



# Whitecross Nursery School

## Failing to Collect a Child Protocol

Reviewed by	Claire FitzPatrick
Date of last review	November 2022
Date of next review	November 2025
Ratified by the Governing Body	November 2022

This policy will be reviewed sooner if there is a change to legislation or guidance which may affect it. Any changes will be communicated to all stakeholders.

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***Protocol for dealing with children not collected from school at the end of the school day or school activity when school have received no information from parents/carers.***

***This Protocol to be followed by all Derby Schools when children are not collected.***

### **Introduction**

This protocol should be followed on those occasions where a child has not been collected from school at the end of the day and it has not proved possible to contact the parent(s)/carer(s) or the emergency contact person for the child. The vast majority of these occasions prove to be where there has been a misunderstanding between parents/carers about arrangements for the collection of their child(ren) or an unexpected difficulty. Whilst these situations are time consuming for the school and upsetting for the child, in most instances, the child is collected late from school.

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 familiar surroundings and/or with familiar people for as long as possible.

### **Procedure:**

Section 175 Education Act 2002 and Section 38 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 places a duty on Local Authorities and Governing Bodies of Schools, to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. A similar duty is placed on proprietors of independent schools. This duty should include having arrangements for dealing with children not collected at the end of the school day, or following an authorised school activity where the Governing Body or Proprietor retains responsibility for use of the school premises.

### **Local Policy**

Whitecross Nursery School recognises that it has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils, and that this duty extends to having arrangements in place for dealing with children not collected from school at the end of the school day or school activity. This protocol explains those arrangements, which have been agreed with the Derby City Council Children and Young People's Department and the Derby Safeguarding Children Board.

Parents/carers of pupils at this school will be made aware of this protocol, in writing, when their child first starts at the school. School staff will also be aware of this protocol, which is referred to in the school's 'Child Protection and Safeguarding' policy.

## Parental Information

It is essential that parents provide the school with a record of their contact details, ie name(s), address(es), home, work and mobile phone numbers (of both parents/carers). If possible, parents/carers should also provide the school with contact details of at least two other relatives/carers who could be called when the parent/carer cannot be contacted or in the event of an emergency. The school will endeavour to keep this record up to date, and it is the responsibility of parents to notify the school of any changes in these contact details.

## Protocol for Schools

The school agrees to care for the pupil who has not been collected until such times as he/she is collected by a parent/carer, or appropriate alternative arrangements have been made with the children and young people's department social care duty team to ensure the child's safety. This is designed to minimise the emotional effect on a child if such instances occur. The child should feel more secure in the familiar surroundings of the school and will also be known to the school staff.

The schools designated child protection co-ordinator will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from school, are late in doing so for no good reason, or where this is a repeat occurrence. Any child welfare concerns arising out of such incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the schools child protection policy.

Whenever a child fails to be collected from school, the Headteacher will send a letter (Appendix A) to the parent(s)/carer(s) notifying them of the arrangements that were made to care for the child. A copy will also be sent to the Local Authority Child Protection Officer.

In the event that a child is not collected by a parent/carer, this will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher or the schools designated child protection co-ordinator immediately. The Headteacher or the child protection co-ordinator will then make every effort to contact the parent, carer or named alternative carer.

If the child has not been collected after 30 minutes past the end of the school day the Headteacher/child protection co-ordinator should alert the social care duty team. It is also important that schools inform the duty officers what steps have already been taken to contact parents/carers and alternative carers.

If it is feasible a member of the school staff should visit the family home and request the parent/carer to collect the child from school (schools should not escort children to their homes, this is not the responsibility of school staff).

If after 4pm (for 3pm leavers) and 5pm (for 4pm leavers) 6.30pm (for 6pm leavers) the child has not been collected despite ongoing efforts by school based staff, the Headteacher/child protection co-ordinator will again inform the social care duty team. The social care duty team will then agree what action will be taken and the responsibility will then be transferred to the social care duty team. It is still expected that schools will continue to try to contact the parents/carers or alternative carers in a parallel process with the duty team.

Social care duty teams will give advice and may carry out appropriate checks and make further attempts to contact the parent/carer. If there are concerns about the welfare of the parent/carer, the social care duty team will ask the local police to visit the home address.

If an appropriate relative or carer is located from the emergency contact list, he/she will be asked to ensure the child is collected from the school. If there are genuine reasons for the relative or carer being unable to do this, social care staff will liaise with school about arrangements for the child to be collected and taken to the new address.

If attempts to contact a parent or alternative carer are unsuccessful, it is in the best interest of the child to remain in the school as long as possible. Social care staff will arrange for the child to be collected and taken to a place of safety, they will notify the school of the child's placement and provide contact details where appropriate.

Plans for transporting the child will be agreed by the school and social care duty team. This should take into account the availability of staff out of hours, the needs of the child and appropriate gender balance if possible. Where possible two adults should always be present. If there is a shortage of staff a mini-cab could be used with a suitable escort.

### **Links, References and Regulations**

Reference to:

- 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, September 2024', Section 3.3 – The welfare requirements *"Providers must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well"*.
- WX Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

**APPENDIX A**

Whitecross Nursery School  
Watson Street  
DERBY  
DE1 3PJ

Dear ..... (Parent/Carer's Name)

Re: ..... (Child(ren)'s Name(s))

On: ..... (Day/Date)

Was not collected from school at the end of the school day, and we were unable to contact you or your named carer(s). As a result, in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of your child(ren), we implemented the procedure for dealing with children not collected at the end of the school day or school activity.

This procedure, which has been agreed by the school, Children and Young People's Department, involved us contacting the Children's Social Care Department in order that arrangements could be made for your child to be taken to a safe place. I am sure that you will appreciate the importance of providing for your child in these circumstances.

I hope that the reasons for your child not being collected are not serious, but would you please contact me as soon as possible to discuss this matter further. You can also contact Children and Family Services on 01332 641172 for further information about the action taken.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Claire FitzPatrick

Headteacher

Whitecross Nursery School

cc Local Authority Child Protection Officer