Uncollected Children Policy

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Role:	Safeguarding Lead, Board of Trustees
Authorised:	September 2026

Ed Thatcher

CEO

September 2026

Dave Poulsom

Chair of Trustees

September 2026

Uncollected Children Policy

1. Policy Statement

Endeavour is committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and protection of all children in our care. This policy sets out the procedures to be followed when a child is not collected at the expected time, to ensure children are safeguarded and staff act consistently, calmly, and in line with safeguarding legislation and best practice.

The welfare of the child is paramount at all times.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, sessional workers, and visitors at Endeavour and should be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy, Child Missing / Absconding Policy, and Safeguarding Manual.

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3. Responsibilities

- **Staff** are responsible for following this policy, maintaining supervision of the child, and recording actions taken.
- **Head of Operations / Duty Manager** is responsible for oversight, escalation, and decision-making.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is responsible for safeguarding decisions and referrals.

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4. Expectations of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Collect their child on time at the end of each session
- Inform Endeavour in advance if they will be late
- Ensure contact details and emergency contacts are up to date

Repeated late collection may result in additional charges or a review of the child's placement.

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5. Procedure for Uncollected Children

5.1 Initial Response (Up to 10 minutes late)

- The child will remain supervised by two members of staff where possible.
- Staff will reassure the child and ensure they feel safe and calm.
- Attempts will be made to contact the parent/carer using all available contact numbers.
- Collection registers and consent forms will be checked for authorised collectors.

5.2 Escalation (10–20 minutes late)

If the child has not been collected within 10 minutes:

- Continue attempts to contact parents/carers.
- Contact emergency contacts listed on the child's records.
- Inform a manager or the Duty Manager.
- All actions must be logged.

5.3 Significant Delay (After 30 minutes)

If the child remains uncollected after 30 minutes and no contact has been made:

- A manager or DSL (or DSD) will be informed.
- Further attempts will be made to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts.
- Consideration will be given to contacting Children's Social Care for advice.

5.4 After 60 Minutes (and no contact) or Safeguarding Concern

If a child remains uncollected after 60 minutes, or there is an immediate safeguarding concern:

- The DSL, DSD or manager will contact Children's Social Care or the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub, or instruct the staff member to do so.
- If required, the police may be contacted for advice.
- Staff will continue to supervise the child until responsibility is transferred appropriately.
    - Note that if the child is passed into the care of the child protection agency, the manager will attempt to leave a message on the parent/carer answer phone.

Under no circumstances will a child be taken home by a member of staff.

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6. Late Collection Outside Normal Operating Hours

If Endeavour is closing and a child has not been collected:

- Two members of staff must remain with the child where possible.
- Staff should not leave the premises with the child.
- Escalation procedures above must be followed.

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7. Safeguarding Considerations

An uncollected child may be a safeguarding concern. Staff must consider:

- Patterns of late or non-collection
- The child's emotional state
- Any existing safeguarding or family concerns

All concerns must be reported to the DSL (or DSD) and recorded in line with safeguarding procedures.

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8. Recording and Reporting

- All incidents of late or non-collection must be recorded on the appropriate incident form.
- Times, actions taken, and individuals contacted must be clearly documented.
- Records will be stored securely in line with data protection requirements.

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9. Staff Conduct

Staff must:

- Remain calm and professional at all times
- Reassure the child
- Avoid expressing frustration to the child or parent/carer

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10. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes to legislation, guidance, or identified learning from incidents.

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11. Related Policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Missing / Absconding Policy
- Safeguarding Manual
- Behaviour Policy