

Policy: Late collection of pupils

Date: reviewed regularly; see date in document label for most recent update

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure the prompt collection of all children from the school
- ensure the safety and wellbeing of children attending a Sphere Federation school
- enable staff to attend training, meetings and carry out professional duties

We have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. This duty extends to having arrangements in place for dealing with children who are not collected at the end of a school day or at the end of an authorised activity (an after-school club, Nursery session (not applicable at Moortown Primary), or wraparound care).

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to collect their child(ren) on time at the end of each school day or authorised activity. The policy applies when a child is not collected and when there is no prior parental consent for the pupil to walk home alone.

Contact details

On admission to school, parents/carers are asked to provide three contacts (including parents/carers, with confirmation of parental responsibility) who may be called in the event of a child not being collected from school / authorised activity, or in the case of an emergency.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure this information is updated whenever circumstances change. If a telephone number does not work or a letter is returned, we follow this up at the earliest opportunity with the parent/carer. Periodically, we remind parents/carers to update contact details.

Action if a child is not collected

We ask parents/carers to call the school office if they are running late to ensure appropriate provision is made and children can be kept informed. If a child is not collected, the child is taken by a staff member to an area near the school office.

The teacher or appropriate member of staff:

1. checks whether the child is usually in an after-school activity and may have just forgotten to attend (if applicable)
2. checks with office staff to see whether a phone call or note has been received
3. attempts to make contact with parents or other named people

After some unsuccessful attempts to contact someone, a member of the senior leadership team is informed.

If there is space available (without compromising health and safety), we may place the child in wraparound care. A charge for this may be applied.

We will record instances of a child not being collected, for example, if late collections are on a frequent basis or there may be a pattern for late collections.

Procedure if a child remains uncollected after 30 minutes

In the case of a pupil not being collected and no contact being made by a parent/carer with the school or the school being unable to make contact with one of the emergency contacts within 30 minutes of the end of school / authorised activity, we may ring either the Police (101) or Leeds Social Care team to discuss the situation and ask for advice. This will allow safeguarding professionals to begin to prepare for the alternative care of the child.

Discretion is used in exceptional circumstances such as major disasters or unexpected early closures.

If there is space available (without compromising health and safety), we will place the child in wraparound care. A charge for this may be applied.

Suitable person to collect for school

It is essential that parents nominate a responsible person to pick up their child if they are unable to do so

themselves. However, it is important that this person is appropriate:

- it would not be appropriate if the person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs or suspected of being under the influence
- it may not be appropriate for an older child or young person to have this responsibility

In such cases, staff make a decision, wherever possible in consultation with a member of the safeguarding team or senior leadership team in school. The decision is made taking into consideration the full context, including the age and number of children they are to collect.

If it is decided that the child might be at risk, alternative appropriate action is taken. This might include contacting another person named on the emergency contact list or another suitable member of the family to collect the child. If another emergency contact or family member is not available then we may contact Leeds Social Care or the Police.

In the case of relationship breakdown between parents and/or guardians, unless there is a court order (which we must have seen a copy of) or there are any safeguarding concerns preventing one parent having contact with a child, we do not deny a parent's right of access.

Charges for late collections

Charges are applied because of the additional administrative and supervision costs.

After school or after-school club, if the child is not collected, we may place the child in wraparound care. A charge for this may be applied.

After a Nursery or wraparound care session, if the child is not collected, there is a late collection fee for every full or part period of 10 minutes. For example, if your child is due to be collected at 12.00 noon and you collect your child at 12.14pm, this equates to two periods. See Nursery Policy and Wraparound Policy for the late collection charges; please also refer to our Charging and Remissions Policy.

Frequent late collections

Frequent late collection of a child from school gives cause for wider safeguarding concerns for the child. In all instances, the first step is a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. For parents/carers who repeatedly fail to collect their child(ren) on time, or who fail to ensure someone responsible collects their child on time, we meet with the parents/carers to address the issue. Consideration is given to making a referral for early help.

If this fails to improve the situation, contact with Leeds Safeguarding Team can be made. They can give advice and guidance about any concerns in this area and can advise when a referral to Leeds Social Care may be appropriate.