



Missing Child Policy

Adopted: 01-17
Prepared by: JH/SCC

Next Review 01-19
Approved by: TD

This policy applies throughout the School from EYFS to Year 6

Introduction

The welfare of all children at The Cavendish School is our paramount responsibility. A child going missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including child sexual exploitation and so-called honour based violence. Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all the children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure that our children are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a child is missing from School, this Policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 of *Keeping children safe in education* (September 2016). Our staffing ratios are generous and are designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that they are in our care.

This policy has been drawn up with regard to the Independent School Regulatory Requirements, Early Years Statutory Framework (September 2014) and the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance *Children missing education* (September 2016).

Information for parents

Our Supervision of Pupils Policy describes:

- The arrangements for children arriving at School and leaving the premises at the end of the day
- The arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in School
- The arrangements for registering the children in both morning and afternoon.
Parents are responsible for notifying the School if their child is absent for any reason. The School will always contact the parents if the child fails to arrive at School without an explanation
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building
- The supervision of the playground

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for our children when on outings are set out in a detailed Outings Policy. This document is on our website and can be provided to parents on request.

We review all our policies regularly in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of children and read Part 1 of the DfE's statutory guidance *Keeping children safe in education* (September 2016).

Action to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend the first day of school

All new children are placed on the School's admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the child will attend the School. If a child fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in her absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) without delay. The Head and DSL/DDSL will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Where there are changes affecting the child (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.

Duty to report

The School monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance.

The School will inform the local authority of any child who fails to attend School regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more without permission.

Where a child has been continuously absent without authorisation for a period of not less than 20 school days (and there are no reasonable grounds to believe the child is unwell or unable to attend because of any unavoidable cause), and the School and local authority have failed, following reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the child is, the School may delete the child's name from the admission register. The School will inform the local authority of such deletion no later than the time at which the child's name is deleted from the register.

The School also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

Procedure 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 is found to be missing, we will take the following steps without delay:

- Take a register to ensure that all other children are present
- If age appropriate, check with the child's friends to see if they know the missing child's whereabouts

- Check the timetable to ascertain whether the child attended the previous lesson. Speak to that class teacher
- Contact the School Office (sending a reliable child with a sealed note if no adult is available). The School Secretary will carry out the following checks:
 - The absence list
 - The music lists in the Entrance Corridor
 - The 'Children Out' list
 - The Medical Room
 - The sports fixtures and activities lists
- Inform the Head and the DSL/DDSL
- Ask all adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the missing child
- Occupy the other children in their classroom(s)
- The Head will arrange for one or more adults to search the School premises, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards etc., where a child might hide. The adults will be given specific areas to search. Particular attention will be paid to:
 - Music practice rooms
 - Lavatories
 - Learning Support rooms
 - All classrooms
 - Cloakrooms
 - Gym
 - St Mary's Hall (NB check under retractable seating)
 - Playgrounds
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit

If the child is still missing, the School will take the following steps without delay:

- The Head will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been taken. The Head will ask the parents to come to the School at once
- The Head or DSL/DDSL will notify the police
- Carry out a local area check on foot (along Inverness Street and Arlington Road)
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to attempt to catch up with them
- The DSL/DDSL will inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The School will co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- Inform the School's insurers
- If the child is injured, a report will be made under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Kentish Town Police Station non-emergency: (9)101

Emergency Services: (9)999

Procedure to be followed by staff if a child goes missing on an outing

- An immediate head count will be taken to ensure that all other children are present
- An adult will search the immediate vicinity
- If appropriate, contact the venue manager and arrange a search
- Inform the Head and the DSL/DDSL by mobile phone
- The remaining children will be taken back to School as soon as reasonably practicable
- The Head will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been taken. The Head will ask the parents to come to the venue or the School, as appropriate, at once
- Immediately contact the police
- The DSL/DDSL will inform the LSCB and the LADO
- The School will co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- Inform the School's insurers
- If the child is injured a report will be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

Procedure to be followed by staff once the child is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- 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 instigate 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 obtain written statements from all concerned
- The investigation report should be detailed, covering: time; place; numbers of staff and children; when the child was last seen; what appears to have happened; the purpose of the outing; the length of time that the child was missing and how they appear to have gone missing; lessons for the future
- Reinforce, through PSCE or other appropriate medium, the children's understanding that they should not leave the premises or separate from a group on an outing

A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a child is missing from School without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the child's explanation.

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

During the course of the investigation into any missing child incident, the School, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other children and how any media enquiries are to be dealt with.

Linked Policies

- Outings Policy
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supervision of Pupils Policy