

Rationale

The safety and security of the children in our care are paramount. Every care is taken to ensure that the children are accounted for at all times both onsite and offsite.

The term 'missing child' does not necessarily mean that a child is lost off premises. A child is considered as 'missing' when no member of staff can accurately determine the whereabouts of a child, e.g., child could have locked themselves in the toilet without anyone knowing.

Procedures

Registration

Each pupil who arrives at school is registered in the morning following the school bell and in the afternoon following the end of lunchtime. Younger pupils are handed over to the class teacher by their parent/carer, older children making their own way to the appropriate classroom, accompanied by the class teacher. All staff maintain appropriate levels of supervision throughout this time and are aware of the location of the children in their care. If a child is absent, without explanation from a parent/carer either by telephone, written or verbal communication, when registration closes at 9.10am, the school will ring home to ensure that the child is safe and not missing on the way to school. Should it not be possible to contact parents at home, the school will attempt to contact parents and then other contacts, e.g., family, friends, using the numbers provided by the parents. If it not possible to establish the whereabouts of a child then the appropriate authorities will be contacted, e.g., police, educational welfare.

Missing child (on site)

The school endeavours to ensure that all children remain safe and secure whilst on the site. Full risk assessments are carried out and all staff observe the procedures detailed in the Playground Supervision and Lunchtime Supervision Policies. However, in the unlikely event of a child found missing on site, the following steps will be followed:

1. The class teacher or member of staff responsible for the group will delegate another member of staff to search the indoor and outdoor areas within the school. If the child is found to be hiding, the parents should be advised of the incident.
2. If a search does not result in the safe location of the child, the Headteacher should be informed immediately if on the premises, or as soon as possible by telephone if not on the premises.
3. Whilst maintaining appropriate teacher pupil ratios, one member of staff will search the school grounds, starting with exit routes. In the event that the child is found, the parent will be advised and a review of safeguarding/security procedures or appropriate risk assessments invoked.
4. If, following the above steps, the search does not result in the safe location of the child, the parents will be informed.
5. The headteacher/teacher or delegated member of staff, will take the child's normal route home on foot, taking a mobile phone with them.
6. If the above steps do not result in the safe location of the child, then the headteacher/teacher will inform the police.
7. Once the police arrive, formal responsibility for the search will pass to the police but the headteacher/teachers/staff will ensure that they are available to assist with enquiries.
8. Before leaving the site, the Headteacher will ensure as far as is possible, that appropriate facilities and/or resources have been made available to meet the needs of children, parents and staff, eg., access to telephone.
9. The headteacher will inform the Derbyshire Child Protection Team and Health and Safety Officer.
10. Within 24 hours of the incident, the headteacher will write a report which will form the basis of a review of existing safeguarding/security procedures or appropriate risk assessment.

Missing child (off site)

When on educational visits off the school premises, staff implement strategies to maximise the safety and security of the children in accordance with the school's trips policy. Full risk assessments are carried out, a list of all the children's names and emergency contact details is carried by the trip leader, all volunteers have List 99 clearance, appropriate pupil teacher ratios are observed and all educational visits only proceed with the approval of the Headteacher.

Regular headcounts are undertaken during all visits off site, however in the event that a child is missing, the following steps will be followed:

1. The safety and security of the remaining children will be maintained whilst one member of staff searches the immediate vicinity and retraces the steps of the missing child.
2. If the child is not found after 10 minutes, the visit leader will contact the parents/carers of the missing child and the police.
3. Once the police arrive, formal responsibility for the search will pass to the police but the staff will ensure that they are available to assist with enquiries.
4. Regular contact will be maintained with the school and parents/carers.
5. If appropriate or required, one member of staff will remain to assist police whilst the remaining children return to school with the other staff.
6. Within 24 hours of the incident, the headteacher will write a report which will form the basis of a review of existing safeguarding/security procedures or appropriate risk assessment.

Moving / transferring Schools

It is important that parents keep the Headteacher informed when they are considering changing schools, as we have a duty to inform the Authority of any child that has left or joined our school. Contact is made between the school the child is leaving and the school that the child is moving to in order to ensure that a child does not miss education and to transfer pupil records and any safeguarding concerns. If we are unable to establish your child's new school, we would have to refer them as a missing child to Education Welfare Services. As a result, your child's name may be kept on a missing register and efforts will be made to trace them.

If you are concerned that the details of your destination should not be shared with anyone but the Headteacher, please discuss this- he/she will be able to ensure that access to your new address details is restricted appropriately. We follow our obligations in respect of the Data Protection Act and The General Data Protection Regulations in regards to the passing on of any pupil information.