

7g MISSING CHILD POLICY

(Including Procedures for when a child is not collected on time)

*Our mission is to develop happy, confident and successful children
who are well prepared for their future.*

MISSING CHILD POLICY (including EYFS)

The welfare of all our children is our primary concern.

Preventative Measures

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 between 8:15-9am (depending on the age of the children) and during the afternoon, throughout the school.
- 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. EYFS pupils are always supervised within ratio.
- 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 and Safety Policy, Pupil Supervision Policy and Educational Visits Policy.
- Staff undertake regular roll calls and head counts.
- The school has rigorous procedures for pursuing unexplained absences, including the aim to contact parents by 9.30am 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.
- Every adult who works at the school has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times.
- All new staff receive an induction into the importance of effective supervision of young children.

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

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

When taking a register, they are discovered to be absent from the class.

A pupil is deemed missing if:

- They are not where they are supposed to be (lesson, activity) at the appropriate time and, after a certain 'period of grace' (no more than 10 minutes) and the member of staff has no information about their whereabouts.
- If their absence is suspicious in any way.

If a child was found to be missing, as defined above, we would carry out the following actions:

- Ask the other children in the class if they are aware of the whereabouts of the missing child.
- Send an email (or runner if systems are down) to all staff, including the school office, advising that a child is missing. The email should; seek information, request that teachers ask the children in their class if they are aware of the child's location and ask for a response.

If no positive response to this email is forthcoming within 5 minutes, the following actions should be taken within the next 15 minutes:

The School Office must be informed by the teacher, by email or runner to co-ordinate a search. They should, in order;

- Check any paper work or emails which may have given the pupils permission to be out of school.
- Speak to the relevant Head of Upper/Lower/Middle School.

The child has now been missing for 30 minutes

- Heads of school should now instigate a search of their own areas and communal areas. This will include:
 - asking all available staff and Upper School children to search the school premises and grounds for the missing child, with staff taking a mobile phone so that they are in contact with the School Office;
 - checking the main doors, school barriers and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit (Bursar)
 - the Deputy Head allocating members of staff to search the school drive, the perimeter footpath (x2) and the route to the golf club;
 - Inform the Headmaster, also the DSL and the appropriate Deputy DSL.

If the child has not be found after a 30-minute search

- Activate a fire drill to gather everyone together on school hardcourt.

If the child is still missing, they have now been missing for 60 minutes and the following should now take place

- The Headmaster will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask those parents to come to the school at once.
- The DSL/relevant Head of School will notify the Police.
- The DSL/Deputy DSL would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board.
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- The Headmaster would inform the Chairman of Governors.
- The Insurers would be informed.
- If the child is injured a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

PROCEDURE FOR MISSING CHILD ON A SCHOOL TRIP OR VISIT

A pupil is deemed missing if:

- They are not where they are supposed to be and cannot be located.
- They fail to check in at the appropriate time and, after a certain 'period of grace' (no more than 15 minutes) can still not be located.
- If their absence is suspicious in any way.

The following steps should be taken immediately the pupil is missing:

- A staff member to ask peer group / friends about whereabouts of missing pupil.
- If mobile phones have been allowed on the trip, phone mobile of pupil (get a friend to, if unsure if the missing child will answer to a school/staff phone number) and text their mobile if no reply.
- Inform other members of staff on the trip to see if they know anything.

If the child is still missing for a maximum of 30 minutes:

- Contact staff at venue including customer services or security if available.
- Inform contact on site.
- Contact the School Office who will contact the Headmaster, or Deputy Head in his absence.
- If necessary, the remaining children and staff of the trip to depart, leaving the lead member of staff at the venue.
- That member of staff to inform the police and continue the search.
- Contact the School Office again so that the parents/guardians of the missing child/children are informed, which they must be if the police are called.
- Follow the advice of police.

Questions to consider:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where were they last seen? ● Who were they last with? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is there any reason to consider abduction (eg family custody dispute)? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where might they have gone? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Did they speak to anyone about leaving? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are their main friends at school? Do they have a special friend? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What was their emotional state? Has anything recently upset them? |

Police response: (the police treat all reports as serious and will assess risks and trigger factors)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Were they in an emotional or depressed state of mind? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do they need any essential medication? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any involvement in violent confrontation prior to disappearance? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider any unusual behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suspicion of abduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suspicion of self-harm/suicide |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have they previously disappeared and suffered or been exposed to harm whilst missing? | | |

Once the incident is resolved:

- Take care of the child and comfort as necessary.
- The Headmaster should speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Headmaster should promise a full investigation. If appropriate, involving Social Services/Local Children's Safeguarding Board.
- Media enquiries should be referred to the Headmaster or Marketing Manager.
- A full written account of the incident must be produced by the member of staff leading the trip or visit on the same day, and sent to the Headmaster and Headmaster's PA for the pupil's file
- The report should be detailed, to include: 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 any lessons for the future.
- When appropriate, all children should be addressed as to the dangers of leaving the premises or separating from a group on an outing.
- The Headmaster and the staff team will review relevant policies, procedures and risk assessments and implement any necessary changes.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

If a child is not collected at the end of After School Care provision, we will:

- Call the contact numbers for the parent or carers.
- If there is no answer, the teacher in charge will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child.
- If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers when the premises are closing, the relevant Head of School or Headmaster will contact the Social Care Duty Officer on 03001234043.
- Social Care will make emergency arrangements for the child and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police.
- We will make a full written report of the incident.

We undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care. No child will be left without the proper care and supervision from either the Headmaster or Deputy Head who are both resident at school or in their absence, a member of EG or a Head of School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Westbrook Hay Prep School policies:

- Pupil Supervision Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

Reviewed by Governing Body December 2019

Next Review by Governing Body due December 2020