Inspire Education Community Trust



Collecting Children from School Policy (including Walking Home Alone Policy)

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Signed by the CEO	Shaukat Islam

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Statement of intent

Inspire Education Community Trust is committed to ensuring the safety of all pupils when they leave school at the end of the day. We appreciate that, for many families, arrangements need to be flexible and it may be that several people care for the child after school. For this reason, we have set out clear procedures that all staff and parents must adhere to, to ensure the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Keep pupils safe.
- Ensure all staff members are aware of the correct procedures for the end of the school day.
- Make parents aware of the expectations regarding collecting children.
- Highlight the importance of parent-school communication.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2002
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- DfE (2023) 'Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Extended Services Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers and Other Visitors

2. Roles and responsibilities

The head of school will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Communicating this policy to all members of staff and parents.
- Ensuring effective procedures are in place for pupils travelling to and from school.
- Liaising with parents to establish whether individual pupils need extra assistance.
- Informing parents where their child has not turned up to school to coordinate an effective response.
- Ensuring arrangements for dedicated school transport are in place.

Staff will be responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils are collected safely at the end of the school day.
- Being wary of suspicious behaviour at the school gates.
- Monitoring the behaviour of pupils as they leave the school.

Parents will be responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy.
- Ensuring their child (in Reception – Year 6) is aware of, and adheres to, the established route for travelling to and from school.
- Informing the head of school when their child has not returned home from school.
- Communicating to the school if they are going to be late to collect their child.

Pupils will be responsible for:

- Behaving appropriately when travelling to and from school.
- Making sure they arrive to school on time.

3. General collection procedure

Parents will promptly collect pupils at the end of the school day, from the playground or designated exit points at the times stated below:

Monday to Friday	**School End time**
Reception	**3:25pm**
KS1 - Year 1 & Year 2	**3:25pm**
KS2 – Years 3,4, 5 and 6	**3:30pm**

Parents will be made aware of what is expected of their behaviour when they are collecting pupils, e.g. that the school is a smoke-free and vape-free zone, no dogs on the playground etc. Parents should also refer to the **Code of Conduct.**

Staff members will supervise pupils until all pupils have been collected, accounting for the school's late collection procedure. Sufficient staff to pupil ratios will be met at all times during the collection process.

Pupils will be allowed to travel home on their own as long as the head of school has been informed of this arrangement by the pupil's parents, prior to this commencing. This would usually only apply to older pupils. (Refer to Appendix A)

Staff members will not release a pupil if it is felt that the parents are not in a fit state to ensure the pupil's safety or if the pupil shows signs of distress or anxiety. In these cases, the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed and children's social care, and the police if appropriate, will be contacted.

Pupils will only be permitted to leave the premises with adults who are registered with the school as a person with collection responsibility i.e. those with parental responsibility or others named on the emergency contact list and who have been introduced to the school staff.

School staff should be certain of the identity of the person collecting including the identity of those with parental responsibility. If in any doubt assistance, the pupil should not be released and assistance should be sought from a senior member of staff.

If the parent has arranged for someone else (who is not on the contact list) to collect their child, they will need to call the school office to make arrangements. The collecting person will need to know the password prior to collecting the child, and report to the office at home time with valid ID.

Staff members should not take pupils home themselves.

4. After-school club collection procedure

All after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities will finish at **4:20pm.**

Parents should follow the normal collection procedure, as outlined in the 'General collection procedure' section of this policy, when picking up children from after-school clubs.

Failure to collect children on time from a club may mean the club place is withdrawn.

5. Late collection procedure

Parents should notify the school at the first possible opportunity if they believe they will be late to collect their child.

The school will allow for a window for collection. If a pupil has not been collected by the specified collection time, a staff member will escort them to the school office before trying to contact the pupil's parents. If the pupil's parents cannot be reached via the contact details provided, emergency contacts will be contacted, and the school will continue to try and contact the parents. If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted, the non-collection procedure will be followed as outlined in the 'Non-collection procedure' section of this policy.

Monday to Friday	School End time	Must be collected by
Reception and KS1 - Year 1 & Year 2	3:25pm	3:40pm
KS2 – Years 3, 4, 5 and 6	3:30pm	3:40pm

The child's name will be recorded in the 'late collection' record along with the time they were collected.

All staff members, including those in charge of after-school activities, will be aware of the school's internal procedure for late collection and will ensure that the situation is resolved whilst causing as little distress as possible to the pupil.

While awaiting collection, pupils will be supervised at all times, ensuring appropriate staffing ratios are met.

Where appropriate, a staff member will sensitively ask the pupil whether they are aware of any reason that could account for their parents being late.

6. Late collection and penalty charges

The length and frequency of late collections are monitored by the school. The school will keep a record of incidents where parents are late with no reasonable explanation.

Concerns regarding a pupil's safety and welfare associated with late collection will also be dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Parents will be made aware of the arrangements that may be put in place if they collect their child late, including the school's right to enforce a penalty charge.

Late after 3:45pm but before 4pm

Number of lates in one academic year	Action
1 late	Explanation is provided to school office
2 lates	Discussion to take place with a senior member of staff
3 or more lates	A penalty charge will be issued on 3rd occasion and subsequent occasions in the academic year

The school may issue a penalty charge for parents/carers who are late (before 4pm) to collect their child/ren three times or more per academic year without a reasonable explanation that is accepted by the school.

Late (3 or more times)	Penalty Charge
3:45pm – 4:00pm	**£10**

Late After 4pm

The school may issue a penalty charge (see table below) for parents/carers who collect their child/ren after 4pm on any occasion without a reasonable explanation that is accepted by the school.

Late	Penalty Charge
4:01pm – 4:15pm	**£15**
For each subsequent 15 minutes after 4:15pm an **additional charge of £5 per 15 minutes** will be applied.	

The penalty charge will be based per family and not child.

Parents/carers will be sent an invoice and given 30 days to pay the penalty charge.

If the payment is not settled with the school within 30 days, the school will forward parent contact details to **Bright Future Solutions Limited.**

Once the school has forwarded debt details to **Bright Future Solutions Limited**, parents/carers are no longer able to pay school directly – the debt must be cleared with **Bright Future Solutions Limited.**

7. Collecting a child on someone's behalf

The school will never release a pupil into the care of another adult who is not a person with parental responsibility or named emergency contact without the consent of the pupil's parents.

School staff should be certain of the identity of the person collecting including the identity of those with parental responsibility. If in any doubt, the pupil should not be released and assistance should be sought from a senior member of staff.

The school's preference is that adults collect children. However, if parent/carers wish for pupils in KS2 to be collected from school by an older sibling, provided that the sibling is aged 16 or older arrangements can be made on the contact form. The child (and sibling over 16) from the point of collection will become the responsibility of the parents/carers.

In Reception/KS1 only adults (18 years of age +) may collect children.

If parents wish for their child to be collected by another party who does not have parental responsibility, whether this is a regular occurrence or a single occurrence, they will notify the school **in writing** using the appropriate form.

Staff members who are unsure of an adult collecting a child (i.e. not on the contact list and/or not seen the person before) will ensure the person is escorted or directed to the school office; a senior member of staff will support the office to verify permissions/the identity of the person.

In an emergency, verbal consent may be given to the school office for an agreed person to take their child home. The school office staff will phone the parent back on a number we hold on the MIS for the parents/carers. The call will be made in the school office ensuring the call cannot be heard by others.

The office staff will:

1. Request the full name of the person collecting the child
2. Request a full physical description of the person, unless already known to the school
3. Issue a one-time password to the parent to pass onto the named individual
4. Request that the named person bring with them a form of identification
5. Request the password from the person collecting the child
6. Request to see the identification

Only a senior member of staff can release the child.

If there is uncertainty about a person's identity following the checking of permission and their identification, the senior member of staff will contact the pupil's parents for further advice.

Under no circumstances will a pupil be allowed to leave the school with someone if they are showing signs of distress or anxiety.

8. Non-collection procedure

The school will continue to try and contact the parents and named emergency contacts in the event of a non-collection. A detailed record of the action taken, and the calls made, will be kept.

Under no circumstances will staff members go and look for the parents. A staff member will supervise the pupil at all times.

If no contact has been made with the pupil's parents or emergency contacts, and no one has arrived to collect the child within an **hour** since the original collection time – the end of the school day or at **4.30pm** if it was pre-arranged for a pupil to attend a school club – the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed and Children's Services, and the police if appropriate, will be contacted.

A member of staff will stay with the pupil until Children's Services arrives.

Once the situation has been resolved, the reason the circumstances arose will be established and noted, and steps to avoid recurrence will be taken by the school and parents. Late penalty charges may apply (refer to section 6).

9. Monitoring and review

Following an event of non-collection, the relevant procedures will be reviewed to ensure they were effective and amended where necessary.

This policy will be reviewed on an **annual** basis by the CEO.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff and parents.

Appendix A

Walking Home Alone Procedures

Parents of children who wish them to walk home unescorted by an adult, at the end of the school day, must adhere to the following guidelines;

- Parents must have discussed and agreed with a senior member of staff that they are prepared for their child to walk directly home from school at the end of the day.
- Children must be in year 5 or 6.
- It is the parent's responsibility to check the route that their children may walk home in order that they may make an assessment of the appropriateness of the journey. Crossing of fast roads, walking through secluded areas is to be discouraged.
- Parents must be certain that children have an awareness and understanding of the safely crossing roads and stranger danger. It is parent's responsibility to ensure they are satisfied that their child is capable of undertaking the proposed journey safely.
- Children should know their home phone number (plus one other emergency contact)
- Any child must be capable of arriving home within 30 minutes of the end of the school day. Journeys over 30 minutes are not considered appropriate for children to walk.
- If any child does not arrive home within the agreed timeframe, parents must immediately notify the school in order that appropriate action can be taken
- If any child does not arrive home within the agreed timeframe and direct contact with the child has not been established by either school or parents, school will instigate the missing person's procedure in conjunction with the relevant authorities
- If the missing person procedure is initiated there must be a point of contact remaining at both the home and school location until further advised by the relevant authorities
- If your child does arrive home after the missing person procedure has been instigated, immediate notification to the relevant authorities/emergency services must be made. This is to enable the missing person procedure to be stood down.
- Once the missing person procedure is initiated responsibility will pass to the relevant authority to further any enquiries. Both parents and school will be guided by them in order that a successful outcome is achieved.

CONFIRMATION THAT MY CHILD MAY WALK HOME ALONE

I confirm that _____ Class _____ may walk home from school alone. I confirm that I have read and understood the School's Walking Home Alone Policy and that my child's safety is my responsibility once my child has been dismissed from his/her class at the end of the school day.

Signed (Parent/Carer) _____

Date: _____