

POLICY FOR RESPONDING TO A MISSING CHILD OR A CHILD WHO HAS RUN AWAY FROM SCHOOL

Overview:

Children should never be allowed to leave the premises during school time without the Headteacher's permission. It is possible that on some occasions a child may leave the premises without the knowledge or permission of the Headteacher. This policy is put in place to ensure that every action possible is taken to ensure the quick and safe return of that child to school. This policy also links to the policy on the collection of children from school.

Objectives:

- To locate any missing child quickly.
- To ensure that all children are kept safely on the school premises during school hours unless they have the head teacher's permission to leave.
- To ensure that children who leave school during the school day only do so with the Headteacher's or teacher's permission and that they are accompanied by an authorised adult.
- To ensure that the building, grounds and play areas are safe and secure during school hours.
- To ensure that teachers and staff keep children under proper supervision at all times.
- To ensure that if a child 'goes missing' during the school day, s/he is located quickly and returned safely to the school.

Strategies:

- If a child cannot be found by his/her teacher, the Headteacher must be notified immediately and told when and where the child was last seen. Time is of the essence and prompt actions must be taken by all.
- The remaining children will be left safe in the care of suitable staff. All other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the child's classroom, play areas, storage areas, toilets, the school building and the school grounds.
- If the child is not found within a short period of time, the police must be called by the Headteacher or staff member.
- Members of staff, who are not supervising children, will be sent to search the area in the immediate vicinity of the school. If the child has gone missing at the end of the school day members of staff may take the most appropriate route home to look for the child. They would also enquire whether the child is likely to have gone to a relative or friends house and explore these routes as well.
- If a child goes missing during an outing or school visit, the teacher in charge must ensure that the remaining children are safely cared for by the other staff and adults. An urgent but thorough search should be made of the immediate vicinity and if the child is not found quickly the police must be called and the Headteacher notified.
- As soon as possible, the parents will be notified that their child is missing.

- The LA will be notified by the Headteacher that a child is missing.
- If a member of staff finds the child the head teacher must be told at once. Parents, police and other authorities will be notified.
- The Headteacher will investigate how the incident occurred and will take appropriate action to ensure that similar events do not happen again.

Children who run away:

If a child runs away from school and is in the eye line of adults.

- The adult should call after the child or try and talk to the child to try and get them to come back.
- Under no circumstances should a member of staff physically restrain or grab the child, unless the child is in immediate danger of hurting themselves or putting themselves in a dangerous situation e.g running onto the road. Please refer to Child Restraint Policy.
- A member of staff should never put themselves at risk in the process and should not attempt to intervene without assistance unless it is an obvious emergency.
- The member of staff should ring the police, inform the Headteacher and ring parents.

Outcomes:

The safety of all children will be given our highest priority. A missing child should be an extremely rare happening. This policy is designed to put into place swift and effective actions to locate any missing child and to notify and involve parents and the authorities at every appropriate point.

Reviewed: October 2019

Next Review: October 2021