

Missing Child Policy

Reviewed By	Approved By	Date of Approval	Date of Next Review
Ed Whitehead	 Jo Pagdin	11.07.2024	01.09.2025



Every effort is made to ensure the safety of children whilst they are in our care at school. This policy sets out our procedures for maintaining safety and dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- It is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and are aware of their responsibilities, what is expected and the relevant procedures to follow.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.
- It is the responsibility of Governors to ensure they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge/support the school in its review of this policy.

PROCEDURES AIMED AT REDUCING RISK OF A MISSING CHILD

Start of the Day

- The school ensure parents/carers are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from staff to them and vice versa. **Responsibility for the child remains with the parent/carer until the child enters the school building between 8:30 am and 8:45am.**
- There are clear procedures for welcoming pupils into school. Staff meet and greet the children at the appropriate entrance.
- All key stage entrance doors are kept open until 8:55 am. After 8:55 all children must enter the school via the School Office and must be signed in using the electronic inventory system stating the reason for lateness.
- The main entrance is used between the hours of 8.55 am and 3 pm, after the side gates are locked.
- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately for the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Children in years 5 & 6 can walk to and from school on their own, with permission from their parent/carer. They remain the responsibility of parents/carers before they enter into the school building and should not arrive before school opens. School reserve the right to insist that a parent/guardian collects their year 5 or 6 child if an incident or illness has occurred in school.

Care Club

- The school takes responsibility for children attending Care Club from 7.30 am until they are handed over to their class adults at 8.35 am
- Children are accompanied from Care Club to their classroom at 08:35

Times Outside the Classroom

- When children are outside they are protected by fencing and padlocked gates and are supervised by an adult.
- If pupils leave the classroom security to work in other parts of the school, we ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained.

- External class doors leading on to the playground are either magna locked or have a high drop lock. These doors are locked before and after playtime and dinner time.

Home Time

- Staff see children out of the relevant exits and ensure that all children are collected by the appropriate adult (excluding Years 5 & 6 if they have permission to walk home).
- After 10 minutes, pupils who are left are taken into the classroom (opposite the main entrance) and the office is informed to ring the contacts of the child. No child is able to leave school without a member of staff knowing.
- If the child is not collected and we cannot contact anyone on the child's file after an hour a member of the senior management makes the decision as to whether to contact Children's Services or the police.
- If a child has not been collected after half an hour, in order to ensure that they are kept safe and their needs are being catered for (e.g. appropriate supervision, drinks and food) they will be escorted to the Care Club with reassurance that they will be looked after. A charge will be made to parents/carers at the relevant School Care Club rate.
- If a decision is taken to wait a little longer, the maximum amount of time is an hour from the original time the child should have been collected. The senior member of staff also contacts Initial Contact Point on to seek further advice. Should we be unable to seek advice, we will then make the decision to call the police.
- The School Office has details of any specific collection routines. This is reviewed regularly and maintained with up to date contacts when parents/carers make any changes.

School Visits

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios are provided whenever pupils leave the school premises. These are approved by the EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator) and Headteacher before the visit takes place.
- Adequate communication contact and a list of pupils/groups is taken on visits out of school.
- Mobile phones are taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.

Missing Child Procedures

- Office staff to immediately call 999
Provide:
 - child's name
 - date of birth
 - description
 - parents' names and contact details

If the missing child is found during this time, the police will talk to the child and staff/parents/carers when they arrive to establish a full understanding and offer advice.

If the child remains missing the following needs to happen:

- A member of SLT to establish who last saw the missing child
- A member of SLT to ring the people on the missing child's contact list
- An allocated member of staff to lead a search of the school including cloakrooms and toilets, starting with the areas nearest to the child's classroom

- Class teacher to write down the events leading up to the child going/being flagged as missing
- An allocated member of staff to lead a search of the grounds and areas immediately outside school
- Staff member to comfort and reassure parent/carer and find any other information about the possible whereabouts of the child

On police arrival, if the child is still missing then they will take over the search.

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises:

- The police must be contacted immediately.
- Visit leader must ensure safety of remaining pupils.
- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child
- Visit leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangements to notify parents, after which procedures above to be followed.