

MISSING CHILD POLICY

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

Policy reviewed by: Robert Bannon - Headmaster

Policy approved by: Robert Berry – Director of Operations

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Reviewer's Signature: 

Approver's Signature



Please note: 'School' refers to Chatsworth Schools; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Part One: Child missing from the school or on an outing

Part Two: Procedures To Be Followed By Staff When A Child Is Not Collected On Time

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION The welfare of all our children at Hall School Wimbledon is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all the children safe at all times. Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 of the current version of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that children are effectively supervised whilst in our care.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS Our companion documents, 'Early Years and EYFS Children Policy - Information for Parents' and 'Guidelines for Pupils and their Parents' describe:

- The arrangements for handing over children to the care of their parents at the end of the day
- The qualifications of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in school
- The arrangements for registering the children in both the morning and afternoon
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to, or exit from, the building
- The supervision of the playground and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the school

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in the policy document: 'Outings and Field Trips'. All documents are on our website and can be provided to parents on request. We review these policies regularly (at least once a year) in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. All new staff receive an induction into the importance of effective supervision of very young children and read Part 1 of the DfE's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- Check with School Reception who will check the signing out/in book

- Inform the Head and Deputy Head or Head of Year
- Ask all the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child
- Occupy all the other children in their classroom(s) with a relevant activity
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere the school premises, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms etc. where a child might hide
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit

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

- Inform the Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (also the Deputy)
- The Head or their Deputy will make contact with the child's parents, explain what has happened and what steps have been set in motion and ask them to come to the school at once
- The Head would notify the Police
- The Head or Deputy would arrange for staff to continue searching the rest of the school premises and grounds
- The school would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the Local Authority.
- The school's insurers would be informed by the Head
- If the child is seriously injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)
- The DSL would inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the school's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

During the course of the investigation into the missing child, the school, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

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 IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity, other adults would stay with the remaining children
- Inform the Head by telephone.
- The remaining children would be taken back to school

- The Head or their Deputy will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. They would be asked to come to [the venue/ the school] at once
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search
- Contact the Police
- The DSL would inform the LSCB and the school's LADO
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the Local Authority
- The school's insurers would be informed by the Head
- If the child is seriously injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (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. The school will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these 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
- The Head will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the LADO if necessary)
- The Head will initiate a full investigation (if appropriate involving the LSCB)
- Media queries should be referred to the Head (after discussion with the LADO if appropriate)
- 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 purpose of the outing], the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons learnt for the future.

PART TWO: PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. If there is no answer, The Head of Year or Deputy Head will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child.

During this time, the child will be safely looked after.

If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a

one hour period or when the premises are closing, the Head will contact the Social Care Duty Officer of the relevant Local Authority. Social Care will make emergency arrangements for the child and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police. We will make a full written report of the incident.

We undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care, until such a time as he or she has been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to give priority to the child's safety.

The school's DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the school's child protection policy and procedures detailed in its staff behaviour and child protection policy.