

Children Not Collected From School Procedures

Revised by Jo Cook Education Safeguarding Coordinator September 2010

Requirements For Schools and Integrated Teams

1. Ensure the child remains in the school.
2. The head teacher (or other senior teacher with delegated responsibility) will try all available contact numbers for parents / carers and, failing these, should try all available back-up contact numbers (friends / relatives*) and make every effort to secure suitable alternative care arrangements.
3. If the child(ren) has not been collected by 4.30pm Monday-Thursday or 4pm on Friday and no alternative arrangements are in place, DCPC or head teacher should contact the duty officer at the relevant Integrated Social Care Team via Customer First – telephone number 01634 334466 – (or the child's allocated social worker, where applicable). Schools must be aware that there may be some considerable delay in the identified Integrated Area Social Care Team being in a position to respond, this will be dependant upon the number and seriousness of other issues being dealt with at the same time.

The duty manager / senior or designated professional will:

1. Reach a decision concerning whether the child could be considered to be abandoned and will take responsibility for ensuring the child's welfare including, if necessary, making arrangements for an emergency placement.
2. A visit will be made to the child's house by a social worker or social care professional. A check will be made with the police and all other avenues of enquiry exhausted. If there is no resolution to the situation then a placement will need to be sought.

As advised, the above may take a matter of hours. Schools must, therefore, have their own procedures in place that can be implemented during the interim period until suitable alternative arrangements can be made and the child's safety confirmed.

It is the school's responsibility to ensure that the child remains at the school until collected by the child's parents / carer or the social worker. Public liability insurance cover may not cover school staff that take children off the school premises in these circumstances. Schools need to clarify the issue of their public liability insurance.

When contact is made with the child's parents / carers, they should be informed that Social Care has been contacted and who to contact if the child has been collected by social care team.

Requirements For School Transport Providers:

If a parent is not available when dropping a child home the following process must be followed:

1. Wait outside the house until the official drop off time.
2. Telephone the parent's / carer's home and mobile telephone numbers.
3. If there is no response, telephone the other two contacts that have been provided by the parents for use in an emergency. If these numbers are not known, telephone the school who should have details of emergency numbers on record / file.
4. If there is still no response, telephone the relevant Integrated Area Social Care Team via Customer First 01634 334466 and advise them of the current situation and the possibility that further services may be required, continue taking the other children home and then return to the child's house.
5. Telephone the parent again and any emergency numbers provided by the parents.
6. If there is still no reply to any of these numbers, contact the local Integrated team via Customer First - 01634 334466.
7. If social services cannot trace the parent / carer, then take the child to the venue identified by social services. Leave a note for the parent / carer explaining that they must contact the relevant Integrated Area Social Care Team and provide contact details. Share with Social Care all the necessary information about the child including: child's address, relevant telephone numbers, medical information and the name of the school.
8. Telephone the parent again to leave a message containing the information above in relation to whom has taken responsibility for the child in the absence of the parent / carer.
9. Do not leave the child with a neighbour or relative unless authorised to do so by the parent / carer in writing.
10. Do not take the child back to your office or home.