



Missing Child Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually	
Policy reviewed:	June 2023 (SAM)
Next review	June 2024 (SLT)

This policy applies to all children in the school including those in the EYFS.

Introduction

WCPS aims to provide a secure environment for children at all times. The primary principle laid down in the Children Act – *the welfare of the child is paramount* – must be kept in mind at all times. Staff make every effort to continually and effectively monitor children whether inside the school, in the playground or outdoor learning area, or on an outing.

The Early Years Foundation Stage outings require a ratio of 1 adult to 4 children for Reception. For Years 1 and 2, outings require a ratio of 1 adult to 6 children. For each type of outing the teacher in charge will carry out a risk assessment and, taking into account the nature of the outing, will consider whether it is appropriate to exceed this ratio. The school obtains written or electronic parental permission for children to take part in outings although the school contract includes an overarching parental permission for school trips. Staff take essential records and equipment on outings, including contact telephone numbers for the parents of children on the outing, a mobile phone, a first aid kit and a recent photograph of each child attending.

There are generally two adults in each classroom in Reception and KS1. This ratio of adults to children helps the school to be confident in the knowledge that all children are accounted for at all times. Staff welcome the children at the back doors of the school and on arrival in their classrooms at the start of the day and are positioned so that they can see each child arrive and therefore help to prevent a child slipping out after their parent. At the end of the day staff ensure they know that an appropriate adult is collecting the child. Parents are requested to inform the school by email, in writing or by a phone call to the school office of any changes to pick-up arrangements.

A register is taken every morning and afternoon to record the presence/absence of all children. The school gate is locked at all times during the school day. Visitors are required to sign in on entry in the office.

Action in case of missing child from the school buildings/playground

In the unlikely event that a child becomes separated from their group, the following will apply:

- Stay calm and instigate a search of the immediate area in particular areas such as toilets, cupboards and other areas of a size capable of hiding a child;
- Doors and gates to be checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could exit the premises.
- The teacher will allocate duties to staff:
 - i) supervise those children present;
 - ii) execute a further search of all rooms in the school and outside areas with the assistance of other members of staff available.
- If the child is still missing, the Head/Deputy Head must be informed a child is missing.
- A senior member of staff present will arrange for all the other children to be satisfactorily supervised;
- They will talk to staff and any other adults to establish what has happened;
- One or more members of staff to be delegated to check local roads;
- If the child is still missing the following procedures must be followed:
 - Parents must be contacted at this stage by the Head Teacher or most senior member of staff available;
 - Inform the Police who will advise on the next stage;
 - Inform Head of KCJS, of the planned action;
 - Re-check all venues;
 - Check by phone and/or mobiles all adults, who have recently left the building (staff and then parents);
- A complete account of the incident must be recorded in the Incident File.
- Staff should not speak to anyone who has no need to know or who might be a member of the media, and under no circumstances should the name of the child be divulged to any such person.
- Legal liability should not be discussed with or admitted to anyone.

If a child has been removed from the school by an unauthorised person, the child's parents and the police will be contacted immediately.

Action in case of a missing child on an outing

- To ensure safety on school outings, the following measures must be taken:
- Parents to have given permission for their child to attend the outing.
- Contact details for parents/carers to be taken on the outing so that they can be contacted in an emergency.
- Each adult in charge of a group will have details of which children they are responsible for. The class teacher will have a photo sheet of the boys in the class.
- The children will be given details of the adult who is responsible for them, including their name.
- All children will be told to stay with the adult and not to stray or to go anywhere unaccompanied. If they need the toilets, they must ask and be taken by a member of staff.
- The children will be given wristbands/stickers with the school contact details on them.
- The children will be told what to do if they become separated from the group.
- Depending on the outing, it will generally involve:
 - Stay where they are as someone will come back to look for them;
 - Look around to see if they can see the group;
 - Not to go with anyone even if they tell you they know where to find the teacher or adult they were with.
- A regular headcount will be taken of the group.

In the unlikely event, when taking a headcount, a child appears to be missing the procedure is:

- Stay calm and ensure the Group Leader is aware of the situation;
- A check will be repeated by the Group Leader; immediate possibilities will be assessed;
- The group will stay still and keep together.
- A member of staff will search the immediate vicinity;
- If the child is still missing after five minutes the staff on site will be informed, the school will be contacted and the Police will be called;
- The group leader will be prepared to give the following information:
 1. The Group Leader's name
 2. What has happened
 3. Name, age, address and description of the child
 4. Time of the incident
 5. Where the child was last seen and by whom

6. Any special medical or learning needs
 7. A photograph of the child from the class photo sheet.
- The Head Teacher/School will contact the parent/carer of the missing child to inform them of what has happened and the steps that are being taken to find their child;
 - They will also inform KCJS (020 8255 5335 – Suzie Richards, secretary to Head of Junior school).
 - The search will continue to happen after calling the police and the school;
 - The teacher/adult involved will complete an incident report as fully as possible. This will be stored in the Head's office for future reference;
 - Teachers/adults should not speak to anyone who has no need to know or who might be a member of the media and under no circumstances should the name of the child divulged to any such person;
 - Legal liability should not be discussed with or admitted to anyone.

The Investigation

The Head will carry out a full investigation, taking statements from all adults present at the time, or who were on the outing.

The Head will write an incident report detailing:

- The date and time of the report;
- What staff/children were present;
- When the child was last seen and by whom;
- What action had taken place since that time;
- Give a copy of the report to KCS – Bursar, Headmaster of Junior School and Head Master;
- ISI will be informed.

A conclusion will be drawn as to how the breach of security took place.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

School: 020 8946 1001
KCJS: 020 8255 5335

A child missing education from school due to repeated or unexplained absence, or by leaving the school unexpectedly, is a potential indicator of wider safeguarding concerns, or where a family may be in need of additional support or early help. The school has drawn up this policy to deal with children who miss schooling in these circumstances, particularly on repeat occasions and for those children who leave school without clear indications of where they will be continuing their education.

1. Context

1.1. This policy should be read alongside the school's Attendance Policy and in particular with the school's Safeguarding Policy, which gives further details on this topic. The policy has regard to the DfE guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2022): 'Children missing education (Sept 2016)

2. Policy and Procedures

2.1. The school will carry out daily registration and absences will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Attendance Policy. This policy covers those instances where:

- there is a repeated pattern of absence;
- the reason for absence is unclear or unexplained;
- a member of staff has concerns about the nature of a pupil's absence;

2.2. In these instances the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL), or the deputy DSL, should be consulted. The school's DSL will then follow the procedure detailed in the school's Safeguarding Policy and in accordance with Children missing education (Sept 2016) and will review the information, recording actions and discussions.

2.3. When a pupil leaves the school other than at the usual transition point (end of year 2), the school will make contact with the receiving school to ensure the child is registered at the school and has started to attend. If a child protection file has been created, the DSL will then forward the appropriate records to the receiving school, in line with the LSCB's guidance: Keeping records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns (January 2014). The school will also notify the local authority when a child leaves the school as described in Children missing education (Sept 2016), using the terms in Annex A of that document.

2.4. When a pupil leaves our school without clear indication of a receiving school, the school will contact local authorities to advise them of the situation and to start their tracking procedures. In case of serious concern the DSL will contact the local authorities, in line with the Safeguarding Policy for further advice.

2.5. If a pupil joins the school at a non-standard transition point, the school will notify the local authority of their residence arrival within 5 days.