



Missing Child Policy

Ratified by trustees: December 2024

To Be Reviewed: December 2027

Missing Child Policy

The safety of our pupils is our priority whilst they are in our care at school. This policy sets out our procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Trust Board to ensure that they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge/support the school in its review of this policy.

It is the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, their responsibilities in terms of what is expected and the procedures to follow, as well as ensuring that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis.

It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times in accordance to its guidance.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis and that they know the procedures for handover of their child for both beginning and end sessions.

Procedures aimed at reducing the risk of a missing child:

Start of the day:

- Ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from staff to them and vice versa.
- Clear procedures for welcoming children into the school.

During lesson time:

- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – morning and afternoons.
- All staff must ensure that external gates to any outside area are locked whenever children are outside. The only exception is the main gate.
- If children leave the classroom to work in other parts of school it is imperative that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all children are accounted for on return to the classroom.

Playtime:

- All children are escorted to the external doors by staff.
- Staff are on the playground before pupils come onto the playground.
- External gates locked.
- Staff vigilant in the playground.
- All doors leading into the playground are closed after the last class return to class.

Lunchtime:

- As above.
- Lunchtime supervisors to ensure that they have read this policy.
- School Leadership Team available at lunchtime.

Home time:

- Gates open at home time to allow access for parents.
- Children leave by two exits.
- Children in foundation stage are collected by their parents from classroom and cloakroom with a member of staff on the exit door. Children and staff have sight of parent before the child leaves through the door.
- Staff ensure that every child is collected by a parent/carer.
- After 10 minutes children who are left are accompanied to the junior building to wait for collection.

Visits:

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/child ratios.
- Mobile phones taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.
- Emergency contact information of every pupil to be taken on visits out of school.

After school clubs:

- Thorough risk assessments in place.

- Register children with contact numbers and details stating how the children are to go home and who with.

Procedures in the event of a child going missing:

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

- Member of staff who has noticed the missing child will calmly inform the nearest member of the SLT.
- Staff will promptly but calmly round up all children to a suitable location.
- Staff will count and name check all the pupils present against the register while the group are assembled in one place.
- **AT THE SAME TIME** all other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and notify the SLT member immediately if the child is found.
- A thorough check of all exits to be made to make sure all gates/doors were locked/bolted and there are no other ways a child could have left the school. If something is discovered this needs to be drawn to the attention of the staff immediately.
- If the child has not been found by the time the register check is completed the SLT member will notify the headteacher or next most senior member of staff.
- Staff will continue to search the area.
- The safety and care of other children is paramount and they will need to be supervised by the member of staff remaining while the search continues.
- At the same time the CCTV will be reviewed.
- If the child has not been found after 10 minutes, parents should be notified. The headteacher or next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted.
- When contacting parents or carers, please ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child.
- Staff must try to remember and write down the description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features.

- If the missing child has any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted to disclosed to police or other agencies.

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

- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
- Visit leader must ensure safety of remaining pupils, at least 2 members of staff must stay with them.
- Visit leader should contact school to alert them.
- If the child is not found within 5 minutes, visit leader must contact police by phoning 999.
- Visit leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangements to notify parents, after which the above procedures should be followed.