

PROTOCOL FOR CHILDREN NOT COLLECTED FROM SCHOOL OR AFTER SCHOOL PROVISION

The Trust delegate the responsibility to each individual school to manage the following processes.

The school will ensure that before a child attends the setting, their contact details and information must be held by the school i.e. dates of birth, address, addresses for those with legal responsibility, and contact telephone numbers and details. It is also important that details of the child's emergency contacts are obtained. Families are reminded, on a regular basis, to inform the school of changes to these details, such as updated telephone numbers.

Children Not Collected from School

This protocol should be followed on any occasion where a child has not been collected from school at the end of the day, and the school office have been unable to contact parent(s)/carer(s) or the emergency contact for the child. These situations are time consuming for the school, and can be upsetting for the child, but in the majority of cases the child is collected albeit late from the school.

Where children are collected late from school on a regular basis, the school will refer this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at their site, and this may begin a process of discussion with the Education Welfare Service. The matter will also be followed up with the parent(s)/carer(s).

There will be occasions when parents/carers fail to collect a child due to an accident, illness, or other emergency which will result in the child not being able to go home at the end of the day. On these occasions, it is important that a protocol is available which will enable the child to be looked after in a safe and welcoming environment.

The guiding principle in dealing with any situation in which a child is not collected from school must be to minimise distress to the child, and for him or her to remain in surroundings which are familiar, with familiar people, for as long as possible.

Protocol – for Schools

1. If a child has not been collected either from school at the end of the day, or from an after school club which they are booked in to attend, the school should make every possible attempt to contact the parent(s)/carer(s). The child may well be able to indicate if something out of the ordinary has happened at home (e.g. parental illness or absence). On some occasions, another parent may offer to take a child home with them. Schools should never release a child into the care of another adult without the expressed consent of the parent(s)/carer(s) – this consent can be given verbally, or confirmed in writing as part of a collection sheet for the child, if held

by the school. A member of staff should not take, or drive, children to their home, or to the child's home.

2. An initial attempt to contact parents/carers should be made within 15 minutes of the end of the school day, or session attended at after school club. After 30 minutes, contact with all emergency numbers supplied by the family should be attempted. If this attempt is also unsuccessful, the staff should then contact the school DSL. If the non-collection has taken place at the end of the usual school day, provision may be made for the child at an appropriate After School club, if one is available, and the cost of attendance may be passed to the family.
3. If no contact has been made, and no one has arrived to collect the child one hour after the end of their expected attendance, the school have a duty of care to contact Children's Social Care at Somerset County Council on **0300 123 2224**. This will usually be the responsibility of the DSL or appropriate deputy in their absence. The staff should provide details of the name, date of birth and address of the child; the names of the parents/carers and their contact numbers, plus any other relevant information regarding the child and their family.
4. The Duty Social Worker will make arrangements for the child until the parent(s)/carer(s) can be traced. Please wait with the child in school, until the social worker arrives, or, in exceptional circumstances, it is agreed that the school will bring the child to the Social Care Office.
5. These arrangements can also be implemented in the following circumstances:
 - Where a parent does not arrive to collect the child, and no contact can be made because the telephone numbers (including any emergency numbers) provided have been cut off or are unobtainable.
 - Where the person collecting the child is not considered an appropriate adult (e.g. is under age, or appears intoxicated, and it has not been possible to contact the parent/carer or emergency contact)
6. Once the child is in the care of Children's Social Care, they will take the responsibility for tracing the parent(s)/carer(s).

Children transported to and from school arranged by the Local Authority

If a child is taken to and from school by transport arranged by the Local Authority, and no one is home to meet the child, the driver/escort will ring the Local Authority SEN Transport Team. Calls will then be made to the contact numbers provided by the parents/carers. If no contact can be made, the SEN Transport Team will ring Children's Social Care, with all the child's details. The Duty Social Worker will arrange for the child to be cared for. The driver/escort will stay with the child until the social worker arrives.