



Micklem Primary School Drop off and Collection of Children Policy

Responsible Committee	Resources
Date Ratified	January 2021
Date Reviewed	January 2026
Next review	January 2027
Signed on behalf of the Governing Body	<i>K. Shah</i>
Print name	K. Shah

1. Scope of this Policy

This policy sets out the school's procedures where:

- children arrive and/or leave school without an adult (with the permission of their parent/carer)
- 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 to or from school alone)
- there are concerns about a parent's/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

2. Children travelling to and from school alone

"There is no law prohibiting children from being out on their own at any age. It is a matter of judgement for parents to decide when children can play out on their own, walk to the shops or school". (Is it legal? A parent's guide to the law by the Family and Parenting Institute - June 2011)

The NSPCC advise the following:

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

The school is not responsible for the safety of children on their journey to and from school.

If parents choose to let their child travel to/from school independently, then they should assess the risks associated with the school route and their own child's confidence. Parents should work with their child to build up their independence, while walking to and from school together, developing road safety skills and general awareness of keeping safe.

3. Supervision on the school site

Parents should note that the school does not provide a member of staff to supervise children before school starts at 8.55am (unless the child has attended breakfast club) and therefore the welfare of children until that time is the responsibility of parents. However, if a problem or difficulty arises and is brought to the attention of the school, the school will

intervene, e.g. if a child falls and hurts themselves the school will provide medical assistance; if a child misbehaves they will be told to wait outside the school office until school starts and their parents will be informed.

4. Drop off and collection by older siblings

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that their child is dropped off and collected by a responsible person. 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.

Parents might find it useful to consider the following factors when deciding whether children should be left unsupervised or in the care of an older sibling:

- Have the risks posed by leaving a child alone or in the care of an older sibling at home or walking to/from school been considered?
- How old are the children?
- How mature are the children? What is their level of understanding or awareness about being left unsupervised or walking to or from school?
- How comfortable are the children with the arrangements (this includes the younger child and the older child who is acting as 'carer')?
- Where will the children be left? Is it a safe place?
- How long and how often will the children be left?
- How far away will the parent/carer be? Will they be easily contactable?
- Do any of the children (this includes the older sibling acting as 'carer') have additional needs - medical, emotional, behavioural, learning difficulties or disabilities? How will these needs be met in the absence of the parent/carer?
- Does the child or sibling caring for another child know what to do in an emergency? Does the child know who they can contact in an emergency? Have instructions been left, e.g. in case of an accident that needs medical attention?
- What are the expectations of the children during this time? Are they expected to cook for themselves?
- Do the children have knowledge about how to keep themselves and younger siblings safe, e.g. road safety, not answering the door to strangers, cooking etc?
- What is their level of knowledge when it comes to first aid?
- How well do the siblings get on? How will tension be managed in the absence of the parent/carer?

- Are the older children clear about rules and boundaries of what they can and can't do while parents/carers are out? If they are looking after a younger sibling, do they have the confidence and authority to implement these rules consistently? What will they do if the younger children misbehave?

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

The use of drugs or alcohol or the presence of mental health difficulties does not in itself necessarily mean that parents/carers are uncaring, incompetent or unable to offer safe care to their children. However, if the extent of a parent's own needs mean that they cannot keep their child safe from harm, the school will make a safeguarding consultation with the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH).

If an adult with parental responsibility presents at school 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. The school will:

1. Be mindful of the safety of staff and the safety of the children in school.
2. Talk to the parent/carer and ascertain if they appear to be able to offer safe care for their children:
 - How is the adult presenting - are they staggering, speaking incoherently?
 - Does the parent/carer's needs compromise their ability to meet the children's basic physical and psychological needs? If so, how?
 - How do they intend to get home? Is the parent driving? Are they fit to do so?
 - Is the parent/carer in sole care of the child? Can the adult identify another parent or supportive adult to be with them and the child?
3. Make a safeguarding consultation with MASH if, based on the factors above, there are concerns about the adult's ability to care for the child.
4. Aim to retain care of the child whilst awaiting the advice of the Police and Children's Services. Schools do not have the authority legally to retain a child against a parent/carer's will therefore, if this is not possible, the school will consider ringing for a Police welfare check on the non-emergency number, 101.
5. Call 999 if it is judged that a child or another person (including staff) may be imminently at risk of serious danger, e.g.
 - where an intoxicated parent/carer is behaving violently or is threatening violence such that the belief is that the threats may be

- carried out thus compromising the immediate safety or care of a child, or,
- where a parent/carer may place others in danger by driving a car whilst unfit through alcohol or drugs.

6. Late collection procedure

Parents and carers share in the responsibility to work with school staff to ensure their children are safe and in the care of a responsible adult. Parents should notify the school immediately (by contacting the school office on 01442 408964) if it becomes apparent that the person collecting their child may be late. If school has not been notified that the person collecting is going to be late the school will:

- Check for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
 - Attempt to contact the parents/carers on their home, work and mobile numbers.
 - Telephone the emergency contacts that have been provided by the parent/carer.
 - 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/email 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 inviting parents to meet with the Headteacher for a discussion about their circumstances.
- See appendix 1.

If a parent/carer wishes for their child to be collected by someone who does not have parental responsibility, 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 parent/carer must give verbal consent for an agreed person to take the child home. If verbal consent is not given school will attempt to contact the parent/ carer for verification. If none has been received

7. Non collection procedure

In the event of a child not being collected from school and the school receiving no notification from the parent/carer by 5pm the school will follow its child protection procedures, i.e. the Police will be informed and a safeguarding consultation will be made to MASH. The school will keep detailed, timed records of the action taken and calls made to contact the parents/carers and emergency contacts. Under no circumstances will school staff go to look for the parent/carer or take the child home with them.

Once the situation has been resolved, parents/carers will be invited to meet with the Head teacher to discuss the steps they could take to avoid a recurrence of this situation, e.g. ensuring that the school has current contact details, including emergency contacts.

8. Regularly transported children

Regularly transported children in this context refers to children who have a statutory entitlement of free home to school transport from the Local Authority. This includes:

- children who have been placed in a school that is not within the statutory walking distance (2 miles for a pupil under 8, and 3 miles for those aged 8 plus)
- children who have been placed in a school where there is no safe walking route
- children from low income families if they are aged 8 - 11 and live more than 2 miles away from their nearest suitable school
- children with special educational needs or disability (SEND) who have a statement which has transport requirements written into it.

The responsibility of the parent/carer is to ensure their child is ready for collection at the designated time as notified by the Local Authority or operator and that there is a suitable person to receive their child at the end of the school day.

Appendix 1

Head Teacher: Mr J Swift

Micklem Primary School

Boxted Road,
Hemel Hempstead,
Hertfordshire, HP1 2QH.
Tel: 01442 408964
Fax: 01442 401962
admin@micklem.herts.sch.uk
www.micklem.herts.sch.uk

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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 15 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,

Mr J Swift
Head Teacher



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Appendix 2

Head Teacher: **Mr J Swift**

Micklem Primary School

Boxted Road,
Hemel Hempstead,
Hertfordshire, HP1 2QH.
Tel: 01442 408964
Fax: 01442 401962
admin@micklem.herts.sch.uk
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Dear [Parent/Carer],

[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,

Mr J Swift
Head Teacher



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