

**St Michael's CE Primary School  
Sydenham**



**Drop Off and Collections Policy  
(including Late Collections)**

Policy shared with Governors: 18 November 2019

Review Date: Autumn 2022

# Drop Off and Collections Policy

## Rationale

At St Michael's School we have due regard for our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We also have a responsibility to keep children safe whilst they are at school and promote the welfare of these children as described in the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy. This Drop Off and Collections Policy reflects our duties to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, making appropriate arrangements to keep children safe and protect them from abuse or neglect and to foster good relations.

## Objectives

- To ensure that parents are aware of their responsibilities relating to the drop off and collection of their children at the start and end of school or at the end of After-School activities.
- To provide clarity to parents regarding the school's policy regarding children coming to or leaving school unaccompanied.
- To establish the school's requirements regarding the practice of siblings accompanying pupils to or from school at the beginning and end of the day.
- To provide protocols for the collection of children from school by persons other than those with parental responsibility for the child(ren).

## Other relevant policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Late Collections Policy
- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

## Drop Off / Start of Day

The expectation is that children arrive at school on time. The gates open at 8.45am, school starts at 8.55am and the gates are closed at 9.00am. Children who arrive at or after 9.00am will be recorded in the school registers as 'Late' with minutes of lateness being recorded after 9.00am.

Children should arrive at school at the time when the gates are due to open and should not be dropped off outside the gates and left unattended.

When the gates are opened, they will be attended by a member of staff at all times.

Whilst there is no legal minimum age at which children can make their own way to school (i.e. unaccompanied), the school expects that all children in Early Years (i.e. Reception Class) and Years 1-4 will be accompanied by a parent/carer or responsible adult or older sibling. Parents should make their decision to allow their child(ren) to walk to school alone based on the child's maturity, ability and the safety, complexity and distance of the route to school.

Children who travel to school unaccompanied should aim to arrive at school at 8.45am when the gates are opened and not arrive so early that they have to wait for long periods outside school.

Accompanying adults may leave their children in the care of staff once the child(ren) enter the school gates. However, parents/carers may also enter the playground and wait with their children until the children go into school. If parents/carers wish enter the school buildings/visit the office, etc. they should leave via the playground gate and make their way to the school office / main front door. Parents are not permitted to enter the school via the corridor doors unless accompanied by a member of staff.

Once a child has entered the school gates/playground they must not leave without reference to the member of staff manning the gate.

Children who arrive late (i.e. after the gates have closed) should be accompanied into the school office/reception area to advise the school of the reason for late attendance.

### **Collection / End of Day**

The Infant gates are opened at 3.15pm

The Junior gates are opened at 3.30pm

Parents/carers may enter the playground areas when the gate are opened but must not enter any of the school buildings.

Class teachers are responsible for the orderly dismissal of pupils from their classrooms.

Class teachers will not allow children to leave with unknown persons.

Where the normal collection procedures are varied (e.g. a different person collecting the child or the child being collected at a different time from normal) the school must be advised as early as possible on the day and always before 3.00pm.

Parents/carers must advise the school if they have been unavoidably delayed and will not be able to attend school to collect their child(ren) within five minutes of the end of the school day. The child (ren) will wait in the office until the parent/carers are able to collect them (see Late Collection Policy)

Once a child has been dismissed by the class teacher into the custody of the parent/carer, the child must not be left unattended in the playground.

Children are not permitted to play on the climbing frames/equipment, play ball games or cycle/scoot in the school playgrounds.

Whilst there is no legal minimum age at which children can make their own way home from school (i.e. unaccompanied), the school expects that all children in Early Years (i.e. Reception Class) and Years 1-4 will be accompanied by a parent/carer or responsible adult or older sibling. Parents of children in Years 5 and 6 may give permission for their child(ren) to travel home alone. Parents should make their decision to allow their child(ren) to travel home from school alone based on the child's maturity, ability and the safety, complexity and distance of the school to home route. The school requires the permission to be in writing (an email will also be acceptable).

### **Collection by siblings**

Pupils may be collected by an older sibling once the school has received written permission from the parent/carer. Older siblings must (at a minimum) be attending secondary school or be in tertiary education. The school does not permit siblings still at primary school to take their younger brothers/sisters home.

### **Concern over parents/carers ability to offer safe care of their child**

If the school is worried that the adult collecting a child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or their behaviour otherwise suggests that they may not be in a fit state to safely look after their child then the school may decide to:

- Contact another contact/family member to collect the child
- Record the incident as a possible safeguarding concern.

The school cannot legally keep a child on the school premises against a parent/carer's will. If, however, the school has immediate concerns about a child's welfare and the parent/carer insist on taking the child then the police should be contacted and a referral made to children's social care. A written report of the incident will be recorded.

### **If someone else comes to collect the child**

The school will not release a child into the care of any other person (i.e. not on collection list held on school system or pre-authorised by parent) without first speaking to the authorised parents/carers. If a parent turns up who does not have legal custody of the child, then the school will contact the child's legal guardian.

### **If a child says they do not want to go home**

If a child discloses that they do not want to go home because of alleged abuse or neglect then the school will follow its child protection procedures - see Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

### **Children not collected on time**

If children have not been collected within 15 minutes of the end of the relevant school day, then the arrangements contained within the school's Late Collection Policy will apply.

### **After School activities**

The same procedures apply for collection from After School Activities as for collection at the end of the normal school day.

### **Breakfast Club and After School Club**

The drop-off procedure for pupils attending Breakfast Club are set out in the Breakfast Club Terms and Conditions information booklet.

Collection arrangements for pupils attending the After School Club are detailed in the After School Club Terms and Conditions information booklet.

## **Late Collections**

The majority of parents and carers of children at the school ensure that they are collected from school on time at the end of the school day. However, there is a small number of parents who are frequently late to collect their children or who fail to make timely satisfactory alternative arrangements for their child(ren) to be collected from school on time. This means that the school has to allocate staff to oversee and care for late-collected children. They also spend considerable time and effort in trying to contact parents to find out why the child has not been collected, any alternative arrangements and when someone will arrive and as a result the staff unable to undertake their normal duties at this time.

### **Objectives**

- To ensure that parents are aware of their responsibilities to collect children on time at the end of school or at the end of After-School Clubs.
- To help prevent children from becoming distressed or feeling neglected because they have been 'left behind' when everyone else has gone home.
- To encourage parents and carers to collect their children on time.

- To enable staff to attend training, meetings and carry out essential marking and lesson preparation at the end of the school day.

## Arrangements

The school agrees:

- To care for a pupil who has not been collected until such time as he/she is collected by a parent/carer, or appropriate alternative arrangements are made with social care and/or police to ensure the child's safety.
- The school's designated person for child protection will keep a record of incidents where parents do not collect a child from school, are late in doing so for no good reason, or where this is a repeat occurrence.
- Any child welfare concerns arising out of such an incident (s) will be dealt with in accordance with the school's child protection procedures.
- When a child is not collected from school, and these procedures have been followed, the school will inform the parent.

The expectation is that children are collected on time.

It is essential that parents provide the school with the following information, in order for the school to make contact with the parent:

- A record of their contact details ie name(s), address(es), home, work and mobile telephone number(s).
- Contact details of at least two of the relatives/carers who can be called when the parent/carer cannot be contacted or in the event of an emergency.
- The school will endeavour to keep this record up to date by reminding parents of the need to notify the school of any changes.

Parents/carers of children who are repeatedly collected late with no good reason, will receive a letter from the Headteacher warning them of their responsibilities to collect their children on time. If the late collections persist, the Local Authority will be informed. In the unlikely event that the child is in immediate need of protection, the police, who have emergency protection powers, will be contacted.

If the child has not been collected by 4.30pm (or within 30 minutes of the end of the school activity) and the school is unable to contact a parent or named carer, a referral will be made to the Duty Social Care Team for the area in which the child is resident. If they are unable to contact the resident authority the referral should be reported to Lewisham MASH team. Social Care will give advice and may carry out appropriate checks and make further attempts to contact the parent/carer. If there are any concerns about the welfare of the parent/carer, social care will ask the local police to visit the home address. If an appropriate relative or carer is located, he/she will be asked to ensure that the child is collected from the school. If there is a genuine reason for the relative or carer being unable to do this, social care will liaise with school about arrangements for the child to be collected and taken to the address.

## Major Incidents

If an incident occurs which result in a large number of children not being collected, social care will be contacted at the earliest opportunity, because it may be necessary to accommodate the children at a single location until an appropriate carer is located. If the nature of the incident is considered serious, the arrangements for collecting and caring for the children, including overnight placements, will form part of the Local Authority's emergency plan.

## Review

Policy to be reviewed every three years.