



Pick-up of Children from Coaching Sessions - Guidance

Introduction

This document gives advice on arrangements that can be put in place to ensure a safe pick-up procedure is in place at the end of coaching sessions involving children and young people. Clubs and individual coaches should have clear procedures in place that are shared with parents and carers, parents and carers should sign to confirm they understand the procedures and will inform clubs or coaches of any changes in personal circumstances that may affect pick-up arrangements.

There is also guidance within this document regarding measures to take if things go wrong.

Gathering information from parents or carers

When signing up for the coaching sessions, clubs/coaches should ask parents and carers to provide the following information for each child:

- the names and full addresses of parents and carers (including confirmation of parental responsibility or private fostering arrangements and any relevant paperwork)
- home, work and mobile phone numbers
- email addresses where appropriate
- two authorised adult contacts who may be called in the event of the parents or carers being unobtainable or in the case of an emergency
- information about any person who has been denied legal access to the child (with copies of any relevant legal documents)

The club/coach should use a secure system to store this information and update it on an annual basis.

The England Squash Pick-up Consent Form can be used for the above collection of information.

Older siblings collecting a child on a parent or carer's behalf

There is no law determining the age at which a sibling can accompany a child from a coaching session. It is ultimately up to parents and carers to decide whether they feel this is appropriate.

Factors that parents and carers should take into account include:

- the maturity of all the children involved
- the length and nature of the journey home
- the behaviour of all the children involved
- the relationship between the children collecting or being collected

What happens if parents or carers are late?

In the event of lateness for collection the club/coach should:

- contact parents or carers
- call emergency contacts if parents and carers cannot be reached so an authorised adult can come and collect the child
- keep records of late collections

If parents and carers have authorised someone else to collect the child, they may not always be aware the child is being collected late, so it's important to keep them informed if this happens.

Persistent lateness might indicate that a parent is struggling to meet their child's needs. The Club Welfare Officer should contact parents or carers outlining their concerns. This should also be recorded as a safeguarding concern using the club's safeguarding procedures.

What happens if parents or carers cannot collect the child?

If parents, carers or other authorised people are not able to collect the child and have arranged for someone else to come instead, the parents or carers must notify the club/coach as soon as possible. Identification may be required when the person comes to collect the child.

Some organisations use a password system for collection of a child.

If nobody comes to collect the child, the club/coach must make every effort to contact the parents, carers or authorised person whose details have been supplied. Clubs/coaches may wish to stipulate a cut-off time after which they will apply child protection procedures and contact children's social care.

Until the child is collected, they should stay at the venue in the care of two members of staff who have undergone the appropriate vetting and barring checks (one should preferably be the Venue Safeguarding Lead/Club Welfare Officer).

Staff and volunteers should never:

- take the child home with them
- transport the child home
- go in search of parents/carers

The nominated Club Welfare Officer should make a full written report of the incident. This report should be added to the child's safeguarding file. If appropriate, this report should also be shared with children's social care.

What happens if an unauthorised person comes to collect a child?

Clubs/coaches should not allow children to go with any unauthorised person without first getting permission from parents or carers.

If a child's social worker is planning to collect them from a session, this should be agreed in advance by the child's parents and carers.

If an unauthorised person arrives to collect the child, the club/coach should contact the child's legal guardian. If the club/coach is unable to make contact with the child's legal guardian, or the legal guardian does not give their permission, the club/coach should explain that they are unable to release the child to anyone else without authorisation from the child's legal guardian. If an unauthorised person refuses to leave the premises, becomes aggressive or violent or attempts an unauthorised removal of the child then it may be necessary to contact the police. This should be recorded as a safeguarding concern using the club/venue's usual safeguarding procedures.

What if a child says they don't want to go home?

If a child discloses that they don't want to go home because of abuse or neglect, then the club/coach should follow the England Squash Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

If a child discloses abuse to you, it's really important to:

- show children you care and help them open up
- take your time and slow down
- show you understand and reflect back what they're saying

If the club/coach has immediate concerns about a child's welfare, the club/coach has a duty to prioritise the welfare and safety of the child.

The club/coach should attempt to keep the child on the premises until they have received guidance or support from children's social care or the police on what action to take.

If, despite the club/coach's best efforts the parent arrives to collect the child, then the club/coach should:

- contact the police
- make a safeguarding referral to children's social care
- keep a full written report of the incident and speak to the England Squash Safeguarding Manager

What if parents/carers appear unable to provide safe care for their child?

There may be times when the club/coach is worried that the adult collecting a child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or their behaviour otherwise suggests that they may not be in a fit state to safely look after the child.

In this case, the club/school should:

- contact another family member or authorised person to collect the child
- record the incident as a potential safeguarding concern

Repeated instances of an adult appearing unfit to provide safe care should be discussed with the England Squash Safeguarding Manager who may need to involve children's social care.

If the club/coach has immediate concerns about a child's welfare, and an alternative family member or authorised person is not available to collect the child, the club/coach has a duty to prioritise the welfare and safety of the child.

The club/coach should attempt to keep the child on the premises until they have received guidance or support from children's social care or the police on what action to take.

If, despite the club/coach's best efforts the parent insists on taking the child, then the club/coach should:

- contact the police
- make a safeguarding referral to children's social care
- keep a full written report of the incident and speak to the England Squash Safeguarding Manager

If you have been involved in a difficult situation involving unauthorised collection of a child or young person

It is important to recognise that it can be emotional and very stressful if you find yourself in any of the situations outlined above. Often you will simply do what feels right at the time to protect the safety of the child or young person. You should never try to deal with these situations alone and should seek immediate help from another adult in close proximity if you can.

If you need support or want to talk through your experience you can contact the England Squash Safeguarding Manager at safesquash@englandsquash.com.