



Missing Child Policy

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including in the EYFS

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The welfare of pupils is paramount. The school endeavours to ensure that no child goes missing and has measures in place to minimise the likelihood of this happening and take the necessary action, should the situation arise.

- Formal registration is taken in the morning at 8.20am for the Pre-Prep, Junior and Senior School and again between 1pm and 2pm for Pre-Prep and at 1.45pm for the Junior and Senior school prior to afternoon sessions
- The staff maintain the appropriate high level of supervision throughout the day and are aware of the location of the children in their care at all times.
- When on excursions outside the school premises, staff implement strategies to maximise the safety and security of the children in accordance with the school's Health & Safety Policy and Educational Visits Policy.
- Staff undertake regular roll calls and head counts.

The above measures ensure that situations where a child could be lost are very limited. These are:

- Where a child wanders off on an off-site visit
- Where a child goes out of a door or gate left open on the school site
- Where a child is taken from the school site by an unapproved adult

The school has rigorous procedures for pursuing unexplained absences, including the aim to contact parents by 10am if a child has not arrived in school and the reason for absence is not known. This should ensure that staff become aware at the earliest opportunity of any child who may have gone missing on the way to school. In these circumstances, this policy will be followed.

School policies relating to health and safety and welfare, if strictly adhered to, should prevent any of the above occurring. However, should a child become lost, the following action will be taken:

Lost at school

In the three paragraphs below, the school should retain and personalise the paragraphs which apply, according to whether the school has EYFS, boarding etc.

In EYFS, alert the Head of Juniors immediately, and also the Headteacher, who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where, to eliminate any misunderstanding. A member of school office staff will check the signing out book to establish whether the child has been legitimately collected from school.

In Years 1 to 11 the following actions should be taken:

- Alert the Headteacher or DSL immediately, even where this happens outside of normal school hours.
- Initially, the following obvious areas should be contacted by the front office staff and/or senior staff on hand: performing arts areas, library, surgery, toilets, changing rooms, squash club.
- Staff conducting a search of the site should have a mobile phone with them.

In Boarding the following actions must be taken:

- Alert the Headteacher, or the DSL in their absence, immediately, even where this happens outside of normal school hours.
- Initially, the following obvious areas should be contacted by the boarding staff and/or senior staff on hand: library, surgery, toilets, changing rooms, dining room, bedrooms, squash club.
- Staff conducting a search of the site should have a mobile phone with them.

Staff must be vigilant in respect of the safety of the other children with regard to supervision and security.

Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, a member of staff should be sent to search each of the following zones, keeping a calm manner and maintaining contact via mobile phone:

- Zone 1 - Outer perimeter (Sunken Lawn, Colts, Barbours Piece and Main Field, Pre Prep Car

park)

- Zone 2 - Reception building, Old Music School, North Lodge, Holm Lodge, Old DT building, staff car park (old tennis courts)
 - Zone 3 - Main building, Jubilee Hall, Talbot Room and yard
 - Zone 4 - Squash club, Stable Block, Garden Block and Library Block
 - Zone 5 - Swimming Pool, Changing Rooms, Art Room and Duggan building
- If necessary, a fire alarm may be sounded to account for the whereabouts of all pupils.
 - It is important to ask other children if they know of any plans the missing child may have had or if they know of any place to which the child may be going. It is equally important not to worry the children so any questioning should be handled sensitively.
 - Any member of staff may be required to assist in the search for the missing child and cover may need to be arranged so that the tutor/class teacher can join the search.

If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the police and parents must be informed. If the search moves to this level, the Critical Incident Policy procedure should be invoked. Meanwhile the office will make available a photograph of the child (from database) and their description. Continue to search, opening up the area, keeping in touch via mobile phone. The child must be comforted and reassured when found. The headteacher will consider calling a fire drill to see if the pupil who is not accounted for arrives at the roll call point.

Lost whilst off-site (including on sports fixtures)

If a child is lost on an outing, the member of staff noticing the child missing should alert other members of the party and carry out a roll call/head count.

1. A member of staff (or the whole group if appropriate) should retrace their movements to the last place that the child was seen.
2. Another member of staff should alert the management/security services of the organisation being visited and the Headteacher as well as the School office to let them know the situation.
3. Depending on the location of the visit/outing, the remaining children would be localised in the immediate area, held on the coach or taken back to the place of residence pending further instructions.
4. Children on the visit should be asked for any relevant information if appropriate.
5. If the child is not found **after fifteen minutes** the police will be called and the School/Headteacher will alert the parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school, if possible, at once.
6. Staff will cooperate with the police and take any action as directed by them.
7. All media queries should be referred to the Headteacher.
8. The Designated Safeguarding Lead would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board.
9. The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
10. The Headteacher should inform the Education Director.
11. A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report (covering time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing, the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future.) which will be given to the Headteacher/Deputy Head and EVC upon return. The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.
12. Once a child has been located, talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.

Pupil removed from school premises by unapproved adult

No child is allowed to leave the school site with an adult other than a parent without permission being received from a parent either by telephone or email. This rule must be rigorously enforced. In cases where a parent is legally denied access to their child all staff must be informed in writing of the circumstances together with a photo of the child and, if possible, the parent. If a child is seen (or believed) to be taken from the school site by an unapproved adult, the police and parents will be immediately informed.

Measures in place to ensure a child does not go missing include:

- Information to staff about challenging unknown persons on the premises
- Requirement for all visitors to register on arrival with the office, present evidence of identity on their first visit and obtain a visitor's badge
- Boundary security regularly checked by health and safety and maintenance teams.
- Supervision of children at all times
- Sufficient staff to maintain ratios appropriate to the venue and the nature of the activity being undertaken
- Collection and non-collection policy for children
- Rigorous risk assessments for trips

Following up an incident

When the situation has been resolved the Headteacher and SLT will review the reasons for it happening. This will include:

- Reviewing the incident with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Assessing the effectiveness of risk assessment procedures.
- Taking written statements from and interviewing staff involved.
- Collecting information from any other relevant adult witnesses, including officials from the venue where a child has gone missing off-site.
- Discussion, as appropriate with pupils.
- Informing the Education Director or Central Team to discuss the review and agree any further action.
- If the incident requires reporting to OFSTED, in respect of RIDDOR or any other official body, such action will be taken.
- The incident and effectiveness of subsequent action taken will be reviewed at the next Health and Safety Committee meeting.

SLT will issue advice to staff and pupils and implement any necessary measures to ensure that it does not happen again.

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