

MISSING CHILD POLICY

Whole School & EYFS

Reviewed: April 2023 (CW)

Governor Review: May 2023

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 Headmistresses' responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, to ensure relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities, what is expected and the procedures to follow and to ensure 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 according to its guidance. **It is the responsibility of parents** 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 pupil – PREP_and EYFS

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 pupils into the Breakfast Club and school.
- Girls enter into the Prep School entrance area where they either attend Breakfast Club facilities if before 8.00am, wait at the turning circle with SLT between 8am and 8.15am or go through to their classrooms where staff are waiting to receive them, from 8.15am.
- Reception, Nursery and Pre School pupils are brought to the playground by parents and are met by the Reception teacher and Early Years Practitioners there. They are then escorted to their classrooms by the staff.
- Doors closed at 8.40am.
- Gates are always locked with the exception of the main entrance gates, which are locked at 9.00am Monday to Thursday and at 9.25am on Fridays. They are re- opened between 2.30 and 3.00pm each afternoon.

During lesson time

- Staff register their classes promptly and accurately – mornings and afternoons.
- If pupils leave the security of the classroom to work in other parts of the school, teachers ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.
- Pupils in the Pre-Prep move round the school in pairs and never in isolation.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained.
- External class doors leading to outside areas are locked at playtime and dinner time or when staff are out of the classroom for an extended period.

Play time

- Duty staff meet children at a designated spot before escorting them onto the playground.

- All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are locked when pupils are playing outside.
- Staff patrol areas in playground.
- Exit/entry doors are closed behind the last member of staff as they come off the playground.
- We have an appropriate staff/pupil ratio for play time. Nursery and Pre-School girls using outdoor activities, are supervised by staff at all times.

Lunch time

- As above.
- Members of staff on lunch duty (rota system).
- Prep SLT available at lunch time.

Home time

- Gates opened at 3.00pm to allow access for parents.
- Pupils in EYFS Reception, Nursery and Pre-School are collected by their parents from the playground and this is monitored by the class teacher and Early Years Practitioners.
- Staff take pupils to the playground and ensure that all pupils are collected by the appropriate adult.
- Pupils (Years 1-2) are taken to the turning circle for 3.15pm and wait with class teacher to be collected by parent.
- Pupils (Years 3-6) are taken to the turning circle between 3.20 and 3.30pm and wait with class teacher to be collected by parent.
- After ten minutes, staff escort any pupils who are left, to the office to enable the Prep school secretary to contact parents and check any changes to end of day arrangements.
- With written permission from parents, Year 6 girls may leave school unaccompanied.

Holding Clubs

- We have a siblings holding club (Sisters' Club) as part of F@TE for girls who are going to be picked up by their older sisters.
- Girls waiting for the 4.00pm activity are also supervised here. Staff escort them to their activity and ensure that those leaving the first session are collected by a parent/guardian. Any who are not collected are taken to the After School Club.

Fun@TheEdge Club

- Girls in Early Years and Pre-Prep attending Fun@TheEdge Club will be supervised by a member of staff until 3.15pm when they will be taken to the club.
- Girls from Years 3-6 are allowed to walk to the club with at least one accompanying pupil.

Visits

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios (see policy for Off Site Visits for staff ratios – section 6.4) are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
- Adequate communication contact and a list of pupils/groups to be taken on visits out of school.
- Mobile phones taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.

After School Clubs

- Register of pupils with contact numbers and details of how the pupils are to go home and who with are provided for the Club organiser. If any girls are not collected within ten minutes of the club finishing, they are to be taken to Fun@TheEdge.

Procedures in the event of a child going missing in Prep and EYFS

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 PSLT.
- Staff will promptly but calmly round up all pupils in an appropriate area and a designated member of staff will read the group a story (or similar).

- 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 PSLT member if the child is found immediately.
- If the child is not present, the Deputy Head (Prep School) and the Headmistress will be informed that a child is missing.
- 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 pupil could have left the school. If something is discovered this needs to be drawn to the attention of the staff immediately.
- CCTV will be reviewed.
- The safety and care of other pupils is paramount so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other pupils in the school must be adequately maintained while the search continues.
- If the child has not been found after a thorough search, then parents should be notified by the most senior member of staff left in school. The Head teacher or next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted. This would be approximately 10 minutes after initial concerns are voiced that a child is missing, giving sufficient time for searches and CCTV observation to take place. When contacting parents or carers please ask them to bring with them a recent photo of their child.
- Staff must try to remember and write down a 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 be disclosed to police or other agencies.
- The Head should inform the Chair of Governors that a child is missing.

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

- Visit Leader must ensure safety of remaining pupils. At least two staff must stay with them.
- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
- Visit Leader should contact school to alert them, ensuring that the Deputy Head (Prep School) and the Headmistress are informed.
- If the child is not found within five minutes, Visit Leader must contact police by phoning 999.
- Visit leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangement to notify parents, after which procedures above to be followed.

(To be used in conjunction with the Crisis Policy. NB contacts with media).

Procedures aimed at reducing risk of a missing pupil – SENIOR SCHOOL

Start of the day

- Girls may be dropped off at school from 8am. If they are dropped off before this time, they must sit in the Homework Club room until the Reception staff come in.
- The front of school gates are locked at 9.00am Monday to Thursday and at 9.25am on Fridays. They are re-opened between 2.30 and 3.00pm each afternoon.

Break and lunch time

- External gates are locked.
- Staff on duty walk around the school as well as monitoring the Hub (area for dining), locker rooms and form rooms.
- SLT are allocated a duty day and are accessible via walkie talkie.

Home time

- Pupils may leave once the bell sounds at 3:45pm and the staff have dismissed them.
- A member of the Year Team or SLT is on duty at the end of the day to see the girls leave. Staff are visible on the turning circle as well as the bus collection point (Wilmslow Road).

- If a school bus is late, pupils return to school to wait in Homework Club and the Reception Team contact the bus company and parents, as necessary.

Visits

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios (no less than one staff member to ten pupils- see policy for Educational Visits for staff ratios – see ‘Supervisor’ section) are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
- All documentation is taken on the school visit by the Group Leader and mobile phones are taken on every visit with mobile contact numbers left at school.

After School Clubs

- Register of pupils is taken by the staff running the club.
- The staff wait with the pupils until all are collected or they are taken to Homework Club (available until 5:45pm).

Procedures in the event of a child going missing in Senior School

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 check at Reception (in case of pre-arranged absence) and inform the nearest member of the SLT.
- Missing child is reported to the Site Manager who will review the CCTV.
- Admin and IT support will track their iPad and ring the personal mobile phone to see if either can help identify location of the pupil.
- SLT and admin staff will check the whole of the school building (top to bottom, following the missing child site map).
- SLT/ Head of Year may contact close friends of the pupil to ascertain any reasons why this may have happened/ ideas where she may have gone and check any sites that are mentioned in the conversation.
- The Headmistress must be informed at this point to review the procedures deployed and action further responses.
- If the child has not been found after a thorough search, then parents should be notified by the most senior member of staff in school. Meanwhile, a second/ third sweep of the school can be undertaken. The Head or next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted. This would be approximately 10 minutes after initial concerns are raised; giving sufficient time to complete a thorough search of the School. When contacting parents or carers please ask them to bring with them a recent photo of their child.
- Staff must write down a 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 be disclosed to the police or other agencies.
- The Headmistress will inform the Chair of Governors that a child is missing.
- If a pupil has told their parent(s) that they are attending a club and they do not attend it, the school will follow the same procedures to help find the missing child.
- If applicable, the Home Office will be informed of any sponsored student going missing within 24 hours of reporting the absence to the police.

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

- Group Leader must ensure safety of remaining pupils. At least two staff must stay with them.
- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child. The staff should try ringing the pupil mobile phone number.
- Group Leader should contact school to alert them. If school is open, they can also contact IT support to do an iPad/ phone location search. The Headmistress must be informed at this stage.
- If the child is not found within ten minutes, Group Leader must contact police by phoning 999.
- Group leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangement to notify parents, after which procedures above to be followed.

(To be used in conjunction with the Crisis Policy. NB contacts with media).