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| **Child missing in Education & Child Missing during the school day** | |
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**Introduction**

# Missing child policy

The safety of our pupils is our priority whilst they are in our care at school. This policy sets out our procedures for dealing with a child’s going missing from the education (ie prolonged unauthorised absence) and in the unlikely event that a child goes missing

See collection and failure to collect children policy for further information.

**Responsibilities**

It is the teacher’s responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, to ensure relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities, what is expected and the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis.

It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance. There are 3 sections to this policy, Child missing in education, child missing whilst at school and child missing whilst on a school excursion.

1. **Child Missing in Education**

* It is a parent’s responsibility to notify the school by 9am if their child is to be absent from school.
* Parents know they must contact the office or the teacher.
* If a child is not in school by 15 minutes after the start time, or they are not on the school bus as normal the office will contact the parent/s to enquire as to where the child is.
* If the parent does not answer, the office will email and or text the parent with the same enquiry.
* If a child does not return to school for 10 days after the unauthorised absence Calderdale Council must be informed.
* During this time the school will endeavour to make enquires to the whereabouts of the child, by phone calls, text, email and a visit to the last known address.
* If a child does not attend school on their first day (as agreed with parent/s) the school will make enquiries to establish the child’s whereabouts and notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

**2. Missing child during the school day.**

# Staff are responsible for

* Completing Attendance Registers.
* They must be completed accurately and promptly according to guidelines.
* Completed registers must be collected by the school office before 9.15am and following afternoon collection procedure
* If a member of staff takes a pupil, group or class out of school they are responsible for informing parents and staff at the school office.
* It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.
* If a parent takes a pupil out of school during the day, they must sign them out at the reception.
* see absence and lateness policy for further information **Procedures aimed at reducing risk of a missing pupil** Start of the day:
* The school should ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from staff to them and vice versa.
* There are clear procedures for welcoming pupils into the school.
* Pupils must be in school by 9am for main school and 9am for kindergarten
* After this time pupils report to the main school reception and sign the late book
* Teachers collect their classes from the playground and escort to their classes after breaks

**During lesson time:**

* Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – mornings and afternoons and return them to the office.
* All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are locked when pupils are playing outside. An additional risk assessment has been completed for security.

# Playtime and lunch times

* Pupils are to be escorted to the external doors by staff.
* Duty staff should be on the playground before pupils come out.
* External gates remain locked. Staff patrol all areas in playground throughout the session.

**In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while at school**:

1) If a teacher or staff member suspects that a child is missing from a lesson, school or activity, they contact the nearest member of the SMT and school office immediately. The SMT member and any teaching assistants will carry out a thorough search of the building, including outside areas, toilets and storage areas.

1. The following lists held in the school reception will be checked**:** 
   * Attendance Registers
   * Off Site Record
2. If necessary, staff will promptly but calmly round up all pupils and a designated member of staff will supervise the children. The safety and care of other pupils is paramount so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other pupils in the school must be adequately maintained while the search continues.
3. Staff will count and name check all the pupils present against the register while the group are assembled in one place.
4. A thorough check of all exits will be made, to make sure all gates/doors were locked/bolted and there are no other ways a pupil could have left the school. If something is discovered this needs to be drawn to the attention of the SMT immediately.
5. The Class Teacher is spoken to gain further information and asked to confirm if he/she attended the previous sessions.
6. A thorough search of the school buildings continues and is carried out by senior members of staff with the help of other members of staff available

Particular attention is paid to:

* + Rarely used rooms
  + Toilets
  + All classrooms
  + The school grounds

1. If the child has not been found after 10 minutes from the initial report of them as missing then parents should be notified.
2. The most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted. Time is of the essence parents and police must be informed within 20 minutes of the first alert
3. When contacting parents or carers staff will ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child.
4. Staff must try to remember and write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features.
5. If the missing child has any special medical or learning needs then these, need to be noted to be disclosed to police or other agencies.
6. **Child missing whilst on a school excursion.**

# School Trips

* Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios (at least following national guidance and often in excess of this) are provided when pupils leave the school premises. Permission from parents is obtained generically at the beginning of each academic year and once again specifically for each trip.
* Mobile telephones taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.
* All children will wear a lanyard with emergency contact information on.

**Procedure for a missing child**

1. The Group Leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. At least two adults must stay with them.
2. One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
3. The Visit Leader should contact school to alert them.
4. If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the Group Leader must contact police by telephoning 999.
5. The Group Leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangements to notify parents, after which the procedures described above will be followed.

**Prepared using the following publications:**

**Missing child, Calderdale Council, 2018**

**Children Missing in Education, sept 2016**

**Keeping Children safe in Education –DFE guidance dated September 2018**

**Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014**