

Innsworth Preschool Arrival and Departure Policy

Last Updated: June 2026

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Overview: This policy sets out the non-negotiable procedures for the arrival and departure of children at Innsworth Preschool.

1.2 Objective: Its purpose is to ensure a safe, secure, and efficient handover process, to maintain a safe environment for all, and to clarify the absolute responsibilities of parents and carers during these times.

2. Legal and Statutory Framework

2.1 Compliance: This policy is underpinned by our duties and rights under the following key legislation and guidance:

- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Supervision, safety, and suitability of adults.
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- The Children Acts 1989 & 2004.
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- UK Contract Law: Forming the terms of our service.

3. The Handover: A Clear Transfer of Responsibility

3.1 Shared Responsibility: The safety of children during arrival and departure is a shared responsibility with clearly defined boundaries.

3.2 Parental Responsibility until Handover: Parents/carers must keep their child close and supervised until a staff member has formally accepted the child at the door.

3.3 Formal Acceptance: Acceptance occurs when a staff member confirms the child's arrival and the child is brought under staff supervision into the setting's control. Being visible in the queue or car park does not constitute acceptance.

3.4 Shared Safety: If staff observe an immediate risk during arrival or departure, we may intervene to prevent harm even before formal acceptance.

3.5 Legal Note: Nothing in this policy excludes or limits any liability that cannot legally be excluded or limited (including liability for death or personal injury caused by negligence).

4. Arrival and Departure Procedures

4.1 Parental Conduct and Supervision (Mobile Phones): Mobile phone use at the door is not permitted during handover. Staff will pause handover until the phone is put away unless it is required for a disability/access need, translation, or an urgent medical/emergency situation.

4.2 No Entry to the Building: For the safeguarding of all children, parents, carers, and visitors are not permitted to enter the main preschool building during arrival or departure. Reasonable adjustments will be considered (e.g. disability access) and any entry must be pre-agreed with the Manager, except in an emergency.

4.3 Authorised Collectors: Children will only be released into the care of adults who are named as authorised collectors on their enrolment form and who are aged 16 or over. This is a safeguarding decision and is not negotiable.

4.4 Passwords and ID: If a person unfamiliar to staff arrives for collection, we will require them to provide the pre-agreed collection password. We reserve the right to verify identity via photographic ID (e.g. driving licence).

- **Verification Failure:** If a collector cannot provide the password/ID when requested, we will contact the main parent/carer and/or secondary authorised contacts. If we cannot verify safely, we will not release the child until verification is achieved.

5. Parental Responsibility and Court Orders (Custody)

5.1 Legal Duty: We understand that families may experience separation or divorce. However, we must operate within the law regarding Parental Responsibility (PR). We cannot legally deny access to a parent who has Parental Responsibility

unless we are in possession of a specific Court Order (e.g. a Prohibited Steps Order or Child Arrangements Order) that explicitly restricts that parent's contact.

5.2 Documentation & Safeguarding: Parents must provide a sealed court order or official copy that clearly restricts collection. Screenshots or unsupported messages are not sufficient.

- **Safeguarding Override:** Where staff have safeguarding concerns at collection, we may delay handover while we seek advice or support, including police assistance if required.

6. Safeguarding at Handover: The Unfit Collector

6.1 Duty of Care: We have a duty of care to ensure the child is safe when leaving our premises.

6.2 Right to Refuse: Staff reserve the absolute right to refuse to hand over a child if they have reasonable cause to believe the collector is unfit to provide safe care. This includes appearing under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or displaying volatile/aggressive behaviour.

- **Witness:** Where possible, the decision is witnessed by a second staff member and recorded immediately with reasons.

6.3 Procedure: In such an event, staff will attempt to contact the second authorised contact.

6.4 Police Involvement: If an unfit collector insists on taking the child, or attempts to drive away with the child, staff **will contact the Police immediately** on 999.

7. Late Collection and The Uncollected Child

7.1 Importance: Adherence to session times is essential for staffing ratios and licensing.

7.2 Late Collection Fees: Parents and carers must collect children at the agreed collection time. The preschool allows one 10-minute grace period for late collection. After this grace period, additional attendance is charged by the hour in line with the Fees, Funding and Charges Policy. Where the parent or carer has contacted

the preschool in advance, the normal hourly rate of £6 per hour applies. Where no advance contact has been made, the additional time will be treated as unauthorised attendance and charged at double the normal hourly rate, currently £12 per hour. Once a chargeable hour has started, that full hour is chargeable.

Late Arrival and Early Collection: Choosing to arrive late or collect early does not reduce, move, replace, or exchange the child's booked funded or privately paid session. The full booked session remains reserved and is managed under the Fees, Funding and Charges Policy.

Meal Provision: Where a child remains at preschool beyond their booked or authorised session time and is still present during the afternoon mealtime period, the preschool will provide the child with a meal in line with the Fees, Funding and Charges Policy and current meal charging arrangements.

7.3 Repeated Lateness: Persistent lateness is a breach of the Parent-Provider Agreement and may result in the termination of the child's place.

7.4 The Uncollected Child: If a child remains uncollected **30 minutes** after the session closes, and no contact has been made with parents or emergency contacts, we will treat this as a safeguarding concern. We will seek advice and support from **Children's Social Care** and/or the **Police**, while continuing to supervise the child safely.

8. Site Safety and Access Rules

8.1 Parking: The preschool car park is for staff and deliveries only. Parents and carers are not permitted to park in or use the car park for any reason. Any misuse of the car park is recorded as a safety breach.

8.2 Fire Routes: All marked fire escape gates and doors must be kept clear at all times.

8.3 Prams and Pushchairs: Prams and pushchairs cannot be left on the preschool premises as they pose a security risk and an obstruction.

8.4 Storage of Personal Items: For fire safety and hygiene reasons, all personal belongings must be taken home daily.

8.5 Food From Home (Opt-Out Families): We do not have internal storage space for large bags or backpacks and we do not provide individual refrigeration.

- **Requirement:** If you provide food from home, it must be in a compact, named, wipe-clean container, with an ice pack where needed. The container must be suitable for safe storage, easy checking, and daily handover.
- **Handover:** Food containers must be handed directly to staff at the door and are stored in a designated staff-controlled area.
- **Allergy Control:** Parents/carers must not bring loose food into the building or allow children to eat in the queue/at the gate due to severe allergy risk. Food brought from home must not contain, or be labelled as "may contain", any allergen restricted by the setting. Standing restricted allergens include nuts, peanuts, and sesame. Additional restrictions may apply where a child has an allergy, allergy plan, medical need, or EpiPen requirement, including but not limited to fish and egg where these are restricted by the setting. (See Allergy Management Policy).

9. Children's Personal Belongings

9.1 Toys and Items from Home: Children must not bring toys, personal items, or non-essential belongings into preschool unless this has been agreed in advance with the preschool. This includes items brought for play, show-and-tell, or comfort, unless the item forms part of an agreed settling-in, SEND, medical, or wellbeing arrangement.

9.2 Agreed Comfort or Support Items: Where an item is agreed, parents must ensure it is clearly named and suitable for the preschool environment. The agreement may be reviewed or withdrawn if the item causes distress, distraction, hygiene concerns, safeguarding concerns, or disputes between children.

9.3 Lost or Damaged Items: Innsworth Preschool is not responsible for toys, comforters, jewellery, accessories, clothing, bags, bottles, or other personal items brought from home, unless loss or damage is caused by the setting's negligence.

9.4 Collection-Time Searches: If an item brought from home is lost during the session, staff will not stop the departure process or search for the item at

collection time. Staff must prioritise safe handover, supervision, and the end-of-day routine. Items will be returned if and when found.

10. Consequences of Non-Compliance

10.1 Condition of Placement: Adherence to this policy is a condition of your child's placement at Innsworth Preschool.

10.2 Breach: Failure to comply with these essential safety rules constitutes a breach of your parental contract. Any action (warnings, suspension, termination) will be managed under our **Suspension and Termination of Place Policy** and recorded. Termination will typically follow documented warnings, unless the breach presents an immediate risk that warrants immediate exclusion.

11. Monitoring and Review

11.1 Review: This policy is reviewed annually or immediately following any incident that highlights a need for a change in procedure.

