



# Uncollected Children Policy

THE MAYFLOWER FEDERATION  
ILDERTON & PHOENIX PRIMARY SCHOOLS

PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN UNCOLLECTED FROM SCHOOL

Approved by:	Helen Hayes Head of School	Date: September 2025
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## Introduction

This policy should be used whenever a child has not been collected from school at the end of the day and it has not been possible to contact their parents or carers. The majority of these cases will arise because there has been a misunderstanding between parents and carers about collection or an unexpected difficulty preventing parents and carers from reaching the school. Although these are time consuming for the school and upsetting for the child, they usually result in the child being collected late.

Where children are collected late from school on a regular basis, the school can make a referral to the schools Family Services Team and the matter will be followed up with a face-to-face meeting with the parent/carers. However, there will be the occasions when parents and carers fail to collect a child due to an accident, illness or other emergencies which will result in the child not being able to go home at the end of the day. On these occasions, it is important that these procedures are followed so that the child can be looked after in a safe and welcoming environment.

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Family Services Team and in line with Southwark's Safeguarding Procedures. Aspire Childcare Project who run after-school clubs and holiday play schemes on the Mayflower Federation sites have their own policy for uncollected children.

### **Collection Procedures**

- At the end of each school day children are dismissed into the care of a known adult by their class teacher/ Teaching assistant.
- Once a child has been dismissed to his/her carer or parent the responsibility for that child's welfare becomes theirs.
- The Mayflower Federation has an expectation that children under the age of 10 (Year 6) will not be sent to or collected from school without a responsible adult.
- The Federation will not release a child into the care of an unrecognised adult without specific written or telephoned permission from a known carer.
- The expectation is that older siblings collecting children will be a minimum of 18 years of age except in special circumstances agreed by a member of SLT.
- When a carer is late collecting a child from school there is an expectation that the school will be contacted in advance so that necessary arrangements can be made for the care of the child .
- On some occasions another parent may offer to take a child home with them. The school will never release a child into the care of another adult who is not a family member or the child's emergency contact person without the consent of the parent or carer.
- Members of staff will not take children home with them.

### **Procedure for Uncollected Children:**

#### *Step 1: Initial Waiting Period (End of School – 3:45 PM)*

- At the end of the school day, any children not collected remain in their classroom under the direct supervision of the class teacher.
- If the child has not been collected by **3:45 PM**, when the school gates close, the teacher will escort the child to the school office.

#### *Step 2: Office Supervision and Further Contact Attempts (From 3:45 PM – 4.30pm)*

- The child will remain in the office under the supervision of a designated staff member.

- School staff will attempt to contact the parents/carers and all emergency contacts, recording all efforts made.
- SLT or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed of the situation.

### *Step 3: Safeguarding Procedures (If a Child Remains Uncollected After 1 Hour)*

- If all attempts to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts fail:
  - The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will contact Children's Social Care for advice and support.
  - If Children's Social Care cannot be reached or if there is an immediate safeguarding concern, the police will be contacted via 101 (or 999 if there is any concern for the child's safety or wellbeing).

Contact details for local CYPS offices:

Duty Manger (Lambeth CYPS)	Duty Manager (Croydon CYPS)	Duty Manager (Southwark CYPS)
International House 6 Canterbury Crescent London SW9 7QE	Taberner House Park Lane Croydon CR9 3JS	Sumner House Sumner Road London SE15 5QS
<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:dutymanager@lambeth.gov.uk">dutymanager@lambeth.gov.uk</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk">childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:RAD@southwark.gov.uk">RAD@southwark.gov.uk</a>

- A referral will be made in writing to the relevant duty manager explaining the situation so that in the event that parents come forward out of hours, the allocated social worker can take any necessary action to re-unite the child with their parent or carer.
- The duty social worker/ police will agree a timetable for further actions, should the child remain uncollected.
- It may be necessary for the child to be taken from the school to a CYPS office. Staff will **not** transport children alone; arrangements will be made to transport the child by taxi or mini cab. Two members of staff will be needed to accommodate transport to the relevant CYPS office.
- There may be occasions when a school building is locked up whilst staff are waiting for someone to arrive to collect the child. A public building will be sought as a place to wait and the parent/carer will be informed of the arrangements.
- The duty social worker will ensure that school has a contact number for them beyond normal office hours.
- Once the child is in the care of CYPS or the police, they will take the responsibility for tracing the parents or carers. The duty social worker/ police officer will make arrangements for the child to be looked after until the parents or carers can be traced.

### **Action by the school Family Services Team and Senior Leadership Team**

- Inform parents/carers of the importance of collecting their child/ren on time and of the expectation that they should contact the school as soon as it appears that they may have a problem.
- Offer advice and support to parents and carers who repeatedly arrive late to collect their child/ren before escalating the matter as a safeguarding concern.

