



Policy in the Event of a Child Going Missing from School/School Activities 2023

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1 Statement

- 1.1 This policy is addressed to current or prospective parent/s or legal guardian/s or education guardian/s, governors, staff and volunteers. It is available, upon request to the School Office, to the parents and prospective parents, governors, staff and volunteers at the School.
- 1.2 The guidance and procedures in this policy have been approved by the Head, CEO and the Court of Governors of the Mill Hill School Foundation. Separate procedures apply in the event of a child protection issue (see the Safeguarding and Protecting the Welfare of Pupils Policy).
- 1.3 The safety and security of the children in our care at the Mill Hill School Foundation is paramount. Every care is taken to ensure that the children are accounted for at all times. This policy should be read in conjunction with:
 - Educational Trips and Visits Policy
 - Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Pupils Policy
 - Supervision Policy
 - Early Years Policy
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE Guidance (Sept 2023)

2 Aims

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is:
To inform Governors, staff, and parents of pupils of the procedures to be followed in circumstances where a pupil may be missing.

3 Procedures

3.1 Introduction

At St Joseph's the safety of the children in our care is of paramount importance and the following safeguards are put in place to prevent a child going missing:

- 3.1.1 A senior member of staff is on duty at the drop off point at the



front of the School each morning and in the playground

- 3.1.2 At afternoon collection parents must remain in designated areas
- 3.1.3 An absence list is published to all staff after morning registration, which also logs children who are leaving early.
- 3.1.4 Children are made aware of the boundaries within St Joseph's
- 3.1.5 Children are supervised at all times throughout the school day - before school starts, during break time, meal times, PE or Games lessons, after school clubs and during our After School Care facility.
- 3.1.6 When a child is collected from School during the school day, due to illness or a prearranged appointment, they must ALWAYS be collected from the School Office.
- 3.1.7 The Welfare Officer will always inform the office if a child goes home. A note is made in the register to record the fact that they are no longer on premises. Pupils are not allowed to leave the School premises alone during the course of the school day.
- 3.1.8 Visitors to the School are signed in upon arrival and signed out when they leave and wear an identity badge. Parents who visit the School during the School day, or after the day has ended, are requested to report to the School office.
- 3.1.9 A digital CCTV system is in operation, which covers the entrances and exits to the School premises. NOTE: CCTV covering outside reception, path to car park, turning circle and main gate into school. No CCTV in car park. Fields surrounding school are securely fenced.

3.2 Registration

- 3.2.1 All children are registered twice a day in their form group, on Pupil Asset.
- 3.2.2 The completed registers are checked by the School Office so that any absences can be followed up with parents.
- 3.2.3 If a child is late they will be required to sign in at the school reception.

3.3 Missing Child at School

- 3.3.1 If the expected number of children do not arrive at a lesson, the member of staff taking the lesson or taking the register will call the



register to check and establish which child is missing, having checked the Absence List

- 3.3.2 The member of staff will check with the School Office immediately as to whether the child has another commitment e.g. support lesson, external appointment, club etc. and inform the Deputy Head and School Office of the situation.
- 3.3.3 SMT will share this concern via a messenger app to notify other SMT members of the problem.
- 3.3.4 The Deputy Head will inform the Head.
- 3.3.5 All available staff will check grounds and rooms to ensure the child has not hidden or been locked in anywhere.
- 3.3.6 The Head / Deputy Head will contact the following people, as appropriate:
 - The Parents/Carer of the child
 - Other St Joseph's Staff
 - The police and / or any other appropriate emergency service
- 3.3.7 The Head will then inform the Director of Safeguarding, and the CEO who will inform the Chair of the Court of Governors. If the Head cannot reach the CEO, they must inform the Chair of Governors themselves.
- 3.3.8 A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's confidential record (Appendix 1).

3.4 End of Day/After School Clubs

- 3.4.1 All pupils are escorted to the collection point by a member of St Joseph's staff.
- 3.4.2 At the end of the School day or after activities, the children are only allowed to leave the School premises if their parent, or an adult approved by their parents, collects them. Or in the case of Year 6, if they have written parental permission along with agreement from the Head to travel home by themselves
- 3.4.3 Pupils are registered for after school clubs.
 - If no approved adult is present at normal pick up time, the child will be taken to after school care until a parent arrives or is contacted. The School has clear procedures in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appointed time (Appendix 2)
- 3.4.4 Children attending After School Clubs are mainly collected from the



playground

3.5 Missing Child on an Educational Visit

3.5.1 When on an Educational Visit outside the school environment staff will ensure they take precautions to ensure the safety of all pupils in accordance with the School's Educational Visits Policy and refer to the individual risk assessment prepared for that trip. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take lifesaving action in an extreme situation.

If a pupil goes missing, the priorities are to:

- assess the situation;
- safeguard the other members of the group;
- seek for and then attend to the pupil(s) involved;
- inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.

The Group Leader will usually take charge in an emergency and would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged.

All those involved in the school trip, including supervisors, pupils and their parents, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

3.6 Standard Procedures

3.6.1 On trips away from the School setting, children should be divided into groups in accordance with the Trips and Visits policy. Each adult will have details of which children they are responsible for, including names and any special requirements (dietary/medical). For trips that occur out of school hours, consent forms and contact details for Parents/Carer will be taken on the trip so that Parents/Carer can be contacted in case of an emergency.

3.6.2 The Group Leader will make sure that the children know who is



responsible for them, including the adult's name and what they are wearing. The children will also be briefed to ensure that they know not to stray and that if they want to go anywhere e.g. to a shop or to the toilet they must ask.

3.6.3 If appropriate, the children will be given labels with the setting's name and a contact number on them.

3.6.4 The children will be told what to do if they become separated from the group:

- Stay where you are - we will come back to look for you
- Look around you - can you see your group or one of the other groups?
- If it seems like a long time before we find you, whom can you talk to?
 - Someone in uniform or wearing a badge from the attraction you are visiting
 - A uniformed policeman or woman

3.6.5 A regular headcount of the group will be taken. This will depend on the children and the activity. If, on taking a headcount a child appears to be missing, the Group Leader will be contacted immediately.

3.6.6 The group should stay still and keep together. If there is another adult with the group, one of them should retrace their steps (to a pre-agreed distance, for no more than five minutes away), to look for the child.

3.6.7 If the child is still missing after 5 minutes, the member of staff of the venue will be informed and asked for their help in finding the child. He/she will be asked to contact the police on 999. Staff should be prepared to give them the following information:

- The adult's name and phone number and where the group is
- What has happened
- Name, age and address of the child
- Description of the missing child
- Time of incident

3.6.8 A member of staff will contact the School Office. The Parent/Carer of the missing child will also be informed by the Head, or the Deputy Head, giving them details of what has happened and the steps that are being taken to find their child.

3.6.9 The Group Leader will ensure the Head knows what actions have been taken. The Head will then inform the CEO who will inform the Chair of the Court of Governors. If the Head cannot reach the CEO, they must inform the Chair of Governors themselves.



- 3.6.10 The search will continue after calling the Police although staff should be guided by the Police as to the action taken to locate the child
- 3.6.11 The Group Leader involved will complete an Incident Form as fully as possible on return to school (Appendix 1).
- 3.6.12 No-one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families.
- 3.6.13 No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.

3.7 Review of Missing Child Procedures

- 3.7.1 When the situation has been resolved, the Head will review the reasons for the event happening and make any necessary amendments to School procedures.
- 3.7.2 A written record of any pupil who goes missing from School, the action taken and the reason given by the pupil for going missing will be held centrally by the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the School who is responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. These records will be reviewed annually by the Head and members of the SMT
- 3.7.3 When the situation has been resolved, the Head will review the reasons for this event happening and revise measures to ensure that it does not happen again.

4. Review

The Head will monitor the operation of these procedures, their efficiency and effectiveness, and make an annual report to the Court of Governor.

The Court of Governors will undertake an annual review of this Policy through the Court of Governors' Pastoral Sub-Committee and the Heads.

This Review: September 2023
Next Review: September 2024

This Policy was approved by the Pastoral Committee of the Court of Governors on 19th Sept 2023



Appendix A: Missing Child – Incident Form

Reporting Person Information

Name:

Date:

Position/Role:

Group Leader:

Name of Missing Child:

Date Child went Missing:

Time: am/pm.....

Please give a brief account of the incident:

(please include times you contacted the school and other agencies and the advice given)

Signature.....



Appendix B: The Procedure To Be Followed In The Event Of A Parent Failing To Collect A Child At The Appropriate Time

- If a child fails to be collected at the end of the day, a teacher should ask the Office to contact the parents/carers/emergency contact to find out who should have collected the child.
- If there is no response a message will be left
- The child will remain in the School Office of After School Club and a snack will be provided
- If after 6pm when After School Club closes and there has been no response to messages, the After School Club Manager must inform the member of SMT on duty
- If by 6.15pm there has still been no response from the parents, or the emergency contact numbers, the member of SMT on duty will contact the Deputy Head who will contact Social Services.