



## **Missing Child Policy** EYFS, KS 1 and KS 2

The welfare of all of our children at Salterford House School is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the School appreciates that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. Our staffing ratios are generous, designed to ensure a maximum level of supervision.

All schools that provide for early years' children within an EYFS framework are legally required to have:

- A policy for the procedures to be followed in the event of a child going missing during the school day.
- A procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect the child at the appointed time.

In addition, the School has identified the need for guidance on:

- Procedure to be followed by the school in the event of prolonged unexplained absence of a child.
- Procedure for a pupil going missing on a trip/outing.

There are also clear links between this policy and policies on Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment, issues of potential exploitation and the 'Prevent' duty. Reference is made to Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), the School's anti-bullying procedures and the Critical Incident Procedure.

Particular consideration must also be given to the school's 'Covid-19' risk assessment and current protocols.

## **1. Actions to be followed should a child go missing during the school day**

Our procedures are designed to ensure that there is a system to identify that a child is missing and can be located without any undue delay. In all situations it is the objective to promote the welfare of the child concerned and to ascertain the reasons for going missing, including any incitement by others. If a child is thought to be missing, the following applies:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children are present.
- Check with the office, class teacher, support staff, Sport/activity/music teachers, extra curricular activity leaders
- Ask all of the adults and children if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child.
- Check with the School Office that the child has not been signed out/collected.
- Check that Class Teacher is not aware of any reason why the child may not be in school.
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s) by e.g. reading to them.
- Inform the Head, Designated Safeguarding Lead)and the Deputy Head
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to conduct a thorough search within the area last used by the children, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a small child might hide.
- The Head would arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises, grounds and local vicinity.
- Notify the office to alert all staff to be vigilant.

- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit.
- Check outside areas including outdoor buildings.
- In light of Covid-19 protocols, pupils should remain in bubbles where possible and have minimal movement around the site. With the exception of toileting and individual music lessons, pupils should not be moving around the site individually.

If the child is still missing the following steps will be taken:

- The Head will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the School at once.
- The DSL will notify the Police and Local Children's Services.
- The School would co-operate fully with any Children's Services/Police investigation and enquiries.
- Inform the proprietor
- Insurers to 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 will be made for the incident report.

## **2. Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time**

If a child is not collected and is unaware of any changes to the family plans at the agreed collection time, the school office/after school staff will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers.

A member of the SLT informed, usually the head. The School will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. If there is no answer, the School 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 have closed (6.00 p.m.) staff must:

- Contact the Head to discuss procedure.
- Possible procedures could include:
  - Police (non-emergency number) to explain the situation and request that the police visit the first point of contact address.
  - Co-operate with the police in providing all relevant numbers/addresses so that the authorities can make appropriate investigations to locate parents/carers.
  - Under the guidance of the Police, contact the local Children's Services office (or out of hours duty system).

A full report of the incident will be written.

### **3: Actions to be taken if a child goes missing on an excursion**

- All children will be gathered in a safe room/area.
- An immediate head count will be carried out in order to ensure that all other children are present.
- If at a visitor centre/attraction the trip leader will alert the centre manager/security and seek assistance in any search.
- The trip leader will coordinate a search using support adults and venue staff to check the areas recently visited ensuring suitable ratios are in place for the remaining children.
- Initial searches will be conducted.
- Inform the designated SLT member or the Head and the DSL by phone.
- If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.
- In the case of an EYFS child going missing Ofsted will be informed.

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

### **Children Missing from Education**

#### **4: Procedure to be followed by the School in the event of prolonged unexplained absence of a child i.e. a period of more than 3 days**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. We are aware that local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

We recognise that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

When a child is absent from school without authority we will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

We have an admission register and an attendance register which supports the school in safe-guarding children who may be at risk of missing education.

We will discuss and agree actions with regards to individual cases with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within Nottinghamshire County Council for pupils who are to be removed from the admission register where the pupil:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education – this will be communicated with the home elective team

- does not arrive at the school as part of an admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts
- has ceased to attend school mid key stage because parents have relocated or have decided to send their child to a different school
- has been permanently excluded. (The actions that will taken by the school are in the Guidance For Head Teachers and Business Managers where Children are at Risk of Missing Education(Nottinghamshire))

The flow chart (located in the school office) summarises that every child should be accounted for, their whereabouts should be known or we will make a referral to the relevant service. We will not remove a child from our role until we have informed the local authority that this is happening.

Where a pupil who fails to attend our school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more we will follow Nottinghamshire County Council's Guidance for Head Teachers and Business Managers where Children are at Risk of Missing Education

Children Missing Officer Glen Scruby  
Missing.CME@nottscc.gcsx.gov.uk

Tel no: 0115 8041045

## **Absence**

Please refer to the School's Absence and Attendance Policy for full details.

If a child is 'missing', their whereabouts cannot be established within the school. Schools will need to identify whether the child is at significant risk.

Children are more vulnerable who:

- are on a plan (child protection plan, child in need plan, looked after child, early help)
- have specialist educational needs and / or a disability
- are using substances
- have an education health care plan
- there are indications that the child is at risk of CSE, grooming, radicalisation etc

There may be other contributing factors that should be taken into consideration when determining if the child is at significant risk such as the child's emotional health, known issues at home etc. School staff will always try to locate the child and attempt to establish the whereabouts of the child. Once a child has been identified as missing and cannot be located within school, the designated safeguarding lead will be informed. Staff will use their professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the child's whereabouts before notifying the police. Parents/carers will always be informed before contact with the police is made, unless a child is at immediate risk of harm and a police response is needed. This will be judged on a case by case basis.

When a decision has been made to contact the police, the police will require information from the school to assist in locating the child and returning them to a safe environment. If a child has a social worker or case manager (eg. early help) then they should also be informed. Where a child is known to regularly go missing from school, a risk assessment for the child will be undertaken.

For further guidance please speak to Nottinghamshire County Council's Glen Scruby, Children's Missing Officer.

Missing.CME@nottscc.gcsx.gov.uk

0115 8041045

In the first 12/24 hours:

- The School Office staff will contact the first named contact on record. If this is unsuccessful:
- The School Office staff will contact the next named person(s) on record.
- If all contact numbers have been exhausted, then the School Office staff will email all parents/carers in order as above.
- With all contacts exhausted the School will wait for a response from the parent/carer.
- The Head and DSL will be informed of an unexplained absence.
- The School Office will follow up every day the pupil is absent.
- The School Office will follow up with a phone call after 3 days if contact has or has not been made.

After 3 days and no contact has been received by the pupil or carers the following actions will be taken:

- The DSL will alert the local safeguarding team for the child's home address and await and act on the advice given. This will be fully documented.
- Records will be maintained of attempts to contact all relevant parents/carers.
- If there are repeat occasions or any safeguarding concerns, the DSL will be informed.

The School will have two emergency contact details for each child.

We undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care and will ensure that every reasonable action is taken to actively promote the welfare of our pupils.

Reviewed: May 2021



