Bishop Hogarth
Catholic Education Trust

# Collecting Children from School Policy

## THIS POLICY APPLIES ACROSS ALL TRUST SCHOOLS AND SERVICES

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| Change Log | |
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| **Updates:** | • Updated policy to reflect the up-to-date legal framework that this policy adheres to.<br>• Addition of roles and responsibilities section.<br>• Updated general collection procedure. |
| **Location:** | • **Legal Framework**<br>• **Roles and Responsibilities**<br>• **General Collection Procedure** |
| **Summary Date:** | **27/05/25** |
| **Completed By:** | **Joseph Walker – Policy and Governance Officer** |

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## Statement of intent

The School is committed to ensuring the safety of all pupils when they leave school at the end of the day. We appreciate that, for many families, arrangements need to be flexible and it may be that several people care for the child after school. For this reason, we have set out clear procedures that all staff and parents must adhere to, to ensure the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Keep pupils safe.
- Ensure all staff members are aware of the correct procedures for the end of the school day.
- Make parents aware of the expectations regarding collecting children.
- Highlight the importance of parent-school communication.

Please note that this policy only applies to instances where pupils are collected from school. It does not relate to pupils who leaving school independently.

## 1. [Updated] Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education (independent school standards) Regulations 2014
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2023) 'Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Extended Services Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## 2. [New] Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring parents are informed where their child has not turned up to school to coordinate an effective response.

Staff will be responsible for:

- Remaining vigilant and reporting any suspicious behaviour observed at or near the school gates to the Headteacher.
- Monitoring the behaviour of pupils as they leave the school.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns identified during the end of the school day to the DSL.

Parents will be responsible for:

- Informing the Headteacher when their child has not returned home from school.
- Communicating to the school if they are going to be late to collect their child.

Pupils will be responsible for:

- Behaving appropriately when travelling to and from school.
- Making sure they arrive to school on time.

## 3. [Updated] General collection procedure

Parents will promptly collect pupils at the end of the school day. Parents will be made aware of what is expected of their behaviour when they are collecting pupils, e.g. that the school is a smoke-free zone.

Staff members will supervise until all pupils have been collected, accounting for the school's late collection procedure outlined in section 4 of this policy. Sufficient staff to pupil ratios will be met at all times during the collection process.

**[New]** Parents will be advised to be mindful of where they are parking when collecting their children so as not to disrupt traffic or block access. Additionally, parents should not leave their vehicles idling whilst waiting to collect their children.

**[Updated]** Pupils will be allowed to travel to and from school on their own as long as this arrangement is appropriate for their age and mental maturity.

Staff members will not release a pupil if it is felt that the parents are not in a fit state to ensure the pupil's safety or if the pupil shows signs of distress or anxiety. In these cases, the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed and children's social care, and the police if appropriate, will be contacted.

Pupils will only be permitted to leave the premises with adults who are registered with the school as a person with collection responsibility.

Under no circumstances will staff members take pupils home themselves.

## 4. After-school club collection procedure

Parents will follow the normal collection procedure, as outlined in section 3, when picking up children from after-school clubs.

Where after-school club provision is provided by an external organisation, it is the responsibility of that organisation to implement an appropriate process for the collection of pupils, ensuring that they effectively identify and respond to safeguarding concerns.

## 5. Late collection procedure

Parents will notify the school at the first possible opportunity if they believe they will be late to collect their child.

The school will allow for a **15-minute** window for late arrival. If a pupil has not been collected **15 minutes** after the specified collection time, a staff member will ensure the supervision of the child before trying to contact the pupil's parents. If the pupil's parents cannot be reached via the contact details provided, emergency contacts will be contacted, and the school will continue to try and contact the parents. If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted, the non-collection procedure will be followed as outlined in section 8.

The school will hold at least one emergency contact for each pupil and will have more than one where reasonably possible.

The pupil will join the after-school care club, where provided and parents will be liable to pay the cost for this service.

All staff members, including those in charge of after-school activities, will be aware of the school's internal procedure for late collection and will ensure that the situation is resolved whilst causing as little distress as possible to the pupil.

While awaiting collection, pupils will be supervised at all times, ensuring appropriate staffing ratios are met.

Where appropriate, a staff member will sensitively ask the pupil whether they are aware of any reason that could account for their parents being late.

## 6. Recurrence of late collection

The length and frequency of late collections are monitored by the school. The school will keep a record of incidents where parents are late with no reasonable explanation.

Concerns regarding a pupil's safety and welfare associated with late collection will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

In the event of recurrence of late collection, where no reasonable explanation has been given, a letter will be sent home to the parents requesting them to attend a meeting to discuss their circumstances.

## 7. Collecting a child on someone's behalf

The school never releases a pupil into the care of another adult who is not a family member or named emergency contact without the consent of their parents.

Social workers are not permitted to collect pupils from the school to attend care review meetings without the prior consent of teachers, foster carers, parents and the pupil themselves.

The school **will not** accept a list of people who may collect the pupil as a substitute to calling the school office and informing the school directly of the change in collection.

Pupils may be collected from school by an older sibling if the sibling is aged 16 or older.

If parents wish for their child to be collected by another party who does not have parental responsibility, whether this is a regular occurrence or a single occurrence, they must notify the school in writing.

In an emergency, verbal consent may be given for an agreed person to take their child home. This will be recorded, and a letter will be sent to the parents confirming that the arrangement was made at their request. Verbal consent must include a full physical description of the person, unless already known to the school.

A password may be requested to be used by both parties to ensure the identity of the person collecting the pupil is the individual arranged by the parent.

Staff members who are unsure of an adult's identity will ask to see identification. If there is uncertainty about a person's identity following the checking of their identification, the following procedure will be followed:

- A staff member will take the pupil to the school office.
- The pupil's parents will be contacted for further advice.
- A member of the SLT will be made aware of the situation.
- If the pupil's parents are not contactable, the standard procedure for uncollected pupils will be followed.

Under no circumstances will a pupil be allowed to leave the school with someone if they are showing signs of distress or anxiety.

## 8. Non-collection procedure

The school will continue to try and contact the parents and named emergency contacts in the event of a non-collection. A detailed record of the action taken, and the calls made, will be kept.

Under no circumstances will staff members go and look for the parents. A staff member will supervise the pupil at all times.

If no contact has been made with the pupil's parents or emergency contacts, and no one has arrived to collect the child within an **hour** since the original collection time – the end of the school day or at **4.30pm** if it was pre-arranged for a pupil to attend a school club – the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed and children's social care, and the police if appropriate, will be contacted.

A member of staff will stay with the pupil until children's social care arrives.

Once the situation has been resolved, the reason the circumstances arose will be established and noted, and steps to avoid recurrence will be taken by the school and parents.

Following an event of non-collection, the relevant procedures will be reviewed to ensure they were effective and amended where necessary.

## 9. [Updated] Monitoring and review

This policy will be actively monitored and reviewed as required to ensure compliance with statutory obligations and will be subject to a formal review every three years.

**Appendix 1**

# Letter to Parents: Collecting Pupils from School

**RE: Collecting pupils from school**

Dear parents,

I am writing to you today with regard to pupils who are being collected late from school, who are being collected by other people than those specified, and who are often not collected altogether.

I would first like to take this opportunity to thank those parents who abide by the school's policy for collecting pupils from school.

Our school has a Collecting Children from School Policy, which I have included with this letter for parents to review. Despite this, it has come to my attention that some parents are not following the procedures that are in place. It is for this reason that I would like to take the opportunity to explain the importance of the school's Collecting Children from School Policy and why there is a need for consistent procedures to be established and adhered to.

Through this letter, I hope to provide clarification on the school's procedures for collecting your children, and avoid any confusion, inconvenience and frustration in the future. I urge parents to read the contents of this letter thoroughly.

At our school, the safety of your children is of the utmost importance to us, which is why we have the following procedures in place.

**Running late**

If, when coming to pick your child up from school, you are running late, we ask that on each separate occasion you ring the school office on **01325 380819** and inform the school that you are running late and when you can be expected at the school. We also ask that you be mindful of the time at which you notify the school; wherever possible, we ask parents to notify the school no later than **30 minutes** before the specified collect time.

If applicable, please also name the person who will be collecting your child on your behalf. The school may ask you for a description of the individual if they are unknown to the school. Additionally, we may request that a password is put in place, for us to ask the individual who comes to collect your child. Pupils will not be released from the school unless staff are completely satisfied that they are safe. When parents are not at the school on time to collect their children, their child will remain supervised.

**Recurring late pick-ups**

As our policy states, the length and frequency of late collections are monitored by the school, and any concerns regarding a pupil's safety that may be associated with late pick-ups will be appropriately addressed by the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, where applicable.

A record is kept of incidents where parents are late with no reasonable explanation, In addition, the school may send parents a letter inviting them to a discussion about their circumstances and any arrangements that can be made to assist the parents.

**Non-collection**

A member of staff will supervise the pupil and the school will try to contact parents, and other listed emergency contacts, in the event that a child is uncollected from the school. Under no circumstances will school staff go looking for parents. If no contact can be made and no specified adult (someone that has been approved to collect the pupil) has come to collect the pupil within an **hour** of the original collection time, the school will have no alternative but to follow their child protection procedures and contact children's social care or the police.

**Collecting a pupil on someone's behalf**

The school will never, under any circumstances, allow a pupil to leave the premises with an adult who has not been specified as someone with responsibility for collecting the pupil. If there is a change in who will be coming to collect a pupil, this **must be communicated to the school**, where a description of the person and a password will be asked of you, to ensure your child's safety.

The school **will not** accept a list of people who may collect the pupil as a substitute to calling the **school office on 01325 380819** and informing the school directly of the change in collection. Having a list of potential adults who may or may not be collecting a pupil is a gateway to confusion and inconsistencies, which is where mistakes can be made. It should also be noted that the school may ask the individual who is collecting the pupil for proof of identification, and they should be ready to provide this.

Finally, please have the same consideration for the above when your child is attending an after-school club – the procedures outlined in this letter and in the included policy are still enforced and should still be followed.

I understand that sometimes emergencies happen which may make the above procedures seem cumbersome; however, I would like to reassure you that the school has these procedures in place for the sole purpose of protecting the pupils of the school. The whole school appreciates your cooperation with following these procedures and we will be understanding of valid explanations and emergencies.

If you have any queries in relation to this letter, you are welcome to contact myself, Katie Whitehead, Headteacher on 01328 380819 or admin@staugustines.bhcet.org.uk. I will, of course, be happy to respond to any queries.

Also included in this letter is a slip which should be completed and handed back to the school office. The slip outlines the emergency contact details for your child. I am asking that parents complete this slip to ensure that the school holds accurate and up-to-date emergency contact details for all pupils.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I would also like to reiterate my thanks to the vast majority of parents who follow the school's procedures.

Yours sincerely

Please complete the slip below and return to K Whitehead via the school office

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name of child:** | |
| **Year of child:** | |

| | **Name** | **Contact number** | **Password** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Parent responsible for collection:** | | | |
| **Emergency contact one:** | | | |
| **Emergency contact two:** | | | |
| **Emergency contact three:** | | | |
| **I agree to the procedures explained to me in this letter and that the information I have provided above is correct:** | | | |
| **Signature:** | | **Date:** | |

**Appendix 2**

# Non-collection of Pupil Letter Template

**RE: Non-collection of pupil**

Dear **name of parent**,

As you are aware, **name of child** was not collected from school on **day/date** and we were unable to contact you, or the emergency contact, via the details you provided to the school.

I would like to remind you that, in the event of non-collection of a pupil, **name of school** must work in accordance with child protection procedures. For this reason, children's social care were made aware of the situation on **date**.

I hope the reasons for the late collection of your child are not serious, but I encourage you that if you are experiencing difficulties collecting your child on time, or arranging transportation for them, please do come in and speak to either myself or your child's teacher and we can discuss ways in which we may be able to help.

Yours sincerely

**Headteacher**