

# **Daffodil Grammar School for Girls**

## **Late Collection Procedure**

**School address:** 163 Commercial Road, London, E1 2DA

**Proprietor:** ASM Anisuzzaman

**Headteacher:** Mr Stephen Montford

**Attendance Lead:** Eman Ahamed

**Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Eman Ahamed

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Mr Stephen Montford

**Applies to:** All pupils on roll

**Review cycle:** Annual, and sooner if required by safeguarding concern, operational need or legal update

## **1. Status, purpose and safeguarding significance of this procedure**

This procedure sets out how Daffodil Grammar School for Girls will manage situations in which a pupil is not collected at the expected time at the end of the school day or following any supervised activity, enrichment session, educational visit return, intervention session or other school-led provision.

The school does not treat late collection as a minor inconvenience or merely an issue of poor timekeeping. Late collection is a safeguarding matter. A pupil who is left waiting after the end of the school day may become distressed, vulnerable, unsupervised or unsure what to do. If school staff are unclear about how to respond, the situation can quickly move from inconvenience to risk. This is especially important in a secondary setting, where adults may assume that an older child can “wait a little longer” without proper procedural oversight. The school rejects that casual approach. A pupil remains the school’s safeguarding responsibility until she has been properly handed over or has lawfully left under the school’s ordinary arrangements. KCSIE

2025 continues to make clear that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and that staff should be supported by the DSL in carrying out those duties.

The purpose of this procedure is therefore to ensure that every late collection incident is handled calmly, consistently and safely; that no pupil is left unsupervised; that parents and emergency contacts are contacted promptly; that records are maintained; that repeated patterns are identified; and that the DSL is involved where lateness or non-collection may indicate wider welfare or safeguarding concerns. The wider statutory safeguarding framework under *Working together to safeguard children* requires practitioners to act in the best interests of the child and to work together where concerns arise about a child's safety or welfare.

This procedure should be read alongside the Attendance Policy, Punctuality Procedure, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Children Missing Education procedure, Visitor Management Procedure, Staff Handbook and any policy governing trips, activities or after-school provision.

## **2. The school's approach and guiding principles**

Daffodil Grammar School for Girls adopts a child-centred approach to late collection. This means that the school's first concern is not inconvenience to staff, but the safety, wellbeing and emotional welfare of the pupil. Every decision taken under this procedure must therefore begin with the question: *What does this pupil need right now in order to remain safe, supervised and reassured?*

The school also adopts a principle of calm escalation. Not every incident of late collection indicates a serious safeguarding problem. Parents may be delayed by traffic, transport failure, family emergency or another unavoidable difficulty. However, the school also recognises that repeated late collection, evasive explanations, inability to contact any responsible adult, or significant delay without communication may indicate family difficulty, neglect, disorganisation, lack of safe supervision or wider vulnerability. For that reason, the school neither overreacts to every isolated delay nor underreacts to repeated or unexplained lateness. Instead, it responds in a structured way, beginning with practical safeguarding and moving, where necessary, to a more formal safeguarding response.

The school further recognises that a late collection procedure must be operationally clear. In a real incident, staff must know who remains with the pupil, who makes the calls, where the pupil waits, when senior leaders are informed, when the DSL becomes involved, and when contact with external agencies must be considered. A procedure that is vague at the point of use is not a safe procedure.

### **3. Scope of the procedure**

This procedure applies wherever a pupil is expected to be collected directly by a parent, carer or other authorised adult and that collection does not take place at the agreed time. This includes the end of the ordinary school day where collection has been arranged, the end of after-school clubs or intervention sessions, the return point for off-site activities or trips, and any other school occasion where responsibility for handover remains with the school.

The procedure also applies where a pupil is ordinarily permitted to travel independently but remains on site significantly beyond the expected departure point in a way that causes concern. In such cases, although the issue may not be “collection” in the strict sense, the school may still need to treat the matter through the same safeguarding lens if the pupil’s whereabouts, transport arrangements or safety are unclear.

The procedure does not replace normal home-time arrangements for pupils who routinely leave independently in accordance with school expectations and parental understanding. However, if a pupil who normally leaves independently appears stranded, distressed, uncertain or unable to leave safely, staff must exercise judgment and may bring the matter within this procedure.

### **4. Normal end-of-day expectations**

The school expects collection arrangements to be clear, stable and communicated in advance. Parents are responsible for ensuring that if a pupil is to be collected by an adult, that adult arrives on time and that the pupil understands the arrangement. Parents should notify the school promptly if there is any change to the ordinary collection plan, including a change of collecting adult, collection point or timing.

The school also expects parents to provide accurate and up-to-date contact information and emergency contact details. This is essential not only for ordinary school communication but specifically for situations in which a pupil has not been collected and the school must act quickly. The importance of up-to-date records and timely, coordinated response is also reflected in local safeguarding protocols for uncollected children issued by local authorities, although the school’s own procedure remains the governing procedure internally.

Staff responsible for dismissal or for the conclusion of an activity must know which pupils are leaving independently, which are being collected, and whether any special arrangements apply. Good safeguarding at the end of the day depends on clarity before a problem arises.

## **5. Definition of late collection**

For the purpose of this procedure, a pupil is considered late collected where she remains in school or in the school's care beyond the expected collection time and the authorised collecting adult has not arrived and has not given a satisfactory revised arrival time that the school accepts as manageable.

The seriousness of the situation increases according to the circumstances. A brief delay where prompt contact is made and a revised arrival time is clear may require only limited action. A longer delay, especially where no contact is made, where the pupil is distressed, where the collecting arrangements were already uncertain, or where there are known safeguarding concerns, requires a more urgent and more formal response.

The school therefore does not fix its judgment solely by the number of minutes passed. It looks at the full context: length of delay, ability to contact the parent, age and presentation of the pupil, past history, time of day, weather, staffing levels, and known family or safeguarding factors.

## **6. Immediate response when collection does not take place on time**

As soon as it becomes clear that a pupil has not been collected at the expected time, staff must act. The pupil must not simply be told to wait "a little longer" without clear responsibility being assumed by an adult.

The first priority is supervision. The pupil must remain under the direct supervision of a staff member or under the oversight of a clearly designated and accountable adult within the school. She should be brought, if necessary, to an appropriate waiting location such as reception or another safe supervised area. She must not be left outside, sent to look for a parent, or left in a semi-supervised space where responsibility is unclear.

The second priority is reassurance. Pupils who are not collected on time may become upset, embarrassed or anxious. Staff should therefore reassure the pupil calmly without making promises they cannot keep. They should explain that the school is dealing with the matter and that the pupil will remain with a member of staff until appropriate arrangements are made.

The third priority is immediate communication. The school must begin contact attempts promptly. This is not a matter to postpone until significantly later, because once collection has failed the school has a duty to establish what is happening and whether the pupil is safe.

## **7. Contacting parents and emergency contacts**

The school will contact the parent or carer as soon as it becomes clear that collection has not taken place. If the first contact cannot be reached, the school must continue through all relevant contact numbers held on record, including additional parental and emergency contact details where appropriate.

The purpose of contact is not simply to remind the parent to attend. It is to establish the reason for delay, confirm the revised expected collection time, confirm who will collect the pupil, and determine whether there is any reason to think the pupil may be at risk.

All contact attempts must be recorded. The record must include the time of the attempt, the number contacted, whether contact was made, what was said, and what the next step was. This record is important both operationally and as safeguarding evidence.

Where contact is made and the reason for delay appears straightforward and credible, the school may continue supervision while awaiting collection. However, even where contact is made, the school must consider whether the length of delay, the pupil's presentation, or the family history means that the matter should still be noted for monitoring.

## **8. Supervision while waiting**

A pupil waiting to be collected must remain with a staff member or under the direct responsibility of a named adult. The school must avoid unclear handover between staff. If responsibility is transferred, this must be explicit. There must always be a clear answer to the question: *Who is supervising this pupil right now?*

The pupil should remain in a safe, calm and appropriate environment. She should not be left in a public entrance area without proper oversight. She should not be placed in a location where staff are coming and going but no one is directly responsible. She should not be made to feel she is a nuisance.

Where a delay becomes prolonged, staff should ensure that the pupil's immediate welfare needs are considered. This may include access to water, toilet facilities and emotional reassurance. In all such decisions, dignity matters. A safeguarding procedure must not itself become a source of distress or humiliation to the child.

## **9. Escalation where contact is not achieved**

If parents or carers cannot be contacted promptly, the matter must be escalated rather than allowed to drift. The school should continue attempts to contact all available emergency contacts. At the same time, a senior member of staff and, where appropriate, the DSL should be informed.

The school recognises that the inability to contact any responsible adult significantly increases the seriousness of the situation. It raises questions not only about practical collection but about the child's wider supervision and family circumstances. The current safeguarding framework under *Working together to safeguard children* supports timely multi-agency action where a child's welfare may be compromised and where practitioners cannot secure safety through ordinary arrangements.

The school will not wait indefinitely where no responsible adult can be reached. The threshold for formal safeguarding escalation will depend on the circumstances, but staff must understand that a pupil whose collection arrangements have failed and whose responsible adults cannot be contacted may require external safeguarding intervention if the situation cannot be safely resolved internally.

## **10. Extended delay and formal safeguarding response**

Where a pupil remains uncollected for a prolonged period, or where no responsible adult can be contacted, the DSL or senior leader must decide whether external safeguarding action is required. This may include advice from children's social care, or in some circumstances contact

with the police if the school believes that the child's immediate safety cannot otherwise be secured.

The school will always act in the best interests of the child. It will not allow fear of upsetting parents or causing inconvenience to prevent proper safeguarding action. The wider safeguarding framework expects practitioners to take timely action where a child may be at risk.

The school also recognises that local safeguarding partners and local authorities often have specific protocols for children not collected from educational settings, and those can assist decision-making. Local protocols commonly emphasise the importance of up-to-date records, timely interventions and escalation where contact cannot be established or where late collection is repeated.

Any decision to contact children's social care or the police must be recorded clearly, including the reason for the decision, the time, the person making the decision, and the advice or outcome received.

## **11. Repeated late collection and emerging family concerns**

The school does not regard repeated late collection as a series of disconnected minor inconveniences. Patterns matter. Repeated late collection may indicate family stress, poor organisation, lack of capacity, neglect, transport instability, competing caring demands, or other issues affecting the child's welfare.

For that reason, all late collection incidents must be monitored over time. If the same pupil is collected late on repeated occasions, or if the same family repeatedly fails to communicate promptly, the matter must be reviewed by the Attendance Lead and, where appropriate, by the DSL.

The school's response to repeated late collection may include formal parental communication, a meeting with parents, review of home arrangements, consideration of early help, or a safeguarding discussion where wider concerns are present. The school should not wait for an extreme incident before recognising that the pattern itself may be significant.

Local safeguarding protocols for uncollected children similarly note that repeated failure to collect on time may require a more formal response and closer multi-agency consideration.

## **12. Role of the DSL**

The DSL must be informed where a late collection incident gives rise to safeguarding concern. This may include inability to contact parents, prolonged delay, repeated incidents, distressed presentation by the pupil, inconsistent explanations, or wider known family vulnerabilities.

The DSL's role is not to take over every minor delay but to ensure that where late collection has become a welfare or protection issue, the school's response is child-centred, timely and properly recorded. KCSIE 2025 continues to state that every school should have a DSL who provides support to staff in carrying out safeguarding duties and liaises closely with other services.

Where appropriate, the DSL may decide that the late collection issue should be considered alongside attendance concerns, family support needs, prior safeguarding history or early help involvement.

## **13. Record keeping**

Every late collection incident must be recorded. The record should include the pupil's name, date, expected collection time, actual collection time, who supervised the pupil, what contact attempts were made, what explanation was given, whether escalation occurred, whether the DSL was informed, and any follow-up action required.

Detailed record keeping matters because it enables the school to identify patterns, demonstrate appropriate action, and support any later safeguarding decision. A school that cannot show what happened in repeated late collection incidents may fail both the child and the regulatory expectation that safeguarding arrangements are implemented in practice.

## **14. Staff responsibilities**

All staff must understand that late collection is not “somebody else’s issue.” A member of staff who realises a pupil has not been collected must not assume that the office, another teacher or a senior leader already knows. The matter must be actively handed over or acted upon.

Staff responsible for pupils at the end of the day or at the end of a supervised activity must remain attentive to which pupils have and have not been collected. Reception or administrative staff must follow the school’s communication and logging process. Senior leaders must ensure that the procedure is supported operationally. The DSL must respond where the matter engages safeguarding.

The school expects staff to use judgment, but never to rely on casual or improvised arrangements that leave the pupil’s supervision unclear.

## **15. Final principle**

At Daffodil Grammar School for Girls, a pupil who is not collected on time remains the school’s responsibility until safe handover or a lawful safeguarding decision is made. The school will therefore treat late collection with seriousness, calm professionalism and full regard to the child’s safety, dignity and welfare.