



# Hoyland Springwood Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

## Ladybirds Class – Feedback

During a Thrive session this week to look at feelings and naming feelings such as sadness, fear, disgust etc... some of the children mentioned being left in the house on their own. Given the age of the children, we are unsure if this is something they have been confused about, if it did happen, what the context was or how long for. As a number of the children in the class said that this has happened to them, I felt it appropriate to make sure parents had guidance. If your child is left alone, the priority is to ensure they are safe and feel safe. Understanding why they don't feel comfortable will give you an idea of how to help – or why they might not be ready to be left alone.

### Is it legal to leave a child home alone?

There's no legal age a child can be left home alone. Every child matures differently, so it would be almost impossible to have a "one size fits all" law. However, parents and carers are responsible for keeping their children safe. If leaving your child home alone puts them at risk of harm – because they're too young to care for themselves for example – the law might consider this neglect.

A child who isn't old enough or who doesn't feel comfortable should never be left home alone. If this is the case, it's best to look into childcare options that might work for your family.

### What age can a child be left home alone?

Learning to be independent is an important part of growing up. Between work, appointments and other family commitments – every parent will have to leave their child home alone at some point so it's good to have a plan in place. Every child is different so build up their independence at their pace – and check in with them to make sure they feel safe. The NSPCC recommends that children under 12 years old shouldn't be left home alone for long. Children in primary school aged 6-12 are usually too young to walk home from school alone, babysit or cook for themselves without adult supervision. If you need to leave them home, it's worth considering leaving them at a friend's house, with family or finding some suitable childcare.

For the full advice and to read further about this subject, please see the link from the NSPCC  
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/in-the-home/home-alone/#>

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Hunt  
Headteacher

