



## Missing Child Policy & Procedures

### Whole School Policy Including EYFS

#### PART ONE: MISSING CHILD POLICY

##### INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to the whole school including Early Years Foundation Stage. The welfare of all of our children at Dolphin School is our paramount responsibility. A child going missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including sexual exploitation and so called 'honour based' violence. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a child is missing from school, this policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Supporting documents include the Independent School Regulatory Requirements, Early Years Statutory Framework and Department for Education guidance *Children Missing Education (September 2016)*.

##### INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in a detailed policy document: 'Educational Visits for Pupils'. This document can be provided to parents on request. We review all our policies regularly so that they remain robust and effective. All new staff receive a thorough induction on the importance of effective supervision of young children and read Part 1 of the DfE's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance.

##### Children missing from Education

The school monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more without permission.

Where a pupil has been continuously absent without authorisation for a period of not less than 20 school days (and there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is unwell or unable to attend

because of any unavoidable cause), and the school and local authority have failed, following reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is, the school may delete the pupil's name from the admission register. The school will inform the local authority of such deletion no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

The school also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm. In order to ensure that safeguarding responsibility is consistent with state schools, Dolphin school submits a starters and leavers form to notify Wokingham Borough Council of any children leaving the school out of normal transfer stages or that have not arrived as expected. The school carries out its own checks before notifying Wokingham Borough Council.

#### 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. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions without delay:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts (Non-EYFS)
- Check the first aid room
- Check with reception who will check the signing out/in book
- Inform the Head of the Early Years (EYFS) or the senior member of staff on duty
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s) with a relevant activity
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the Early Years setting (EYFS) or arrange for one or more adults to search the school grounds (Non-EYFS). Both the inside and out should be checked, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms etc. where a small child might hide.
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit

If the child is still missing, the following steps should be taken without delay:

- Inform the Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- The Head would arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds
- Ask the Head to 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
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her
- The DSL would inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the school's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The DSL/Head would immediately notify the Police
- The school would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- Inform the Chair of the Board of Advisors
- The school's insurers would be informed
- If the pupil is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

During the course of the investigation into the missing child, the school, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

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.

#### ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING/TRIP

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- Immediately inform the Head and the DSL by mobile phone
- The remaining children would be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable
- Ask the Head to ring the child's parents as soon as reasonably practicable to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue/ the school at once
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search
- Immediately contact the Police
- The DSL would inform the LSCB and the school's LADO without delay
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Advisors without delay
- The school's insurers would be informed as soon as reasonably practicable
- If the child is injured and is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days of the accident.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. The school will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

#### ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

- Talk to, take care of and comfort the child
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Head will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the LADO if necessary)
- The Head will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving the LSCB)
- Media queries should be referred to the Head (after discussion with the LADO if appropriate)
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: 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 how s/he appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.

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

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. If there is no answer, the Teacher will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after. If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a one hour period, the Head will contact the Social Care Duty Officer on 0118 9746105. 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, until such a time as s/he has been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to prioritise the child's safety. The school's DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the school's child protection policy and procedures, detailed in its Staff Behaviour and Safeguarding Children policy.**

Reviewed: October 20

Next review: October 21