

Carterhatch



Infant School

Procedure For The Collection and Non-Collection of Children

Headteacher: Sarah Clements

Updated: December 2024

Next Review: December 2026

Non Statutory

Introduction

We have a very strict policy relating to the collection of children. Carterhatch Infant School will dismiss children in line with its own agreed process for the dismissal of children at the end of the school day. This applies to school and after-school activities.

Procedure for dismissal of pupils at the end of the school day

Ensuring that children are passed into the care of their adults safely at the end of the day is a vital part of keeping our children safe. It is important that staff are fully focussed on ensuring that processes are followed.

Parents and carers will often attempt to speak with staff during the dismissal process and it is important that staff are confident in advising adults to wait until all children are safely dismissed before engaging in conversation with them.

All staff must remain vigilant and must share any concerns around the safety or effectiveness of procedures with SLT immediately.

Where a parent / carer is unable to collect their child and are nominating a friend or relative who is unknown to us to do so on their behalf, the school office must be notified in advance. The office will inform the relevant staff.

Nursery

At the end of the school day adults will be asked to wait in the nursery outside area. Staff will be on duty on exit doors and supervising children in the classroom.

Reception and Year 1

At the end of the school day adults will be asked to wait in the playground for their child. Each class has a designated door to exit. Parents will be informed at the start of the year the door their child will be released from.

Year 2

At the end of the school day adults will be asked to wait in the year 2 area, outside the classrooms. Parents will be informed at the start of the year where their child's classroom is.

Afterschool clubs and activities

At the end of any afterschool club and activity, children will be accompanied by the member of staff that is supervising the activity to the agreed collection point.

Identifying Adults

A member of staff will identify if the adult is known to staff, usually the class teacher or learning assistant. Once a recognised adult has been identified the member of staff will call for the child who will be dismissed by the supervising member of staff and sent to the door. The member of staff on the door will then dismiss the child into the collecting adult's care.

If they are not recognised staff will contact the office, where further checks will be undertaken. The office will ask the parent if they would like to add that person to the collection list.

If children are not collected

Children who have not been collected in designated areas by 3.25pm will be accompanied to the school office by the teacher or learning assistant. The office will attempt to contact their parents.

In the event that we are unable to contact parents, we will follow the **procedure for when children are not collected** below.

Our expectation of parents / carers

This policy is in place to protect your child and is reviewed and updated regularly for the safeguarding of all children in our care.

- All persons who collect children **MUST** have their contact and emergency details entered into our database which is stored centrally and managed by the administration of the school.
- Whilst we have a duty to maintain this information, it is also the responsibility of the parent / carer to keep this information up to date and notify us of any changes immediately.
- All persons who are to collect a child **MUST** be made known to us and only these named persons can collect a child unless a parent / carer has given us in advance, explicit permission for another adult to do so on their behalf.
- Staff reserve the right and are encouraged to respectfully challenge anyone with whom they are not familiar.
- Parents / carers must ensure they are on time or inform the school if they are going to be late or absent. We acknowledge there may be an extenuating circumstance whereby an occasion of lateness occurs. In this circumstance a telephone call will be acceptable, along with details of the person who will be collecting their child/children.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to collect a child and to nominate people who support them with this responsibility. However, staff are encouraged to query any situation where an individual child is felt to be at risk e.g. Collected by a sibling that is not that old, or not acting responsibly. Someone who may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Staff will discuss this with the senior leadership team before they hand the child over.

Procedure for when children are not collected

We abide by the Enfield Safeguarding Partnership policy which has been developed by Head teachers, Social Service representatives, Police and Education Welfare Services within the Local Authority . <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/safeguardingenfield>

Lateness

Children who are not collected at the end of the school day will remain with their class teacher for ten minutes and then be taken to a designated area within the school; this area is outside the school office. The office will attempt to call parents or emergency contacts. If children have not been collected by 3.30pm they will join our after school club, parents may incur a charge for this. The collecting adult must sign the child/children out and provide a reason for their delay. This is to be done on the touch screen signing in/out device at the school office.

Lateness is monitored and whilst we will initially work with parents / carers to address and to discuss any underlying difficulties, if a parent / carer is persistently late in collecting their child from school this will be followed up by a member of the senior leadership team and possibly the Educational Welfare Officer. A letter will be sent to the parent / carer explaining the concerns and the consequences of continued lateness. **Appendix 1**

Should parents / carers wish to familiarise themselves with our procedures, they are available on our website and reminders are printed in newsletters.

This information advises parents / carers that they should: -

- contact the school as soon as a delay is predicted;
- make alternative arrangements for their child / children to be collected; and
- notify the school of the name of the person they are authorising to collect their child / children .
- If the school has not been contacted within a reasonable time (which we suggest is at least 10 minutes prior to the end of the school day) a member of staff will try to contact the parent / carer and / or the emergency contact numbers provided.

If the school is unable to make contact with the parent / carer and if it is appropriate in the circumstances, the child / children will be given a temporary place (if one is available) at an After School Club and charges will be made.

Non collection

If the school is unable to make contact with the parent or emergency contact and an hour has elapsed since the end of the school day, a referral to Children and Families Services should be made by phone on 0208 379 5555. This referral should be made no later than 4.15 pm. This contact will alert Children's Social Care that a child has not been collected by their parent. The child's full details including name, D.O.B. address and all contact numbers must be provided at the time of the call.

Action by Children and Families Services

On receipt of a telephone referral from school, details of the pupil's emergency contact numbers will be shared. The social worker will liaise with the school, and relevant information known about the child and family by both agencies will be exchanged.

The social worker will continue to make attempts to call parents and any family members listed as emergency contacts whilst further information and checks are undertaken in relation to known history.

This joint and continued effort will take place whilst the child remains in the care of school staff. A decision will then be made at the point at which all efforts to contact parents have reached an end and the school can no longer continue to care for the child due to the school day coming to an end that further action is needed. This allows every opportunity for parents to arrive at school and minimise the negative experience for their child(ren).

An agreement will be reached about the child being brought to the Children's Social Care offices ideally by school staff who know the child well and are familiar. If there are reasons as to why this cannot happen arrangements should be made for Children's Social Care to collect the child from school.

Children's Social Care will continue to try and make contact with the parents whilst the child is being brought to their offices. A home visit may be undertaken by the school in discussion with Children's Social Care and a risk assessment made to consider if this is safe and appropriate to do so.

At this time the social worker may also need to undertake a home visit or be looking at alternative family members and as a last resort securing emergency accommodation for the child if we continue to be unable to make contact with parents.

Pupils will only be accommodated in Local Authority accommodation as a last resort after it has been demonstrated that this is in the best interest of the child and that no other alternatives exist.

Following accommodation of the child, continued efforts will be made to contact parents/carers. The social worker will liaise with the school as soon as possible to update them regarding the resolution of the incident and discuss any further welfare issues concerning the child.

If children are taken to Children's Social Care offices, we will make efforts to inform parents/carers of the action that has been taken, by emailing and delivering a letter to the home address on the same day of the event (Appendix 2). These actions will be recorded on the pupil's file for future reference. The letter will inform parents of the action taken and give a number for the parents/carers to contact at Children and Families Services.

Pupils not collected from after school club/activities

Children not collected from an after school activity, sporting club or enrichment activity will be subject to the same policy and procedure. Pupils not collected from after school clubs or activities which finish beyond 17.30 will be referred to the Emergency Duty Team on 0208 379 1000.

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The best start in life for all our children-no excuses, no compromise

Carterhatch Infant School

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www.carterhatchinfants.com

Headteacher: Sarah Clements

Carterhatch



Infant School

Date:

Dear,

I am writing to you to remind you of the school's policy for 'Children Not Collected At The End Of The School Day' as stated on the school website and available at the school office.

Yesterday your child was not collected at the end of the school day for the second time in.....weeks/months without contact from you or an acceptable explanation for the delay. This was not only very upsetting for..... but prevented my staff member from performing other duties or returning to their own family.

If is again left at the end of the school day without contact or an acceptable reason for the delay, I will be inviting you to a meeting with a member of the Police Safer Schools Section and myself to discuss how this matter may be resolved.

The length of time was left at school came very close to the point at which our policy suggests we should be seeking the assistance of social workers within Families and Children's Services.

I would ask again that you make every effort to prevent further distress for by collecting ...her/him/them promptly at the end of the school day.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Clements
Headteacher

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Infant School

Date:

Dear,

As your child was not collected at the end of the school day and we were unable to make contact with you using the contact numbers you provided your child is now being looked after by the London Borough of Enfield's Children and Families Service.

In compliance with section 20 of the Children Act 1989 your child was determined to have been, either abandoned or the carer was deemed to have temporarily or permanently been unable to provide suitable care and accommodation at that time.

Please contact Children and Families Service

0208 379 1000 (Emergency Duty Team) out of hours 5pm -9am. 0208 379 5000 –9am – 5pm.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Clements
Headteacher