



Uncollected Children

On rare occasions, children and vulnerable young people are not collected from educational settings before the setting closes, often causing anxiety for staff and the child or young person.

These guidelines have been developed in conjunction with Children's Social Care and the Police to support schools to take action when this happens.

They are written to help staff respond sensitively and consistently to ensure the safety and welfare of such children and young people.

Schools should:

- Ensure that full contact & emergency information is received promptly from all mothers, fathers & carers
- Ensure that contact and emergency information is regularly updated
- Inform mothers, fathers & carers that if a child is not collected from the setting by closing time, this procedure will be followed.

Education settings with provision for under-fives will have to pay particular regard to the:

[Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2014](#)

A summary of this guidance for schools is in our [Education Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures](#) section:

- **Under 5's in Schools, Sept 16**

Children's Social Care and MAST contact details are regularly updated and available from the [Education Safeguarding Children Toolkit](#):

- **MAST, Social Care & other resources, Sept 16**

If the uncollected child is under 5 years old & has been referred to Children's Social Care, Ofsted must be informed tel. 0300 123 1231

Non-collection of child or vulnerable young person:

If a child or vulnerable young person is not collected within an agreed period of time, e.g. 15 minutes after closing time, the following steps should be taken:

- A check should be made for information about changes to the normal collection routines
- Reasonable attempts should be made to contact:
 - Parents, carers or others with parental responsibility at home or at work
 - Other adults authorised to collect the child or vulnerable young person from the setting
- The child or vulnerable young person should not leave the premises with anyone other than parents, carers or other person with parental responsibility
- If no-one can be contacted to collect the child or vulnerable young person after e.g. one hour, the relevant Children's Social Care Area Team or Police should be contacted
- The child or vulnerable young person should stay at the setting in the care of two [Disclosure & Barring Service \(DBS\)](#) checked staff members until safely collected either by the parent, carer, person with parental responsibility, social worker or police officer
- If necessary Children's Social Care will assess the child or vulnerable young person's situation & find appropriate and safe alternative accommodation if needed
- **Staff should not attempt to look for the parent or carer**
- **Staff should never take the child or vulnerable young person home with them**
- A full written report of the incident and outcome must be recorded in the child or vulnerable young person's safeguarding file