

Howe Dell Primary School

Collection of Children Policy

Reviewed: Spring 2026

Next review: Spring 2028

Rationale

The Governing Board have adopted the Hertfordshire's County Council School Safeguarding Practice Guidance: Drop off collection of children successfully (August 2012) Section Three of this document outlines that all schools should have a local policy in place stipulating the age of older siblings collecting children from school.

The school has taken into consideration the professional advice of The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the NSPCC who recommend that no one under 16 should be left to care for a younger child.

Purpose

- To provide a clear and cohesive policy for staff and parents
- To prioritise the safety of all children (taking into consideration the surrounding roads and locality)
- It is for schools to use in circumstances where:
 - children are collected late
 - children are not collected
 - it is not safe for children to go home unaccompanied
 - there are concerns about supervision before and after school (childcare by a sibling/child walking from school alone)
 - there are concerns about a parent/carer's ability to offer safe care, because they are under the influence of alcohol/drugs or there are concerns about their mental health state

Outline of collection expectations

- All children from Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 4 are to be collected by an appropriate adult or elder sibling (16 years of age or older)
- Appropriate personnel and those with parental responsibilities are those listed by parents, carers and Social Workers on the School's computerised system. Should an arrangement change it is the parent / carer's responsibility to update the relevant information and provide the school with linked documentation
- If an arrangement has been made that someone, who is not on the contact list, is collecting your child then the school office needs to be contacted by telephone (not emailed) before 12 noon so that office staff can inform the class teacher, in a timely manner to make them aware of the change of plan

- Children are collected from the external door of their classrooms or in the case of Year 4 children from the junior playground
- Children in Year 5 and Year 6 are able to independently go home at 3.15pm (this is based upon the school's and parent's joint view that this is safe practice. Parents will be required to complete and sign a 'Lone Walker' form which authorises this practice)
- For late collection, the child will be taken to the main school reception in the care of a member of staff. This ensures that these children stay safe. Parents would then need to collect their child from the main reception. After 3.30pm, the child will be taken to the After School Club and a late collection fee will be charged (this is currently £12.50 but is subject to change as After School Club fees are reviewed)
- If a child attends an after-school club/school event they will need to be collected by an appropriate adult or elder sibling (16 years of age+), irrespective of whether a lone walker agreement is already in place

Please note that if these arrangements and/or collection times need to be changed (such as during a pandemic) the new arrangements will be communicated by email to all parents.

Late Collection

As a school, we fully understand that at times parents may be running late to collect their child, in these circumstances a courtesy telephone call to the office enables the school team to inform the child the reasons for your late arrival avoiding any anxiety or distress.

In the case that no contact has been made by the parent, the school will attempt to contact the parent using the available contact numbers. If the parent cannot be contacted, then the school will telephone the emergency contacts. After a set amount of time school will contact Children Services and/or Police.

Late collections are logged by the school and are reviewed for patterns. Late collections will incur a charge in line with our After School Club fees policy.

Two late collections from after a club run after school may result in a child not being permitted to attend the club for remainder of the term.

Factors that may compromise a parent/carer's ability to offer safe care

The use of drugs/alcohol or the presence of mental health difficulties does not in itself mean necessarily that the parents/carers are uncaring, incompetent or unable to offer safe care to their child. However, if the extent of a parent's own needs mean that it appears they cannot keep the child safe from harm, then a safeguarding referral to Children's Services is required. ('Drugs' in this context refers to all drugs including medicines, volatile substances, alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs).

If an adult with parental responsibility comes to school to collect a child and staff are concerned that their presentation suggests they are unable to offer safe care, steps will be taken to clarify the situation and assess the risk to the child.

Monitoring and Reviewing

It is the responsibility of the Governing Board and Head teacher to ensure that the expectations of this policy are met. This policy will be reviewed in line with the Hertfordshire Children's Services School Safeguarding Practice Guidance: Drop Off Collection of Children Successfully (September 2019). <https://thegrid.org.uk/assets/cs0269-dropoff-collection-children-sept19-under-review.pdf>