

## Missing Child Policy (ISI 14b)

This Policy covers EYFS

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### Associated Policies:

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy (ISI 7a)  
Supervision Policy (ISI 14a)  
EYFS Supervision (ISI 14c)

Reviewed by: Deputy Head  
Applicable to: All Staff

Reviewed Date: October 2019



There are a limited number of situations where a child could be lost or missing, these are:

1. When a child is registered as being present in school
  - a. Child is not in the timetabled class
  - b. Child exits the setting unsupervised
  - c. Child is taken from the setting by an unapproved adult or other child
2. When a child is registered and on a trip
  - a. Child wanders off
  - b. Child is taken from the trip by an unapproved adult or other child
3. When a child is unregistered
  - a. No contact has been made to explain the child's absence

**There are policies relating to health and safety and welfare in place which, if strictly adhered to, should prevent any of the above occurring.**

However should a child become lost the following action should be taken:

### **Registration**

If a child appears as absent on the register, the office will telephone the parents for clarification of their whereabouts and amend the register accordingly. Should the parents believe the child is at School then an immediate search of the School and grounds will take place. The parents and the School will work together following steps and procedures as marked out below.

### **Lost at school**

- Immediate contact must be made with the relevant member of staff for each area:
  - Pre-Prep - Head of Pre-Prep or Headmistress
  - Prep School - Deputy Head or Headmistress
  - Boarders after 17:25 - Head of Boarding or Deputy Head of BoardingThe appropriate member of staff will make enquiries as to when the child was last seen and where, to eliminate any misunderstanding. Remember the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security.
- Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, members of staff should search the building, gardens and immediate vicinity keeping a calm manner and maintaining contact via mobile phone / walkie talkie. Retrace the pupil's last known steps. This must be someone who knows the child.
- If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes or after a thorough search of the grounds, then the police and parents must be informed.
- The police will want to know:
  - Address of setting

Child's next of kin

Detailed description of child (age, gender, clothing, distinguishing features etc.)

How long the child has been missing

The circumstances of the incident and any triggers (i.e. arguments etc.)

Who is looking for the child and how to contact them

- The Deputy Head / Headmistress would invoke the Critical Incident Procedure.
- Parents must be contacted by a senior member of staff.
- The office, or Matron, to make available a photograph of the child from iSams with a description.
- Continue to search, opening up the area and keeping in touch via mobile phone / walkie talkie.
- The incident must be documented including any conversations with the police.
- The child must be comforted and reassured when found and parents supported as necessary.
- If not found, the police will advise how to continue the search.

### **Lost on an outing**

If a child is lost on an outing the member of staff noticing the child missing should alert other members of the party and carry out a numbers check.

1. A member of staff or the whole group if appropriate should retrace their movements to the last place that the child was seen.
2. Another member of staff should alert the management of the organisation being visited and the school to let them know the situation.
3. Children on the visit should be asked for any relevant information if appropriate.
4. If the child is not found straight away the school will alert the parents.

### **Measures in place to ensure a child does not go missing**

- Information to parents and staff about challenging unknown persons on the premises
- Frequent reminders to parents about the importance of closing doors and locking gates on departure
- Requirement for all visitors to first register and obtain a badge from Reception
- Secure doors with coded entry
- Boundary security regularly checked by maintenance team
- Supervision of children at all times
- Sufficient staff to maintain ratios appropriate to the venue
- Clear lines of communication between staff, parents and pupils to ensure pupils do not leave the School with anyone who is not an approved adult
- Trips should be rigorously risk-assessed. (To include: venue - facilities, suitability for age, access, cost, special clothing requirements, eating facilities, transport )

## **After an Incident**

Consider the following:

1. Ensure the child and parents are supported as appropriate for the incident and that their needs are met.
2. Who needs to know about this? The School's Governing body, SLT and any other relevant parties (including staff who may carry out the same trip or other trips involving the same child in future).
3. A full review of the incident by senior staff, following conversations with those involved. A report will be filed and kept by the Headmistress.
4. Risk assessment in place to ensure that all measures are in place to prevent a recurrence.

**Ewan Carradine**  
**Deputy Head**