

## **If a parent arrives drunk or drugged to collect their child – or if you believe they are not capable of caring for their child safely**

We were given the following wording for our safeguarding policy by Cheshire east – there is a fine line between withholding a child and risking an allegation of abduction – and keeping the child safe. If your policy clearly states what you will do then you can follow it and you will be protected from allegations.

### **Managing children's needs if parents arrive to collect them while drunk or under the influence of drugs**

After consultation with the CEC Safeguarding Advisor for the Early Years, Cheshire East and Ofsted (Early Years duty desk response) the following information is added to the safeguarding procedure on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011 –

If a parent appears to be drunk or clearly under the influence of drugs (prescription or illegal) and it is apparent that s/he is not fit to drive or incapacitated to take care of the child, the childminder must not release the child from her/his care and do the following:

1. Phone the emergency contacts, to whom the parents have given authorisation to collect their child and...
2. In case of not being able to contact any of the emergency contacts, contact the Police and Social Care. The Police and Social Care are agencies with statutory child protection powers, who will act quickly to secure the immediate safety of a child where there is a risk to his/her life or a likelihood of serious immediate harm.

Ofsted advise that the childminder's duty and responsibility is to prevent the child from being harmed. The childminder must ensure the child's safeguarding and must not release the child from his/her care. This is not the same as removing a child from their parents which must not be done.

**NOTE** – this is wording from Cheshire east and Ofsted – if you are unsure I advise you to check with your own LSCB before adding it to your safeguarding policy and procedures.