

Drop Off and Collection of Children Policy

Adopted by: Larkwood Primary Academy

Date: 16th March 2015

Signed by COG: _____

Policy on the Drop Off and Collection of Children

This policy should be read and applied in conjunction with existing safeguarding policies in the school, in line with Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, DfES 2007 and Working Together to Safeguard Children, HM Government 2010, Keeping Children Safe in Education, April 2014

References to parents in this policy can mean a parent or carer.

This policy relates to situations where

- Parents/carers wish the child to walk to/from school independently
- Parents/carers wish to provide drop off/collection by an older sibling
- There are concerns about a parent/carer's ability to offer safe care
- Children are collected late, not collected or wish to change the arrangements for collection at the end of the day

Larkwood Primary Academy prefers all children to be collected every day by a responsible adult.

1. Pupil walking to/from school independently

The most important factor to consider about suitability of a child walking to / from school alone is any risk to the child. 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 to leave a child alone if it places them at risk and therefore schools have a continual obligation to take action if they believe this is the case.

If parents/carers wish to let their child travel to/from school independently, then they must assess the risks associated with the school route and their own child's confidence, and should meet with the school or have a telephone conversation to discuss the school's view. An example of where this may happen is where parents want to increase the independence of their children as they prepare to leave primary school and move onto secondary school. In other circumstances the school might identify alternative options, e.g. another parent taking the child home. If the school is in agreement for the child to make their own way home, the school will ask the parent to write a letter to confirm the procedure, ensuring that this is reviewed regularly. Parents should 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 responsibility for their child's safety rests with parents and carers who choose for them to walk independently to / from school.

2. Drop off/collection by an older sibling

There is no minimum age set in law when a young person is allowed to remain in charge of another child. But it is an offence to leave a child alone if it places them at risk, and 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). Parents/carers are therefore responsible for anything that should go wrong in their absence. If parents wish older siblings to drop off / collect younger children they must meet with the school to discuss the situation and if this is agreed write a letter to confirm the procedure, as above. If the school has 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 will be made to Children's Services where necessary.

3. Parent/carers ability to offer safe care

If the school has a concern that the parent/carer is using drugs/alcohol and therefore may not be able to

prove safe care for their child/children the school will speak with the parent/carer to inform them of the concerns and monitor the situation. However, if the extent of a parent's own needs mean that they cannot keep the child safe from harm, then a safeguarding referral to Children's Services, LBWF will be made. If an adult with parental responsibility presents at school and staff are concerned that their presentation suggests they are unable to offer safe care, one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads will speak with the parent/carer to clarify the situation and assess the risk to the child.

The school will aim to retain care of the child whilst awaiting the advice of Police and Children's Services but schools do not have the authority legally to retain a child against a parent/carer's will. If a parent/carer is under the influence of drugs or alcohol and takes the child/children off site the school will then ring for a Police welfare check on the non-emergency number, 101.

4. Late collection/ non-collection

Larkwood School does not expect any child to be collected late. If a parent/carer is delayed for any reason it is the parent/carer's responsibility to call an authorised adult to collect the child/children from school on their behalf. The school office will not make these calls.

The school procedures covering the collection of pupils at the end of school are to ensure children are safe and in the care of the parent or an authorised adult by 3.30pm. The school must have the full contact details of parents/carers and other adults [such as grandparents] authorised by the parent/carer to collect their child. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure contact details are up to date and that they have sufficient authorised adults for a range of emergencies. The following procedure will apply for collection of children:

- Children in the morning nursery should be collected from 11.30am
- Children in the afternoon nursery should be collected from 3.15pm
- Children in Reception and Key Stage One are to be collected directly from school staff from 3.15pm at the classroom door.
- Children in Key Stage Two are to be collected from the class teacher in the designated area of the school playground from 3.20pm. The school has staggered the end of the day to support parents/carers collecting children from different key stages
- The responsibility is on parents/carers to complete these arrangements every day, including the responsibility to make their own arrangements with their named authorised adult to collect their child/children if they are going to be late for any reason.
- In the event of an emergency the school expects the parent/carer to make appropriate arrangements so the child/children are collected by 3.30pm by an authorised adult.
- It should be a rare occasion when there is a need to call the school to inform them that a child/children will be collected late. Parents/carers will be charged £3.00 per child on the first occasion that they are late to collect their child/children. On any subsequent occasion they will be charged £3.00 per child for every 15 mins they are late.

The school currently has an After School Club that is managed by an outside provider. More information can be found about the club from the school office.

If a parent/carer or an authorised adult has not collected the child/children from the school by 3.30pm on more than two occasions it will trigger the activation of child protection procedures including making a safeguarding referral to Social Care LBWF.