



Swim England Late Collection of Children Policy

Occasionally, parents may be delayed or unable to collect their child from training or after an event on time. The list of emergency numbers for the parents is to be used in such situations. Parents should be asked to inform the appropriate officer of the organisation if they are going to be delayed, with clear guidance on what the organisation will be required to do, e.g. the parent must give consent if they wish for another parent to transport their child home. The officers must never leave a child or young person alone unless they are over 16, and then only with parental consent. Swim England recognises that some young people aged 16 and over will take themselves home, so the officer must assess each situation as they arise in an appropriate manner. Until a child is collected, to maintain the wellbeing of all concerned, two appropriate officers or parents must remain with the member.

Parents who persistently fail to collect a child on time or who have not arrived after a reasonable period of time, and have given no prior notice or informed the organisation that they are delayed, may be failing in their duty of care to their child. The organisation should use the emergency numbers they have for the child to try to arrange for a nominated person to collect them. If the nominated person(s) is unavailable to collect the child, and the parent has still not contacted the organisation after a reasonable period of time, the organisation should consult the police or Children's Services/MASH for advice on action to take.

If a parent arrives to collect a child and the officers are concerned at their ability to take appropriate care of the child (i.e. they are considered to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs to the level where they are unfit to drive, and/or take care of their child), the organisation should gain advice from the police or Children's Services.

The organisation should:

- Attempt to contact the parent/carer from the information sheet completed on joining/renewing membership.
- Attempt to contact the emergency contact or nominated person.
- If there is no reply from the parent, emergency contact or nominated person, ask the child if there is another family member who may be contacted.
- Wait with the young person at the organisation with at least one other responsible adult, e.g. an official, coach, teacher, volunteer or parent.
- If you are unable to reach someone, contact the local police to enquire about the best course of action.
- Remind parents/carers of the policy relating to late collection.

You should avoid:

- Taking the child home or to another location.
- Asking the child to wait in a vehicle.
- Waiting with the child at the organisation on your own.
- Sending the child home with another person without permission.

Persistent failure to collect a young person on time

If a parent/carer fails to collect their child or young person on several occasions, with no contact from them or reasonable explanation for the delay, the welfare officer and another officer should arrange to meet with them and discuss the matter. It may be that the parent/carer can be assisted in arriving promptly.

If over the next few weeks there is no change, the welfare officer should either contact the Swim England Child Safeguarding Team, Children Services or MASH team for further advice.