

St Mary's CE Aided Primary School Lost Child Policy Statement

St Mary's CE Primary School believes that every effort must be made to ensure the safety of pupils whilst in the care of our school including the foundation stage. This policy sets out our procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

Responsibilities:

It is the Head Teacher's responsibility to ensure that all relevant parties are aware of this policy, to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis.

It is the responsibility of the Foundation Stage Teacher to ensure that all staff and other adults working with Foundation Stage pupils are aware of the details of this policy and act according to the procedures outlined especially the agreement of code words for the release of children to unfamiliar adults.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher/ Assistant Head Teacher to ensure that all staff and other adults working with pupils are aware of the details of this policy and act according to the procedures outlined.

It is the responsibility of all staff and responsible adults working within our school to read this policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

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, including bus transport arrangements and the provision of code words to release Foundation Stage children to unfamiliar adults.

It is the responsibility of the Academy Council to ensure they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge/support the school in its review of this policy.

Procedures aimed at reducing risk of a missing pupil:

- All staff *must* ensure that the gates/doors to any outside (and where appropriate inside) area are locked when children are playing outside.
- 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.
- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – mornings and afternoons.
- Children who are collected/returned to school outside of normal times are signed in/out in the at Main Reception by the adult collecting them.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained.
- Ensure that staff have clear and safe procedures for welcoming and dismissing children through the doors of the school.
- Ensure that staff follow the agreed procedures when taking children to the school buses at the end of the school day (door entry system safety).
- If children leave the school building and site to continue their studies the school should ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all children are accounted for on return to the unit.

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios are provided when children leave the school premises and a qualified paediatric first aider accompanies all external visits
- Adequate communication contact and a list of pupils/groups to be taken on visits out of school and the Educational Visits Policy is adhered to.

Procedures in the event of a child going missing:

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

- Member of staff who has noticed the missing child will calmly inform the Foundation Stage Teacher or the Assistant Head Teacher as appropriate.
- Staff will promptly but calmly gather all children to a pre-arranged area and a designated member of staff, not the leader/assistant, will read the group a story.
- The foundation stage teacher or class teacher (as appropriate) will count and name check all the children present against the register whilst the group are assembled in one place.
- AT THE SAME TIME all other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and notify the Head Teacher/Assistant Head Teacher if the child is found immediately.
- A thorough check of all exits should be made to ensure all gates/doors were locked/bolted and there are no other ways a pupil could have left the building/grounds. If something is discovered this needs to be drawn to the attention of the Head Teacher/Assistant Head Teacher teacher immediately.
- If the child has not been found by the time the register check is completed the leader/class teacher will notify the head teacher or next most senior member of staff.
- Designated foundation stage staff or school staff as appropriate will begin a search of the area immediately outside the building/school grounds/immediate area.
- The safety and care of other pupils is paramount so the security of the building and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other children in the school must be adequately maintained whilst the search continues.
- If the child has not been found after 10 minutes from the initial report of them as missing then parents should be notified. The head teacher or next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted. When contacting parents or carers please ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child
- All staff must try to remember and write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features if a uniform is not worn.

- If the missing child has any special medical, behavioural or learning needs then these need to be noted to be disclosed to police or other agencies.
- **In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises:**
 - The visit leader must ensure safety of remaining children. At least 2 staff must stay with them.
 - One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
 - The visit leader should contact school to alert them.
 - If the child is not found within 5 minutes the visit leader must contact police by phoning 999.
 - The visit leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangements to notify parents, after which procedures above to be followed.

Policy approved by the governing body: October 2019

Date for review: October 2021