



## Policy for a Lost Child

### **Additional References**

*Policies: Behaviour & Discipline  
Safeguarding & Child Protection*

### **Rationale**

Adults in school need to know where children are in school at any given time. Children do move around school unaccompanied by adults and occasionally become unaccounted for during the school day. This policy is to ensure that children are located quickly and efficiently.

Staffing levels are such that children aged 4-11 are able to remain on the premises and accounted for at all times. Children and adults are expected to take responsibility for their safety and be in the right place at the right time.

### **Procedure during an Incident**

The following is an outline. Any incident will involve the head teacher or senior leader making judgements as to the specifics of the incident.

1. When an adult notices a child is not accounted for he/she informs the office.
2. Office staff inform a senior leader (usually the headteacher).
3. Admin staff and the head teacher will have an initial scout round for the child.
4. If the child is not located then the head teacher will ask all adults not responsible for the class (teaching assistants) to come urgently to the staffroom.
5. If there are insufficient adults to carry out a thorough search children will be moved to the hall or into another class, freeing up teachers for the search.
6. All exits will be checked and secured. The head will be informed of any open exits.
7. Adults will divide up the school and a thorough search of the internal premises will be made for five minutes.

- a. Toilets
  - b. All cupboards
  - c. Corridors
  - d. Classrooms
  - e. Library, mobile buildings and offices
8. If the child remains unaccounted for these adults will then undertake a thorough search of the grounds.
    - a. Check the woodland area
    - b. School Garden
    - c. Walk the perimeter of the grounds to check the fence
    - d. Small World Nursery area and garden
    - e. Reception outdoor play area
  9. If the child remains unaccounted for the headteacher or senior leader will:
    - a. Telephone the police and parents.
    - b. Complete the Missing Persons identity Form and Questionnaires
    - c. Copy the Missing Persons Identity Form for the police and other people involved in the search
    - d. Inform the Local Authority Designated Officer for Safeguarding
  10. If the child is known to have left the grounds the head teacher may judge that a search of the immediate area around school is made while waiting for the police.
  11. If the child is known to have left the school grounds as he/she has articulated and/or been seen to do this in anger the headteacher will:
    - a. Telephone the police
    - b. Telephone the parents
    - c. Make a judgement as to whether to allow staff to follow. In making this judgement the head teacher will have to consider whether following the child may increase his/her anger and cause him/her to run and therefore increase the danger he/she presents to him/herself (if a child runs they are at greater danger from traffic).
    - d. The age and maturity of a child will inform the head teacher or senior leader's judgement.

## **Guidelines Following an Incident**

1. The headteacher and/or SENCO will investigate the matter with relevant teachers, adults and children who witnessed the event or events leading up to the child going missing.
2. The Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection will be informed and the incident must be confidential and not discussed with other Governors until resolved [as a precaution for Governors remaining impartial in the event of a formal complaint or disciplinary procedure].
3. Parents or carers and the child will be required to attend a strategy meeting with the head teacher where the importance of children being accounted for will be communicated strongly.
4. In the event of the child having left the school grounds this meeting will occur before the child is admitted back into his/her class.

5. The relevant parts of policies for Safeguarding and Behaviour will be communicated.
6. Children who have left the school grounds are at risk of exclusion.

## **Equality and Special Educational Needs**

The head teacher and/or SENCO will investigate the matter with relevant teachers, adults and children who witnessed the event or events leading up to the child going missing.

Some children such as those with Special Educational Needs and Looked After Children are particularly vulnerable. Office and front of house staff are made fully aware of any restrictions on particular people having access to children or additional precautions around adults collecting a child from school. If a vulnerable child is missing within school the headteacher, or senior leader deputising in her absence, will contact relevant agencies [i.e. social care, police] without delay.

*Policy agreed by Governors – September 2016*

Signed:  
Chair of Governors \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:  
Head Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_