



Children Not Collected From School Procedures



Updated and ratified by the MSCB December 2008



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, then school should contact the duty officer at the relevant Integrated Team via Customer First – telephone number 01634 334466 – (or the child's allocated social worker, where applicable). Schools need to be aware that there may be some considerable delay in being able to respond, depending on the number and seriousness of other issues being dealt with at the same time.

The duty officer will:

1. Reach a decision about whether this 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 the social worker. 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 have to be sought.

As mentioned earlier, all the above may take a matter of hours. Schools must, therefore, have their own procedures that can be implemented in the interim period until suitable alternative arrangements can be made.

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 steps must be followed:

1. Wait outside the house until the official drop off time.
2. Ring the parent's / carer's home and mobile telephone numbers
3. If there is no response then telephone the other two contacts that have been supplied by the parents for use in an emergency. If these numbers are not known, then ring the school who should have details of emergency numbers on record.
4. If there is still no response, carry on taking the other children home and then return to the child's house
5. Ring the parent again and any emergency numbers supplied 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 advised by social services. Leave a note for the parent / carer explaining where you are taking the child. Provide social care with all the necessary information about the child, relevant telephone numbers, medical information and the name of the school.
8. Ring the parent again to leave a message as to where you are taking the child.
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.