



St. Michael's School

Missing Child Policy

SCOPE: This policy applies to the whole school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

POLICY REVIEW

Latest review	Reason for review	Reviewed by	Formally adopted by the Governors
September 2020	Cyclical review	D Webb & J Mobbs	30 th November 2020

Review cycle:	Annual
Next review:	September 2021
Related policies:	Educational visits Critical Incident Planning

Aims

- To minimise the possibility of a child being lost at school.
- To minimise the possibility of a child being lost on an educational visit.
- To outline the procedures that should be followed in the event of a child being lost at school.
- To outline the procedures that should be followed in the event of a child being lost on an educational visit.
- To follow up a child having been lost at school or on an educational visit.

Minimising the possibility of a child being lost at school

Most children are brought to school by their parents/carers. Very few arrive independently, and this minimises the possibility of them becoming lost on the way to school. These children are in Year 5 and Year 6 and have been given permission by the Headmaster, so they are known to the School.

Children enter school through the main gate or Nursery entrance where staff are in attendance or through the front door. This reduces the possibility of children arriving at school unnoticed.

All children are registered between 8.30am and 8.45am electronically via EduLink One by the end of assembly at 9.00am or immediately afterwards. Children arriving for Early Morning Care or individual lessons before school are required to sign-via the InVentry screen in the School reception area. Parents are asked to contact the school in advance if their child will be absent and they have not already given notice about this. The electronic

registers are checked by the Admin Assistant and any unexplained absences are followed up with a text message to parents to ensure that all children are accounted for.

Registers are formally taken again at the beginning of the afternoon session by 1.30pm. Form Teachers check with the Office if a child is unexpectedly not present for the afternoon session. Any children who go in and out of school during the course of the day for appointments or the like are recorded via the InVentry screen in the School reception area. If the child cannot be accounted for, the procedure outlined below, is followed.

Staff should check whether all children are present at the beginning of each lesson (this need not be done with a formal register) and if not, establish whether the child has been in school that day. If necessary, it is possible to phone the Office to check.

All children are told that they must not open any of the doors or gates that leave the premises. Staff are asked to be vigilant about any open doors and gates and ensure that they are closed immediately. If a child is waiting to be collected, they must be reminded not to open the door to the main reception area unless there is an adult waiting for them. Any child seen leaving the premises unaccompanied should be challenged.

Form Teachers must be present at the Nursery entrance, the playground or in the Glass Corridor to see their class out at the end of the school day. Staff will only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to the School by the parent. Staff will also ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised (unless written permission has been requested by the parent and granted by the Headmaster – see below).

All after school clubs and After School Care should check that the expected pupils are present at the beginning of the activity. The Office must be informed promptly that all the children are present or whether anyone is missing. Office staff must check the whereabouts of any missing child as outlined below but checking first with the Form Teacher as to whether they saw the child being collected at the end of the school day and by whom.

If parents wish children to cycle/walk to or from school unaccompanied at the end of the day they must advise the Headmaster, as outlined in the Parents' Handbook. A list is displayed on the Staff Room board and distributed to the Form Teachers. To cycle to School, the children should have passed their Bikeability test and wear a helmet.

Minimising the possibility of a child being lost on an educational visit

Please refer to the Educational Visits Policy for further details. The teacher in charge of the visit will have an accurate list of all the children on the visit. All children need to be counted frequently throughout the visit, especially when they are regrouping after a visit to the toilets or a shop etc. Depending on the nature of the visit, group leaders will also take responsibility for ensuring that their group is accounted for. Children should also be encouraged to take responsibility for each other and notice if someone is missing.

All the children and adults are given an important briefing before an educational visit. All children should be reminded about remaining with their group leader or within designated areas and what to do if they become lost.

Procedure if a child is lost at school

- Establish whether the child has been in school that day or whether they have gone on a legitimate visit and have signed out. If possible, check Home/School Link Book or Homework Diary to check if there is a message from the parent about collecting them early etc.
- Check with the Office whether they know if the child has left the premises.
- Check that the child is not in a lesson, an activity or in After School Care.
- Without causing undue alarm, establish where the child was last seen; try to verify this with an adult rather than just a child's word.
- Ensure that the rest of the children are safe whilst a thorough search is conducted of the premises, inside and out. Check everywhere, including unlikely areas, in cloakrooms, toilets, etc. – anywhere a child could hide.
- Check all available exits.
- Check relevant CCTV footage
- If all possibilities have been explored and the child cannot be accounted for, the Headmaster must be informed (or the Deputy in their absence) and the parents must be phoned. If the parents cannot account for the whereabouts of the child it will be necessary to contact the police. It will be helpful to know when and where the child was last reliably seen.

Procedure if a child is lost on an educational visit

- Establish where the child was last seen and with whom.
- Inform the Visit Leader.
- If in groups, check with all the other groups to see if the child has joined a different group.
- The deputy group leader should take charge of the remainder of the children whilst the group leader leads the search for the missing child.
- Ensure that the rest of the children are safe whilst a thorough search is conducted of the area.
- Depending on the location of the visit, the Visit Leader should inform any relevant authorities for their assistance in locating the missing child. E.g. An information point, Centre staff etc.
- The Visit Leader should inform local police or other authority e.g. coast guard.
- The Visit Leader should contact the Critical Incident Team leader at school to inform of the situation and the action taken.
- The Critical Incident Team leader will convene a meeting of the Critical Incident Team to manage the situation from school

- The Visit Leader should liaise with the Critical Incident Team leader about contacting parents and should inform the Critical Incident Team Leader immediately the child is found.

To follow up a child having been lost at school or on an educational visit

Once a child has been found it is necessary to establish how the child was lost to minimise the likelihood of the event recurring.

If the child was lost at school, the Headmaster will conduct an investigation into how this occurred and will address any matters arising from this.

If the child was lost on an educational visit the Visit Leader will need to prepare a report for the Head on the circumstances regarding the incident. The Head will address any issues arising from this and will liaise with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator regarding any amendments that may need to be made to the Educational Visits Policy.

APPROVAL

This policy was reviewed by the School's Board of Governors against the Independent Schools Standards Regulations on 30th November 2020 and was approved for full adoption and implementation.