

EYFS Missing Child Policy

In the event of a child going missing:

- The adult in charge will organise staff to supervise the remaining children in the group.
- A complete and systematic search will take place, throughout the Junior School, checking toilets, cupboards and other areas where a child could hide. The outside will be searched including the garden.
- Doors and gates will be checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The signing in board will be checked to make sure no other child has gone astray.
- The adult in charge will talk to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and will record this.
- If the child is still not located then the following procedure will take place:
 - a) The Head of the Junior School will be informed
 - b) The Headmaster will be informed
 - c) The police will be contacted
 - d) The parents will be contacted
 - e) The Social Services will be informed

In the event of a child going missing from a public place

- The adult in charge will organise staff to supervise the remaining children in the group.
- A complete and systematic search of the surrounding area will take place by the adult in charge and all available spare adults.
- The management of the visiting venue will be informed (there may be the possibility of intercom use or help from staff).
- The police will be informed
- The Head of the Junior School will be informed
- The Headmaster will be informed
- The parents will be informed.
- The Social Services will be informed.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Setting leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the setting leader. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the setting leader and the other should be the Chair of Trustees or their representative. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.



- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The Chair of Trustees or their representative will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press.

Head Junior School and EYFS Co-ordinator
September 2025