



Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School

Safe Drop-off and Collection of Children Policy



Author / Contact:	Debbie Hyslop
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Statement of Intent

Schools have a duty to safeguard children in their care. An important part of this is considering how to ensure that pupils arrive and leave premises safely. Every school should have clear policies and procedures about children being dropped off and collected to and from the school site, as part of their wider safeguarding responsibilities. These policies and procedures should reflect the age of the pupils and any additional needs they might have.

Our children's safety is of paramount importance to us all. We will endeavour to ensure clear and robust procedures for collection are in place, regularly reviewed and clearly shared with staff, parents, carers and pupils. In the event that at the end of the school day a child is not collected by an authorised person, the school will put into practice our agreed safeguarding procedures.

Aim

The end of the school day is a busy time, and our aim is to ensure children are dismissed carefully, under strict supervision, collected on time and arrive home safely. The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of children by making sure that the responsibilities and expectations of all parties are clear when it comes to children leaving the school premises.

Who is dropping off and who is collecting children?

A vital part of keeping children safe is ensuring the school knows who is responsible for dropping off and collecting a child. Before school starts children **MUST NOT** be left unattended in the school playground. Parents/carers, childminder or other childcare providers **MUST** wait until the school bell goes and they see their child enter the classroom door / nursery gate.

Gathering information from parents/carers

On enrolment to Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School, we will ask parents and carers to provide the following information for each child:

- the names and full addresses of parents and carers (including confirmation of parental responsibility or private fostering arrangements and any relevant paperwork)
- home, work and mobile phone numbers

- email addresses where appropriate
- one authorised adult contact as they may be called in the event of the parents or carers being unobtainable, or in the case of an emergency
- information about any person who has been denied legal access to the child (with copies of any relevant legal documents).
- Information about who has primary responsibility for the child

Our school uses a secure system to store this information and we will update this information on an annual basis. If there are any changes to any of the above, we ask that the school office staff are notified immediately. When there is a change to the end of the day arrangements, we ask that parents inform either the school office or the class teacher as soon as possible.

In the event of a child **NOT** collected by an authorised adult, we will ensure the situation can be resolved as quickly as possible and to cause as little distress as possible to the child. We inform parents/carers of our procedures, so if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be aware of our procedures being followed.

The Authorised Adult

The authorised adult **MUST** be a responsible person. The person may be a:

- Parent
- Family member
- Child minder
- All adults must be authorised by the child's main parent/carer

[Dropping off and picking up before and after school | NSPCC Learning](#)

Safe Collection

Nursery (am) starts at 8.40am and finishes at 11.40am

Nursery (pm) starts at 12.20pm and finishes at 3.20 pm

Children in Nursery enter and exit Nursery via the Nursery gate, supervised by the Nursery staff

School starts at 8.50am and finishes at 3.20pm

All children in all classes (Reception, Year One and Year Two) enter and exit via their classroom door. At the end of the school day, once a child has been handed-over to a responsible adult, they are no longer the responsibility of the school. We ask parents/carers to remain vigilant after collecting their child to ensure they leave the school premises safely.

Other potential safety issues

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children do not access or use any areas of the school site that may pose a risk to their safety. This includes playing on any outdoor playground equipment such as climbing frames, football nets or playing in Dragon World. All equipment on our school premises must only be used by pupils of the correct age **during the school day and with under appropriate staff supervision**. No pupils should use bikes, skates or scooters etc. on the school drive and school site.

Communication

As always, good communication between home and school is vital so please let us know ASAP if there are any changes to your normal drop off and collection routines. Particularly if you will be late to collect your child at the end of the school day and please remember that, it is a parent's responsibility to ensure children travel to and from school safely. Please talk to your children about staying safe.

When a child / children have NOT been collected from Nursery / School

Sometimes, in exceptional circumstances, a child may not be collected on time. We request that you contact school as soon as possible to notify us that you may be late. If we receive no such message, we will follow the below procedures:

- The child will be taken to wait at the school office with the class teacher
- Messages from parent/carers to the office / school staff will be checked to see if there are any changes to the end of the day arrangements
- Parents/carers are contacted at home/work and if this is unsuccessful, other authorised adults are contacted

Where NO authorised adult can be contacted

1. If the child(ren) has not been collected after one hour from home time (4.20pm) and no contact has been made or arrangements agreed, we will follow our Child Protection Procedures and contact the Mash team (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).
2. The Safeguarding Team will aim to locate the parent/carer or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child may be placed into the care of the Local Authority.
3. The school will deliver a letter to the child/children's home informing the parent/carer of the actions that have been taken to safeguard their child.
4. A full report of the incident will be written and placed in the child's school file.

Following a Late Collection from Nursery / School

- All children who are collected **late**, will be recorded in the school register.
- Where a child has **3 recorded late collections in one half term**, a letter will be sent home to parent/carers.
- This information may also be passed to Nettleworth school family support worker (Mrs Coupe) and/or attendance officer (Miss Riley) for further investigation.
- Where there is no improvement in a child persistently being collected late, a second letter will be sent and a referral made to the **Early Help Case Management Team (NCC)**

Extra-Curricular Club Arrangements

Our school's procedures for dropping off and collecting pupils also applies to after school Extra-Curricular Clubs on the school premises.

- Please note that **ALL** pupils will need to be collected if they are staying late at school for any reason e.g. If your child takes part in any after school club
- Where children are collected more than 20 minutes late from an afterschool club on 2 occasions they will automatically lose their place at that club.

No pupils will be allowed to leave school on their own at any time.

Children travelling to and from school without adult supervision

There is no law that states the age that children may travel to and from school unsupervised. Parents and carers should make their own decision based on their child's maturity, ability and the safety and distance of the route to school. However, as stated by NSPCC, some schools advise parents and carers with children under the age of 8 to make sure they are accompanied by an adult. The NSPCC also states that some schools prefer not to send a child home with a sibling unless the sibling is aged 14 or older.

Older siblings accompanying a child to or from school on a parent or carer's behalf

There is no law determining the age at which a sibling can accompany a child to school. It is ultimately up to parents and carers to decide whether they feel this is appropriate.

Factors that parents and carers should take into account include:

- the maturity of all the children involved
- the length and nature of the journey home
- the behaviour of all the children involved
- the relationship between the children collecting or being collected.

The NSPCC guidance states that '**Some schools prefer not to send a child home with a sibling unless the sibling is aged 14 or older**'. At Nettleworth Infant School and Nursery, we support the NSPCC guidance. We therefore **will not allow any pupil to go home with an older sibling, unless the older sibling is aged 14 OR the parent/carer has specified in writing to the school that this can happen.**

To help parents/carers decide whether to give permission for their child at Nettleworth to be collected by an older sibling, please click on the **below NSPCC link**

[Dropping off and picking up before and after school | NSPCC Learning](#)

How to manage disputes about drop off and pick up

Problems around who should be picking up or dropping off a child can arise when there are disputes between a number of adults claiming to have parental responsibility.

To help schools understand and deal with issues relating to parental issues, the Department for Education (DfE) has produced guidance on understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility.

[Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

What happens if parents or carers are late to collect their child?

Every school should have a procedure for late collection that all staff, parents and carers are fully aware of. In the event of lateness for collection at the end of the school day, staff at Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School will:

- contact parents or carers
- call emergency contacts if parents and carers cannot be reached so an authorised adult can come and collect the child
- keep records of late collections.

If a parent/carer has authorised someone else to collect their child, the parent/carer may not always be aware that the child is being collected late, so school will keep them informed if this happens.

Persistent lateness **might** indicate that a parent is struggling to meet their child's needs. A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) from Nettleworth School will contact parent/carers outlining their concerns. This will also be recorded as a safeguarding concern, using our school safeguarding procedures.

If school continues to have ongoing concerns about a child's welfare, we may need to make a referral to children's social care so that the family can receive support.

What happens if parents and carers cannot collect the child?

If parents, carers or other authorised people are not able to collect the child and have arranged for someone else to come instead, the parents or carers must notify the school as soon as possible. Identification may be required when the person comes to collect the child.

What happens with late pick-ups, or if no one turns up?

Being late for pick up or not turning up at all can be a cause for concern, so procedures need to be in place to deal with this. If nobody comes to collect a child, we will make every effort to contact the parents, carers or authorised person whose details have been supplied.

If a child from morning Nursery has not been collected by **1.20pm** or by **4.20pm** for pupils in afternoon Nursery and Infant School **i.e. one hour after the end of the school day at 3.20pm**, we may apply child protection procedures and contact children's social care.

Until the child is collected, they will stay at school in the care of two members of staff who have undergone the appropriate vetting and barring checks (one will be the designated child protection lead or deputy designated child protection lead).

School staff and volunteers will not:

- take the child home with them
- transport the child home
- go in search of parents/carers

The Designated Child Protection lead will make a full written report of the incident. This report should be added to the child's file. If appropriate, this report will also be shared with Children's Social Care.

What happens if someone else comes to collect a child?

Staff at Nettleworth Infant and Nursery **will not allow** children to go with any unauthorised person without first getting permission from parents or carers.

If a child's social worker is planning to collect them from school, this should be agreed in advance by the child's parents and carers. If an unauthorised person arrives to collect the child, the school will contact the child's legal guardian. If the school is unable to make contact with the child's legal guardian, or the legal guardian does not give their permission, the school will explain that they are unable to release the child to anyone else without authorisation from the child's legal guardian.

If an unauthorised person refuses to leave the school premises, becomes aggressive or violent or attempts an unauthorised removal of the child, then it may be necessary to contact the police. This will be recorded as a safeguarding concern using our school's usual safeguarding procedures.

What to do if a child says they don't want to go home?

If a child discloses that they don't want to go home because of a disclosure of abuse or neglect, then Nettleworth School staff will follow our child protection procedures.

What happens if parents and carers appear unable to provide safe care for their child?

There may be times when 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 the child. In this case, we will:

- contact another family member or authorised person to collect the child
 - record the incident as a potential safeguarding concern.

Repeated instances of an adult appearing unfit to provide safe care will be discussed with children's social care.

If the school has immediate concerns about a child's welfare, and an alternative family member or authorised person is not available to collect the child, the school has a duty to prioritise the welfare and safety of the child. The school will attempt to keep the child on the premises until they have received guidance or support from children's social care or the police on what action to take. If, despite the school's efforts the parent insists on taking the child, then we will:

- contact the police
- make a safeguarding referral to children's social care □ keep a full written report of the incident.

Who else needs to be involved in the safe dropping off and collection of children?

Other external organisations such as child minders, private nurseries, may need to be involved in drop off or pick up from school. It is important for parent / carers to check they are also fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.

This policy will be shared with parents and carers when a child joins our school. Parents and carers should read this policy and sign to confirm they have understood the policy and agree to follow it. (NSPCC October 2023). This policy also applies to all children within our school and nursery, and will be reviewed annually.