



Missing Child Policy - Infant and Junior School

This policy applies to all children in the Infant and Junior School including the EYFS; our curriculum and procedures take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all our children.

Rationale

The welfare of our children is paramount. This policy exists in order to establish the procedure in the unlikely event of a child going missing on the school premises. The safety procedure on outings is outlined in the Educational Visits handbook and taken into consideration by staff when planning and writing risk assessments for individual outings. Through our Supervision Policy and Procedure, Trip Risk Assessment and duty of care the school aims to minimise the risk of children going missing:

Procedure

Children are registered at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. Any children arriving after registration has closed must sign in at the office.

Morning drop-off and Afternoon collection

Infant girls attending Breakfast Club are registered as they arrive and at the end of the Club (approximately 8.15am) are escorted into the Infant playground by the Breakfast Club Learning Assistants.

Infant children (other than those in Breakfast Club – see Supervision Policy) are supervised in the playground from 8.15am. Parents must leave the children in the duty staffs' care, and are encouraged not to wait in the playground. A bell is rung at 8.30am indicating the start of the school day, and Infant children line up in their form groups, and proceed into school. At the very start of the school year, Reception parents who have waited with their children can walk their child to the classroom where they are greeted by the teacher or assistant.

Junior children line up in the playground at the start of the day – with a bell being rung at 8.30am and having been supervised by the members of staff on duty from 8.15am. Junior children in Breakfast Club will also go to the playground at this time. Gates are closed and supervision is vigilant. Children enter the building in class groups.

Alterations might be made in the case of bad weather so that the children and adults are kept dry.

Registration is taken by the teacher and any children not present in school are marked absent. Often there has been previous communication, either directly with the teacher or forwarded by the School Secretary, accounting for an absence. If this is not the case, these children are left with an unaccounted absence mark and the School Secretary will follow up with a phone call to the given contact numbers until a reason for absence is ascertained. If for whatever reason no communication is possible the Head of Infant and Junior School is notified and investigation/safeguarding actions will be taken (see below for further detail). An afternoon register is taken by all teachers and the same process is followed.

At the end of the day, children are only returned to an adult known to be collecting them. If this is someone other than the parent, confirmation of the individual collecting must be received by the school (either email, phone call or direct conversation by the parent).

Collection of all Infant children is from the back playground of the Infant building. Girls going to either after school activities are collected by leaders in the classrooms or taken by the teachers/assistants to venues, including those children in After School Club (who are escorted to the dining room) . If a child is not at the club registration, initially there is a discussion with the teacher and then a search of the school site; if the child is not located, a phone call to parents is made to ascertain if the child has been collected without notifying the School Office.

Junior children exit the buildings with an adult and if being collected, go to their parents/carers who will be waiting at the front of the school. We have designated gates for year groups. Junior children going to Tea-Time Club are escorted there or for older year groups make their way independently to the dining room. Children attending after school activities are collected by the leaders at designated places, are registered and undertake the club. If a club member is not at the registration, initially there is a search of the school site and discussion with the teacher, and then a phone call to parents to ascertain if the child has been collected without notifying the School Office.

For children waiting for collection, adults remain in the playground until approximately 3.45pm. At this point they will be brought into the Office, where phone calls will be made to parents and if necessary emergency numbers. Children remaining uncollected may be entered into TTC until collection is arranged. Please see the After School Care Procedure for further procedures.

All participants in Afterschool Clubs will be delivered to parents collecting them at the front of the Junior School . Parents collect girls in TTC will need to ring the TTC bell outside the main entrance, where a member of the team will have them sign their children out on the register, and bring the child to them.

Break time

Children are lined up at the end of break times before coming back indoors; giving the opportunity for a head count.

During the school day

Children who leave either school site during the day must be signed out in the Office by the adult who is responsible for them and signed back in should they return before the end of the school day. Any children who have Music lessons in the Senior School are collected by the teachers from the School Office, unless other arrangements have been made. Gates are locked and access in and out of the building is monitored to the best of ability.

Procedure if a child is missing

Every care is taken to ensure our children are accounted for at all times. Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. However, in the unlikely event that it is suspected that a child has gone missing the following procedure will be followed:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children are present
- Inform the Head of Infant and Junior School or designate
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s) – at no time should other children be left unattended.
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the school, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a child might hide
- Check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit

If the child is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- Head of Infant and Junior School to inform Headmistress and then ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once
- Head of Infant and Junior School to notify the Police
- Head of Infant and Junior School would arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her
- The Child Protection Officer would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
- Inform the Chairman of Governors
- The Insurers would be informed
- If the child is injured, when found, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- Head of Infant and Junior School will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- Head of Infant and Junior School will undertake a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/ Local Children Safeguarding Board)
- Media queries should be referred to the Headmistress
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the length of time that the child was missing and how she appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future.

| Responsibility: | Updated: | Review: |
|-----------------|----------|---------|
| EG | 09/25 | 09/26 |