incident and follow Section 8 without delay.

7. Record all enquiries, times, people contacted, decisions and the final outcome.

7. Repeated, prolonged or concerning absence

- Staff must not view attendance only as an administrative matter. Absence can be a safeguarding indicator.
- The DSL/manager will review repeated, prolonged or unusual patterns of absence, including changes from the child's normal attendance.
- The setting will contact parents/carers and emergency contacts promptly where there is concern.
- Relevant information may be shared with the child's school/DSL and safeguarding partners where necessary to protect the child.
- Where concerns cannot be resolved, the DSL will follow local safeguarding procedures, including referral to Children's Social Care or requesting a welfare check where appropriate.
- Where Early Education Entitlement funding requirements apply, Little Monkeyz will also follow the relevant Birmingham notification requirements.

8. Missing child procedure

A child is considered missing when they cannot be located and their whereabouts are not known when they should be in Little Monkeyz care or during an agreed transfer into our care.

Immediate action:

1. Alert the Club Manager/Lead Supervisor immediately and clearly state that a child cannot be located.

2. Check the register, collection record and last known location/time. Confirm the child's description and what they are wearing.

3. Allocate staff to search the immediate premises and agreed safe search areas without leaving other children inadequately supervised.

4. Check toilets, activity areas, exits, playground/outdoor areas and other places the child could reasonably be, following the site's emergency arrangements.

5. Notify the DSL/management immediately.

6. If the child is not located promptly, or there is an immediate safeguarding risk, contact police on 999. Do not delay emergency action while repeatedly searching or trying to contact parents.

7. Contact the parent/carer and the school as appropriate. If the child went missing during a school-to-club handover, coordinate information with the school immediately.

8. Preserve relevant information, including register/collection records and any available CCTV or witness information.

9. When the child is found, ensure their immediate welfare, provide first aid if required, and notify all relevant parties.

10. Complete a full written incident/safeguarding record and make any required notifications. Management will review the incident, risk assessment and procedures before the next relevant session.

Staff must never leave the remaining children unsafely supervised in order to search for a missing child.

9. Authorised collection

- Children will only be released to a parent/carer or another person authorised by the parent/carer, subject to the child's agreed collection arrangements.
- Parents/carers must provide Little Monkeyz with details of authorised collectors and keep those details up to date.
- Where Little Monkeyz uses a safe word/password system, the agreed safe word must be checked when an unfamiliar authorised person collects.
- Staff must not rely solely on a child's statement that they know the collecting adult.
- If staff cannot verify the collector, the child must remain safely supervised while the parent/carer is contacted.
- Parents/carers should notify Little Monkeyz directly of any temporary change to collection arrangements. Messages passed only through a child will not normally be accepted as authorisation.
- Where a court order or other legal restriction affects collection, management must be provided with the relevant information/documentation and staff who need to know must be briefed.
- Collection records should show when the child left and, where required by the setting's system, who collected them.

10. Concerns about a collecting adult

If an authorised collector appears intoxicated, under the influence of drugs, seriously impaired, aggressive, or otherwise unable to provide safe care, staff must prioritise the child's safety.

- Do not knowingly release the child into a situation that presents an immediate risk of harm.
- Inform the Club Manager/Lead Supervisor and DSL immediately.
- Seek another authorised and suitable adult to collect the child where possible.
- If the situation escalates, there is an immediate danger, or the adult attempts to remove the child in circumstances presenting a serious safety risk, contact police.
- Follow safeguarding referral procedures where the circumstances raise a concern about the child's welfare.
- Record the incident factually, including observations, actions, decisions and outcome.

11. Late collection

Parents/carers are expected to collect children by the published closing time or agreed collection time. Where a parent/carer is going to be late, they should contact Little Monkeyz as soon as possible.

1. Keep the child safely supervised by appropriate staff and reassure the child.

2. Check whether the parent/carer has contacted the club with an updated collection time.

3. If no contact has been received, telephone the parent/carer promptly.

4. If the parent/carer cannot be reached, try the child's other authorised/emergency contacts.

5. Continue to follow the setting's staffing and safeguarding arrangements; a child must not be left alone.

6. Record significant late collections and monitor repeated patterns.

12. Non-collection

Little Monkeyz's existing safeguarding procedure states that if no one collects a child within 10 minutes of the club finishing, staff will contact parents/carers. If the child remains uncollected after 45 minutes and nobody can be contacted, the Lead Supervisor will escalate under the non-collection procedure.

1. Continue attempts to contact parents/carers and authorised/emergency contacts.

2. Keep the child safely supervised and do not make the child feel responsible for the situation.

3. The Lead Supervisor/DSL will seek safeguarding advice from the appropriate Birmingham children's services contact and/or police where necessary.

4. The child will remain in the care of Little Monkeyz staff until a safe and authorised handover is arranged or responsibility is transferred to the appropriate statutory service.

5. Staff must not take the child home, take the child to their own home, or leave the premises to search for the parent/carer.

6. Complete a written safeguarding/incident record, including all calls, times, advice received, decisions and the eventual handover.

7. Repeated non-collection will be reviewed by the DSL as a potential safeguarding concern and discussed with the parent/carer.

13. Independent Departure

Where Little Monkeyz permits an older child to leave independently, this must be based on the setting's rules, the child's age and maturity, the risks of the route/time, and clear written parental/carer authorisation. The agreed departure arrangement must be recorded and known to relevant staff. Independent departure will not be permitted where staff have a safeguarding concern that makes the arrangement unsafe.

14. Information sharing and records

- Attendance, absence, missing-child and collection records are safeguarding records where they relate to a welfare concern.
- Records must be factual, dated, timed and signed/attributed to the person making the record.
- Information will be shared with the school, safeguarding partners, Children's Social Care or police when necessary and proportionate to protect a child.
- Data protection must not be treated as a barrier to necessary safeguarding information sharing.
- Records will be stored securely and accessed only by those who need the information for their role.

15. Parent/carer responsibilities

- Provide accurate contact and emergency-contact details and update Little Monkeyz promptly when they change.
- Tell the club when a child will be absent from a booked session.
- Notify the club directly of changes to collection arrangements.
- Ensure authorised collectors understand the setting's identification/safe-word arrangements.

- Collect children by the agreed time and contact the club as soon as possible if delayed.
- Inform management of relevant court orders, restrictions or safeguarding information affecting collection.

16. Staff training and review

All staff will be briefed on this policy during induction and through safeguarding updates. Scenario-based training should include: a child not arriving at Breakfast Club; a child missing at school-to-club handover; an unknown collector; an impaired collector; and a child not collected at closing time.

Management will review this policy at least annually and earlier following a significant incident, changes to legislation/guidance, changes to local safeguarding procedures, or lessons learned from practice.

17. Quick-response guide

Situation	Immediate response
Expected child absent	Check messages/register → contact parent/school as relevant → establish whereabouts → escalate safeguarding concern.
After-school child does not arrive	Check school handover immediately → contact parent → if whereabouts unknown, activate missing-child procedure.
Child missing while in care	Alert manager → maintain supervision → search agreed areas → DSL → police/999 where required → parent → record/review.
Unknown/unverified collector	Do not release → verify with parent/carer and safe-word/ID arrangements.
Child not collected	Supervise → contact parent/emergency contacts → escalate under non-collection procedure → never take child home.

18. Related Little Monkeyz Documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Notice of Concern / Incident Form
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Emergency and evacuation procedures
- Registration/booking and authorised collection records
- Relevant school-site handover arrangements