

# CHRIST CHURCH PLAYGROUP

## Lateness Policy

Christ Church Playgroup is part of the local community and values its close relationships with the families and friends of all children who attend or have attended playgroup.

It is important that children are not repeatedly late as this causes disruption to both staff and the other children. Christ Church Playgroup is also a place of work, subject to legislation especially with respect to the care of children. The staff must have their lunch breaks and may have appointments shortly after playgroup has finished, and so are not available to give extended non-contracted care for children left at the playgroup, when the session has finished.

The Playgroup needs to contain arrivals and departures to limited pre-defined times to ensure the safety and care of all the children, and to allow staff to carry out their responsibilities during their working hours. Sometimes lateness is unavoidable because of one-off needs such as doctors' appointments, sibling school meetings and assemblies, illness etc and in these unavoidable or exceptional circumstances the Playgroup will be flexible and supportive, as long as we have been advised of any hold ups in advance. However, we are not able to admit children to playgroup late because parents cannot get them there on time as part of a regular daily schedule.

Drop off time is 9.15am (except on the first day back after each half term when it is 9.45am). The doors will be closed from 9.25am. The intervening 10 minutes is to allow parents/carers to settle the children and say goodbye. It is not an extension of drop off time. If a parent/carer arrives after 9.25am, without prior notice, the child will not be allowed to attend that day's Playgroup session. If a parent/carer arrives just before 9.25am the staff may at their discretion let the child in but not allow the accompanying adult in to settle the child if to do so would disrupt the start of the session.

The collection time is 11.15am during the child's Settling In Period, or 1.10pm once the child is settled. As the staff cannot leave a child unattended at the end of a session it is unacceptable for parents/carers to assume there is no problem in arriving late. If a parent/carer does arrive late, they will be asked to sign a late book. If a child's parent/carer is 10 minutes late on more than 3 occasions per half term, they will be charged a fee of £10, with an additional £10 for every 10 minutes thereafter to cover staff overtime costs.

We understand that occasionally parents and carers may be unavoidably held up when they should be dropping off or collecting their children from playgroup.

If parents/carers have a genuine reason for being late then they must ensure that they call Playgroup in advance on 020 7354 3117.

## **Uncollected Child**

It is essential that parents keep the setting informed of their current home, work and mobile phone numbers, as well as the numbers for anyone else who is authorised to collect their child. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the Playgroup informed of any changes to their contact details.

If parents are students it is important to know their courses and tutor so that they can be traced more easily at college.

It is important that staff at the setting know whom to contact, and in what order. It is also important to know from parents if there is anyone who is not authorised to collect their child.

Children under the age of 16 are not permitted to collect children from Playgroup at the end of the session. This is in line with Ofsted recommendations.

When a parent/carer is more than 15 minutes late to collect their child, without informing the Playgroup that they have been unavoidably delayed, two suitable members of staff need to remain with the uncollected child.

The following action should be taken by the Playgroup Organiser:

1. Call the parent/carer using the phone numbers given for normal daytime contact
2. If no contact is established then call using any other phone numbers which have been provided for the primary carer or other parent/carer
3. If contact cannot be made by any of the above numbers then the emergency contact should be called.
4. If contact cannot be established with the emergency number then points 1 to 3 should be tried again, in that order.
5. If after 45 minutes no contact has been made with any member of the child's family, including the emergency contact number then the Islington Social Services Department should be contacted to advise on what further action to take. Staff members would continue to look after the child, in order to minimize distress to the child.

Children & Families Social Work Services – 0207 527 7400

Out of Hours – 0207 226 0992

If the child is then moved from the premises a notice should be left on the door of the building stating who should be contacted to find out what has happened. A similar note should be left at the child's address.

## **Recording the Incident**

A detailed record of the incident must be kept. Records of any discussions with parents, practitioners and other professionals should also be kept. The Uncollected Child Policy will be updated following an incident so that any lessons that have been learned can be integrated into procedures

If a child is not collected Ofsted must be notified, as this is a significant event.

**This policy was adopted on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013 following review by the  
Playgroup Committee**

Signed on behalf of the playgroup.....