



Missing Pupils

The Old School Henstead

Written by: WJM

Last reviewed on: 9 September 2022

Next review due by: 9 September 2023

1. Policy 5 – MISSING PUPILS including EYFS

1. Policy Statement

The Old School Henstead seeks to ensure that the whereabouts of all pupils are known at all times. On occasions when a member of staff identifies that a pupil or pupils are missing from their expected location, immediate action is required. Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

For pupils missing on educational visits, this policy and procedures apply.

2. Procedure

A pupil may be identified as missing:

After an absence at morning registration is not confirmed by the office's staff call home; by observation in class, or on reconciliation with the afternoon registration. As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the Headmaster, Deputy Head or Head of Early Years (EYFS):

- The designated staff will carry out a thorough search of the buildings, grounds and outdoor learning area and
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security

whereby a child could wander out.

- The designated staff contact the Headmaster and report the incident.

- If the child is not found, the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.

- The Headmaster talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was

last seen and records this.

If the pupil is still found to be missing, the office will:

- Record the absence on Scholarpack/Tapestry (the school's Management Information Systems) with the name of the pupil, date and time of first noted absence.
- Advise all teachers due to teach the pupil later that day that they must immediately inform the School Office if the pupil appears.
- If considered appropriate, a school fire alarm practice would be a useful tool in locating missing pupils.

If the site search fails, parents will be informed and a search of local roads will be made on foot, or by car, by available staff and parents, as appropriate. Owing to the age of the pupils at the Old School, and in consultation with the parents, the Police will be contacted.

On completion of this and any subsequent searches made over the day, parents will continue to be informed of progress.

If an EYFS child goes missing

- The person in charge will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- Person in charge talks to staff to establish what happened
- If the child is not found the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.

What to do when a child goes missing from a school or EYFS outing.

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.

The Head or Head of EYFS is contacted immediately and the incident is reported. In the case of an EYFS child, the Head of EYFS contacts the Headmaster who contacts the police and reports the child as missing. The Head or Head of EYFS contacts the parent, who makes their way to the Nursery or outing venue as agreed with the Head of EYFS. The Nursery is advised as the best place, as by the time the parent arrives, the child may have been returned to the Early Years unit.

Staff take the remaining children back to School or the Early Years unit. In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle

the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
The Headmaster contacts the Chair of Governors and reports the incident.
The Chair of Governors, with the Governing Board carries out an investigation and may come to the School immediately.
The Head of EYFS, or designated staff member may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

The investigation
Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
The Head of EYFS together with the Headmaster speaks with the parent(s).
The Headmaster and Deputy Head/Head of EYFS carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:
The date and time of the report.
What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.

When the child was last seen in the group/outing.
What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. LSCB may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
The insurance provider is informed.

Ofsted/ISI may be informed: Ofsted Tel: 0300 1231231 ISI Tel: 020 7600 0100

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 for the outing. 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. The Headmaster needs 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 Head of EYFS. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the Head of EYFS and the other should be the Headmaster or Deputy Head. 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 Headmaster/ Deputy Head will use their discretion to decide what action to take. Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press.

EYFS Non-Collection of Children Policy

Statement of Intent

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session, the EYFS puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child.

Aim

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult, we will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Methods

The following information is collected and held for each child as part of the initial registration procedure:

- Parents' home and work addresses and telephone numbers (or suitable agreed alternative).
- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of adults authorised by the parents to collect their child from the nursery, for example a childminder or grandparent
- Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child
- Names of persons with parental responsibility for the child

Pre-notified alternative collection procedures

On occasions when it is known in advance that parents or other normally authorised person will be unable to collect the child, parents are requested supply at the start of the session, in writing to the Head of EYFS, the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child.

In the event that parents become unable to collect the child as planned, they must inform the school office as soon as possible.

In the event that a child is not collected from EYFS by an authorised adult and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises, the safeguarding and child protection procedures as set out in the EYFS child protection policy are followed.

Procedure followed if a child is not collected at the end of the session

- The office is checked for information about changes to the normal collection routines.
 - If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
 - If this is unsuccessful, the adults authorised on the Registration Form to collect the child are contacted.
 - All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
 - The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form and/or that their parents have specified in writing to the office
 - If no-one collects the child after one hour and no authorised person can be contacted, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
 - We contact Customer First (telephone number -0808 800 4005)
 - The child stays at setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social worker
 - Children's services will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will be admitted into the care of the local authority.
 - Under no circumstances will staff go to look for the parent, nor will they take the child home with them.
 - A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
 - Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.
- Ofsted/ISI may be informed: Ofsted Tel: 0300 1231231 ISI Tel: 020 7600 0100