

Oldswinford Church of England Primary School



Collection/Dropping Off Children Before and After School Policy

***Approved by the Resources Committee of the
Governing Body:***

23rd March 2022

Review: February 2025

Signed:

Chair of Governors

CONTENTS

SECTION 1:	~Page~
~Context	3
~Vision, Values & Ethos	3
~Rationale	3
~Purpose & Principles	4
~Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	4
~Roles & Responsibilities	4
~ Review	4
SECTION 2:	
~Admissions Information	5
~Supervision before and after school	6
~Drop off and collection by older siblings	6
~Extra-curricular activities	7
~Late collection	7
~Non collection	8
Appendices:	
~1a: Sample letter for use when a child is collected late from school	9
~1b: Sample letter for use when alternative transport arrangements have been made with verbal consent only	10
~2: Sample letter for use when child is not collected from school	11
~3: Permission to walk to/from school consent form	12

SECTION ONE

Context

Oldswinford Church of England Primary School (OCEPS) is a voluntary controlled primary school within the diocese of Worcester. We are a much larger than average primary school averaging 420 pupils on roll. Children from Reception to Year 6 are taught in two classes in each year group. OCEPS is a popular school which is consistently over-subscribed.

“The pupils are polite, courteous, confident, articulate and keen to do their best. Children feel safe in school, and have great confidence in their teachers and other adults in school to help with any problems they have.” Ofsted January 2018.

Vision, Values & Ethos

We fully embrace our distinctive church school ethos and wholeheartedly promote the whole child and the fullness of life, as set out in our ethos, vision and values:

‘Believe, achieve and shine brighter together’

At Oldswinford Church of England Primary School we believe that there is a light which shines within each of us – a light that has been given to us by God, which we should use to help us achieve great things.

We believe it is our job to help that light to shine in all that we do and all that we try to do.

Believe

‘Everything is possible for one who believes’

Mark 9:23

As a Church of England school we offer all children an invitation into the Christian faith, a chance for them to develop spiritually as well as intellectually, socially and morally. We want children to believe in their own abilities, to persevere when things are tough and we encourage them to aim high and follow their dreams. We want them to have the confidence to stand up to injustices and to make wise choices.

Achieve

‘Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart’ Colossians 3:23

We have high aspirations for all our learners and believe that every child should have the chance to reach their potential. We recognise that achievements come in many guises and we look to celebrate each child’s individual talents. We want to ensure our children are prepared for the next steps in their learning journey and they have all the skills they need to flourish and be happy.

Shine brighter together

‘Let your light shine for others, so they may see your good works’

Matthew 5:16

We believe that we all belong to one big family and each of us has a special part to play. We understand the need for our children to be responsible citizens especially when caring about our world and the people around us. As individuals we are unique and special but together, with God, we can be exceptional.

Our vision and 7 key Christian values of love, respect, trust, courage, forgiveness, generosity and joy enable us to *‘believe, achieve and shine brighter together’*.

Rationale:

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governing bodies of maintained schools and FE colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. In addition, those bodies must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in considering what arrangements they need to make for the purpose of that section.

Safeguarding arrangements will include consideration of the procedures for dealing with children who are late to be collected or are not collected at the end of a school day/ authorised school activity and where the Governing Body or Proprietor retains responsibility for the use of school premises. It also applies where staff have concerns about effective care by the person collecting the child and the impact of this on the child's safety outside of school, in line with *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, DfES 2012* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children, DCSF 2018*.

Other legislation relevant to this guidance:

Children Act 2004

Children Act 1989

Children and Young Persons Act 1933

Occupiers liability Acts 1957 and 1984

Purpose & Principles:

The purpose of this policy is to create a robust approach to safeguarding the pupils in our care both before and after school as far as reasonably practicable.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion:

We believe that the broad principles in this policy should be applied equally to all pupils, regardless of ability, gender, race or culture, including those with special educational needs;

Roles and Responsibilities

- Governors: ensure that this policy is reviewed in a timely manner, either before the review date stated in the policy or before if legislation changes sooner.
- Head teacher/ SLT: ensure that the policy is adhered to by all stakeholders
- Business & Resources Manager: ensure that the policy is reviewed as required and that office staff and teaching staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in respect of this policy.
- Office Staff: ensure accurate record keeping, as detailed later in this policy.
- Class teachers: ensure that any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children before or after school are reported promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Parents /Carers: ensure that they communicate effectively with school with regard to contact details and arrangements for the care of their children before and after school as necessary.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Business and Resources Manager

Section Two

Admissions Information

When a child starts at Oldswinford CE Primary School, parents/carers will be given information on the school day and routines, as well as expectations around punctuality of drop off and collection of children. It will be made clear that school staff are responsible for the children during school opening hours, but they have other commitments once their teaching day has finished.

Parents/carers are made aware of any other relevant policies/guidance in place, in accordance with the school's child protection policy, including information relating to:

children walking to/from school alone

a sibling accompanying a child to/from school on a parent's behalf

what will happen if the parents/carers are late to collect their child

what will happen if the parents/carers fail to collect their child

It is also ensured that when a child begins at Oldswinford, parents/carers supply key information such as:

- Names and full addresses of parents/carers (including confirmation of parental responsibility/ private fostering arrangements* and copies of any legal orders)
- Information about any person who has been denied legal access to the child (and copies of any relevant legal orders etc.)
- Home address and telephone number/s
- Place of work and work telephone number/s
- Mobile phone numbers where appropriate
- Emergency contacts who may be called in the event of the parents/carers being unobtainable or in the case of an emergency

Oldswinford CE Primary School stores this information on the Management Information System (Integris) which school staff have access to. There is a system in place to make sure the registration details are kept up-to-date. Parents are also regularly reminded to ensure that their contact details are kept up to date.

*Private Fostering is an informal arrangement where a person looks after somebody else's child under the age of 16 years (or 18 years if the child has disabilities) for more than 28 days, when they themselves are not a close relative of the child and do not have parental responsibility for the child. A placement may have been arranged by the child themselves or by a parent but not by the Local Authority. The birth parents retain full parental responsibility for the child and for the making of all decisions in respect of the child.

Supervision before and after school

There is no set legal age that children can walk to and from school independently or be left on their own. It is an offence, however, to leave a child alone if it places them at risk and therefore schools have a continual obligation to alert relevant authorities if they believe this is the case. This could, theoretically, include the school journey.

The NSPCC advise the following:

- children under 8 will not be outdoors for a considerable length of time unaccompanied
- children under the age of about 12 will not be home alone for more than a very short period of time

Schools are only responsible for safety on the school journey where they have specifically arranged transport. Schools cannot legally prohibit cycling for the school journey, but they are entitled to prohibit bikes from being brought onto the school grounds.

If parents choose to let their child travel to/from school independently, then they will assess the risks associated with the school route and their own child's confidence. Parents will work with their children to build up their independence, while walking to and from school together, through route finding, road safety skills and general awareness. The most important factor to consider about suitability of a child walking to/from school alone is any risk to the child.

Drop off and collection by older siblings

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that the child is dropped off and collected by a responsible person if it is not safe for the child to walk home unsupervised. There is no minimum age set in law when a young person is allowed to remain in charge of another child, however it is an offence to leave a child alone if it places them at risk. This can include in the care of an older sibling if the level of supervision is 'likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health' (*Children and Young Persons Act, 1933*). Therefore, parents/carers must understand and be prepared to take responsibility for anything that will go wrong in their absence. They are also responsible for the care and safety of their eldest child, even while that child is acting in a caring role for younger siblings.

The suitability of an older sibling (aged 16 years or above) caring for a younger child needs to be considered on a case by case basis, by a judgment of the potential risks of this arrangement; the maturity of the child collecting/being collected; the length and nature of the journey home, the behaviour and relationship of the children collecting/being collected.

Many schools allow siblings over the age of 14 to drop off or collect a child, however The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the NSPCC recommend that no one under 16 will be left to care for a younger child.

It is Oldswinford CE Primary School's policy that only a young person aged 16 years or above will be permitted to drop off or collect children from school. Written permission from parents/carers will be required for older siblings to collect /drop off younger children and this will be recorded. If we have any concern that older siblings are not competent to take younger siblings to and from school or there are concerns about any child's safety or welfare due to these

arrangements; this will be raised with the parent (ideally in advance of collection) and if alternative arrangements are not made, a safeguarding referral made to Children's Services if necessary.

Children in Years 5 and 6 only are allowed to walk home alone, if the school has received written consent from parents/carers. (See Appendix 3). Only children in Years 5 and 6 whose parents/carers have sent this completed and signed consent form back to school will be allowed to go home with a sibling younger than 16 years of age. Children in Year Groups 4 or below will not be allowed to go home with older siblings below the age of 16 years old.

Extra-curricular activities

The same procedures for drop off and collection will be applied to extended school activities, where the activity is provided by Oldswinford. However, in the case of an extra-curricular activity that ends after 4pm during Autumn and Winter when it gets dark earlier; children in Years 5 & 6 will not be allowed to walk home from school unaccompanied and must be collected by an adult 16 years old or above. During British Summer Time when the evenings are lighter, children in Years 5 & 6 are allowed to walk home unaccompanied provided school has written permission from parents/ carers to do so.

Any safeguarding concerns are reported to the DSL, who will decide on the appropriate response.

Where the activity is provided by an external organisation, it is the responsibility of that organisation to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns, including those arising from drop off and collection issues. The school governing body will ensure that as part of the lettings agreement, the organisation has confirmed that:

- level one safeguarding children training has been completed by staff
- a child protection policy is in place
- an appropriately trained designated member of staff is responsible for responding to safeguarding concerns.

Late Collection

Parents and carers share in the responsibility to work with staff to ensure their children are safe and in the care of a responsible adult. It must be made clear to parents that the school must be notified immediately it becomes apparent that the person collecting the child may be late. Each school has their own internal procedures for late collection, which all staff (including those in charge of after school activities) will be familiar with to ensure the situation can be resolved as quickly as possible to cause as little distress as possible to the child.

Oldswinford's is that, we will:

- Check for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
- Attempt to contact the parents/carers at home/work/mobile phone.
- Attempt to telephone emergency contacts
- Keep a record of incidents where parents/carers are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents.

- Send a letter home to the parent/carer notifying them of the possible arrangements that may be put into place for their child if they continue to collect their child late and invite parents in for a discussion about their circumstances if applicable. An example is shown in *Appendix 1a*.

If a parent/carer wishes for their child to be collected by somebody who does not have parental responsibility (including siblings, if appropriate and in line with school policy), whether this is a regular or pre-planned arrangement, the parent/carer must put this in writing. In the event of alternative arrangements being made in an emergency, the child's parent/carer must give verbal consent for an agreed person to take the child home. This must be recorded and it is good practice to write to the parent/carer to confirm that this arrangement was made at their request and with their consent (see *Appendix 1b*).

Concerns about the child's safety and welfare associated with late collection will be dealt with in accordance with the school's child protection policy and procedures, the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board Interagency Child Protection Procedures and local practice guidance, Meeting the Needs of children and Young People in Dudley.

Non collection

Parents will be informed that in the event that their child is not collected from the setting by an authorised adult and no contact has been established with the parents/carers within forty-five minutes to one hour of the usual collection time, the school will follow their child protection procedures, i.e. Police will be informed and a safeguarding referral to Children's Services will be made.

The DSL will keep detailed, timed records of the action taken and calls made and under no circumstances will staff go to look for the parent/carer or take the child home with them.

A few days after, a letter will be sent to the parent/carer notifying them of the arrangements put into place for their child (an example is shown in *Appendix 2*) and to invite them in for a discussion about their individual circumstances. Once the situation has been resolved it is important to establish how and why the circumstance arose and to ascertain whether there is anything that we could reasonably do to avoid a recurrence of this situation. It may be necessary to discuss with the parent steps that they could take to avoid recurrence e.g. ensuring that we have current contact details etc. It will also be necessary to review the procedures used to ensure that they worked smoothly and if necessary to amend for future incidents.

Appendix 1a

Sample letter for use when a child is collected late from school

Dear [parent/carer],

As you are aware, [child] was collected late from school on [date]. I would like to remind you that, in order to keep your child/ren safe, the school is obliged to implement its Late Collection Procedure for children not collected on time. If you are regularly late to collect your child, fail to collect your child after 45 minutes, or fail to make suitable alternative collection arrangements this may lead to school contacting Police and Children's Services.

Please do speak to either myself or your child's teacher if you are currently experiencing difficulties in collecting your child, or if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXX

Sample letter for use when alternative transport arrangements have been made with verbal consent only

Dear [parent/carer],

This letter is to document that as you were not able to collect [Child] from school on [date], you gave your consent via telephone for [Name] to take [him/her] home. This was noted at the time and this arrangement was carried out in order to keep your child/ren safe. Please do speak to either myself or your child's teacher if you are currently experiencing difficulties in collecting your child, or if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXX

Sample letter for use when child is not collected from school

Dear [Parent/Carer],

As you are aware, [Child's name] was not collected from school on [day / date] and we were unable to contact you or the emergency contact(s). In circumstances where children are not collected at the end of the school day or school activity, the school is obliged to work within local procedures for keeping children safe and this resulted in the school contacting Children's Services and Police.

I hope that the reasons for your child not being collected are not serious, but would ask you to contact the school as soon as possible to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXX

Permission to Walk to and from School unaccompanied

Child's name: _____

Child's class: _____

I give permission for my child to walk to and from school unaccompanied.

Signed: _____

Print: _____

Date: ____/____/____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

SEEN BY TEACHER (SIGNED):

SEEN BY HEADTEACHER (SIGNED):

ENTERED ON SYSTEM (SIGNED):