



Marchwood Church of England Infant School

Pupil Collection Policy

Headteacher: Sally Atkins

Date approved: May 2024

Signed: 

Next review due: May 2027

Aims

This policy aims to:

- To ensure the safety and well-being of children
- To ensure the prompt collection of all children from the school
- To 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. The DfE states it is for each school to decide, and enforce its own pupil collection policy and the school is not responsible for a child's safety on his or her way home. However, Marchwood C of E Infant School recognises that it has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, and that 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.

Procedure

Collection from school

No adult other than those named will be allowed to leave the school with a child unless we have been informed in advance and they have been provided with the secure password set by the parent as part of the enrolment process. In the event that someone else should arrive without prior knowledge, or is unable to provide the password, the school will telephone the parent/carer immediately and await their advice. If the person who normally picks a child up is not doing so then the school should be informed verbally or in writing that morning.

Collection by a sibling

There is no law determining the age at which a sibling can accompany a child to school. However, as a school, we are responsible for the welfare of our pupils and therefore have to consider what we believe is good practice in ensuring the safety of our pupils. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk. In setting our protocol for collecting

children, we have taken advice from the DfE and NSPCC. Therefore, all children should be picked up from the school site by a known adult or siblings provided they are 14 years old or above (as advised by the NSPCC).

Collection before the end of the school day

If a child is to be collected before the end of the school day, the school is to be notified on the same morning. On arrival to school to collect the child the parent/carer will report to the School Office. The child will then be brought, by staff, to the office to be taken home by the parent/carer. Children should only be collected before the end of the school day in exceptional circumstances (for example an urgent medical or dental appointment. All routine medical and dental appointments should be made outside school time. When it is essential to have a non-routine appointment during the school day, evidence (such as an appointment card or hospital letter) should be shown in advance to the office staff.

Late collection

If the parent/carer or alternative nominated adult is going to be late to collect their child, they should let the school know as soon as possible.

The late collection policy will operate to the following timetable from the end of the school day:

School finishes at 3.15 pm

- Teachers and children will remain in their classrooms until 3.25 pm
- At 3.25 pm children will be taken to the office for collection. The late collection policy applies from this point.

In the event of late collection, the school will:

- Make every effort to contact the parents/carers on the telephone numbers or email addresses they have provided if we have not been contacted
- Call emergency contacts if parents/carers cannot be reached, so an authorised adult can come and collect the child
- Keep records of late collections
- If no one has collected the child by 3.30pm (or 15 minutes after the end of a club or other activity), a further phone call will be made and a member of the senior leadership team will be informed

Procedure if a child is not collected by 3.25pm

- On the first occasion, a record will be kept.
- On the second occasion the parent/carer will receive a letter and a record will continue to be kept.
- On the third occasion, the parent/carer will be asked to meet with the class teacher or a senior member of staff and will receive a formal warning letter that charges will be levied in relation to any subsequent occasion of late collection. Again, a record will continue to be kept.
- On many days, teachers have professional development or professional meetings and cannot look after children who are not collected on time. Because of the additional administrative and supervision costs, the Governors impose a late collection charge for children who are not collected. Therefore, on any subsequent occasion the parent/carer will be charged £1 per 5

minutes, per child. For example, if you pick up your child at 4.00 pm, you are 45 minutes late and this will cost you £8.00 per child. The office clock will be used to determine the cost. The charging procedures contained within this policy will not be followed where school trips, visits or journeys have caused the late arrival of children back to school. Alternatively, the child may be placed into an afterschool club and the parent will be charged for the session. This does not mean that the child has a place in this club from that point onwards.

Frequent late collections may cause us concern about the care the child is receiving and mean we may need to make a referral to children's social care so that the family can receive support with this.

This procedure will also apply if parents phone the school to say they are running late but children are still not collected by 3.25 pm.

After School Clubs

Children must be collected by the agreed time stated for the relevant club.

- On the first occasion when a child is not collected on time, the parent/carer will be reminded about the club's finishing time.
- On the second occasion when a child is not collected at the agreed time, the parent/carers will receive a letter and a record will continue to be kept.
- On the third occasion when a child is not collected at the agreed time, the parent/carers will be informed that their child will no longer be able to participate in the club.
- Late collections for clubs will be reviewed termly.
- The office clock will be used to determine the time

Children not collected

If nobody comes to collect the child, the school will make every effort to contact the parents/carers and authorised persons whose details have been supplied as outlined above. If we have not been able to make contact with the parent/carer or authorised person, or the child has not been collected after 45 minutes the school will apply child protection procedures and contact the Police and/or children's social care. This will allow these professionals to plan for the possibility that they may need to make arrangements for the alternative care of the child.

Until the child is collected, they will stay at school in the care of two fully vetted members of staff (one should preferably be the nominated child protection lead or deputy child protection lead).

Staff will never:

- take the child home with them
- transport the child home
- go in search of parents/carer

If a parent/carer appears unable to provide safe care for their child

If we are worried that the adult collecting a child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or their behaviour otherwise suggests that they may not be in a fit state to safely look after the child, we may contact another family member/named contact to pick up the child. If no contact can be made, children's social care may be contacted for advice. Schools do not have the legal authority to keep a

child on the premises against a parent/carer's will. However, if we have immediate concerns about a child's welfare and the parent/carer insists on taking the child, we will:

- contact the police
- make a safeguarding referral to children's social care
- keep a full written report of the incident.

Repeated instances of an adult appearing unfit to provide safe care will be discussed with children's social care.

If someone else comes to collect a child

The school will not allow children to go with any unauthorised person without first speaking to the authorised parents/carers.

If a parent/relative who does not have legal custody of the child arrives and tries to take them, the school will contact the child's legal guardian.

If a child's social worker is planning to collect them from school, this should be agreed in advance by the child's parents/carers (DfE, 2018) and the school should be notified.

Parents are reminded that any changes to normal collection arrangements (e.g. child going on a playdate or being collected by another parent) should always be shared with the school office or the child's class teacher.

Issues relating to parental responsibility

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced guidance for schools in England on how to understand and deal with issues relating to parental responsibility, for example when

- there are disputes between a number of adults who each claim to have parental responsibility for a particular child
- a child does not live with one or both parents
- a child is in the care of children's services (a looked after child - LAC)

In the case of relationship breakdown between parents and/or guardians, unless there is a court order (which the school must have seen a copy of) or there are any identified child protection issues preventing one parent having contact with a child, the school is unable to deny a parent's right of access.