

Protocol for dealing with children not collected at the end of the school day or school activity

Safeguarding

At White Laith we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at White Laith. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

We also exercise this responsibility by educating our children so that they grow in their understanding of their rights and responsibilities to themselves and others, in safety consciousness, and, in their maturity and abilities to keep themselves and others safe.

We perceive this to be part of our role in promoting British values

Section 175 Education Act 2002 places a duty on Local Education Authorities¹ (LEAs) 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.

Schools are therefore advised to have a protocol regarding this issue, which has been agreed by the agencies likely to be involved in the process, including the school itself, social care, police, and local authority education services if appropriate e.g. education welfare. The protocol should be endorsed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and clearly communicated to both parents or carers, and staff. The following protocol has been adapted to meet local circumstances. It draws from existing protocols used by a number of authorities. An example of an information leaflet for parents and carers is also available.

¹ Also applies to local authority education services

White Laith Primary School

PROTOCOL FOR DEALING WITH CHILDREN NOT COLLECTED FROM SCHOOL AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY OR SCHOOL ACTIVITY

Introduction

White Laith 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 local authority education services, social care, police, and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

This protocol will be brought to the attention of parents/carers, in writing, when their child first starts at the school. The protocol is also referred to in the school's child protection policy and procedures of which staff and parents should also be made aware.

It is essential that parents provide the school with a record of their contact details i.e. names(s), address(es), home, work and mobile telephone number(s). If possible, parents should also provide the school with the contact details of at least two other relatives/carers who can 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 by reminding parents of the need to notify the school of any changes.

The school agrees to care for a pupil who has not been collected until such time as he/she is collected by a parent/carer, or appropriate alternative arrangements are made with social care and/or police to ensure the child's safety.

The school's designated person for child protection will keep a record of incidents where parents 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 an incident(s) will be dealt with in accordance with the school's child protection procedures.

When a child is not collected from school, and it is considered appropriate, the Head teacher will send a letter to the parent(s)/carer(s) notifying them of the arrangements that were made to care for the child. An example of this letter can be found at appendix A.

Procedure

In the event that a child is not collected by a parent or carer, this will be brought to the attention of the Head teacher or person with designated responsibility. The Head teacher or person with designated responsibility will then make every effort to contact the parent or carer or named alternative contacts.

During this period the school's Education Welfare Officer may be able to offer support/assistance.

In the unlikely event that the child is in immediate need of protection, the police, who have emergency protection powers, will be contacted (see appendix C for contact details).

If the child has not been collected by 4.30pm (or within 30 minutes of the end of the school activity if later) and the Head teacher or person with designated responsibility is unable to contact a parent or named carer, he/she will inform Social Care by phoning the LCC call centre, or the allocated social worker (see appendix C for contact details), and provide the following information:

- Brief circumstances of incident
- Child's details
 - Name(s)
 - date of birth
 - address
 - gender
 - ethnicity
 - religion
 - language spoken
 - special dietary needs
 - SEN/behavioural difficulties/medical needs
- Parent/carer/alternative carer details
 - name(s)
 - address(es)
 - home/work/mobile telephone number(s)
- Any current or previous child protection concerns
- Any previous incidents of not being collected from school

The call should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours using an Education Leeds 'confirmation of referral' form.

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

If an appropriate relative or carer is located, he/she will be asked to ensure that the child is collected from the school. If there is a genuine reason for the relative or carer being unable to do this, social care will liaise with school about arrangements for the child to be collected and taken to the address.

If attempts to contact a parent or appropriate carer are unsuccessful, social care will arrange for the child to be collected and taken to a place of safety e.g. a temporary foster carer or family centre. They will notify the school of the child's placement and provide contact details as appropriate.

Plans for transporting the child will depend on local arrangements which should take into account staff availability out of hours, the need for adequate insurance cover, appropriate gender balance, and any information about special needs or behavioural difficulties etc provided by the school. Where possible, two adults should be present. If there is a shortage of staff a mini cab could be used with a suitable escort. Social care for the school area will liaise with social care for the area in which the child resides if this is different.

Regularly Transported Children

Where arrangements are in place for a child to be escorted home from school, and there is no response at the home address, the driver will immediately inform the school. If other children have to be taken home, the child will remain in the vehicle whilst this is done. The driver will leave a pro-forma (see Appendix B) at the child's address with the school's contact details. Unless directed otherwise, the driver will then return the child to the school. In the meantime, the school will liaise with social care for the area in which the child resides, in the event that the parent or carer continues to be unobtainable.

Major Incidents

If an incident occurs which results in a large number of children not being collected, social care will be contacted at the earliest opportunity, because it may be necessary to accommodate the children at a single location until an appropriate carer is located. If the nature of the incident is considered serious, the arrangements for collecting and caring for the children, including overnight placements, will form part of the Authority's emergency plan or Crisis response.

APPENDIX A

Dear Parent/Carer's name

Re: Child(ren)'s name(s)

On Child(ren)'s name(s)

were 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, local authority education services, social care, police and the Local Safeguarding Children Board, involved us contacting social care 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 social care on ...0113 3760336... for further information about the action taken.

Yours sincerely

N.Sheerin
Head teacher

APPENDIX B

Dear Parent/Carer

On / / at pm, there was no response when your child(ren) was/were returned to his/her/there address as previously arranged. Unless the school instructs otherwise, the driver will return your child to the school and arrangements will be made to ensure his/her safety.

Please ring the school on 0113 2930280 as soon as possible. If no-one is available when you call, please contact social care on **0113 3760336**

Yours faithfully

Mr/Mrs/Ms

.....

Driver / escort

APPENDIX C

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

School	Tel 0113 2930280
Head teacher	N. Sheerin
Designated person	N. Sheerin (Safeguarding Lead) & R Drinkall
Social Services Dept – Duty & Care	Tel 0113 3760336
Emergency Duty Social Worker (out of office hours)	Tel 0113 5350600
Police	Tel 101 or 999