



## **Policy: Late collection of pupils**

**Date:** January 2023

The end of the school day is 3.15pm. Most after-school clubs and tuition last an hour, therefore the end of the school day in these cases is 4.15pm (unless stated otherwise). The end of our wraparound care provision is 5.30pm (Moortown Primary) and 6.00pm (Scholes (Elmet) Primary and St James' CE Primary).

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

It is the responsibility of parents to collect their child(ren) on time at the end of each school day. 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.

The policy applies when a child is not collected at the end of the school day, after attending after school clubs, or after attending wraparound care; 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 or in the case of an emergency
- home and work telephone numbers
- mobile phone numbers where appropriate

Periodically, we remind parents/carers to update contact details. This information is collected and updated to allow us to make a quick and informed decision if somebody less familiar seeks to collect a child or if the class is being dismissed by a supply teacher. The admissions form also provides parents the option to provide a password which can be given by any adult wishing to collect the child to verify that adult is known to the parent.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer 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.

### **Action if a child is not collected**

We ask parents 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.

We will record instances of a child not being collected if:

- late collections are on a frequent basis
- there is a pattern for late collections
- the collection is after 15 minutes of school, club, tuition or wraparound care has ended

If a child is uncollected after an activity club or at the end of wraparound care (and office staff have gone home) the supervising adult assumes responsibility for attempting contact with the parents or emergency contacts. They also inform a member of the senior leadership team.

## Procedure if a child remains uncollected after 45 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 45 minutes of the end of the day/end of the club/activity, we will 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), the child will be placed in wraparound care – a charge may be applied.

## Change of collecting adult

If an adult who is not named on the consent form and/or does not know the password attempts to collect a child, we contact a parent/carer to confirm whether they are genuine and do have permission. This is to ensure the child is safe.

Changes to normal collection arrangements (eg child going on a playdate, being collected by another adult) should be communicated to the school office or the child's class teacher/club leader.

## 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 are unable to deny a parent's right of access.

## 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, 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.

Because of the additional administrative and supervision costs, a late collection charge may be applied. The charge matches wraparound care costs and will not be applied without at least one formal warning letter.

Parents/carers should consult the terms and conditions of wraparound care for late collection charges after wraparound care.