

Missing Pupils Policy

for the whole School including EYFS

Policy reviewed by	MWr
Date Reviewed on	September 2026
SLT Review Period	Annual
Next SLT Review Date Due	September 2027
Governor Review Period	Annual
Governing Committee	Pastoral Committee
Approved by Governors On	September 2026
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Statement of Intent

In line with our Mission, the welfare of the children in our care is paramount. In the unlikely event of a child being unaccounted for the following policy will be implemented immediately.

This policy sets out the immediate actions to be taken by staff in the event of a pupil or pupils going missing, or suspected of being missing, during the School day once they have registered as attending School.

Whilst the policy applies to the whole School, including EYFS; please note that variations to procedures may be applicable to different ages & circumstances as detailed within the policy.

This policy has been developed in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)*, *Children Missing Education (DfE, 2016)*, and the *EYFS Statutory Framework (2026)*.

Any incident involving a missing pupil will be treated as a safeguarding matter. The School will consider the individual circumstances of the child and whether there are any indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other forms of harm requiring an immediate safeguarding response.

Related Policies

Key related policies include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Critical Incident Plan;
- Incident/Accident Policy;
- Supervision of Pupils Policy.

A child may be unaccounted for under a wide range of circumstances and locations, both on and off site and suspicions raised of a “Missing Pupil” when a normal contact point is missed. This may be at a registration, in class, or during optional activities. Regardless of circumstance, the principles behind this policy are to:

- Make every effort to locate a child through questioning and searching;
- Maintain supervision of other children;
- Communicate with parents and external authorities in the event that the child is not quickly located;
- Ensure that appropriate safeguarding responses are put in place for children who go missing from Edge Grove.

Staff Actions

1. Missing Pupil(s) on or around the School Site

The principles apply to all ages – there will be some procedural variations for pupils in the Junior Department and these are noted below.

If a pupil cannot be accounted for on or around the School site, is not present at a registration (not initial registration at the start of the day where absence is handled by a separate procedure) or a report of a suspected missing person is received at any other time of the day, the staff member who suspects a child is missing should:

- If taking a class (or other activity) without a colleague being present, contact the Front Office by classroom phone or send a pupil to the Front Office or Junior Department Office/Staff Room or, depending on circumstances, to find a colleague to request urgent assistance;
- If two or more staff members are present, then one should immediately raise the alarm as above whilst the other properly supervises the remaining pupils;
- The Front Office will
 - a) Check the registration records on SchoolBase;
 - b) Check the absentee and School trip information;
 - c) Check the signing out book to see if a parent/guardian has been in to collect the pupil;
 - d) Contact the Healthcare Assistant.
- The Head of the Junior Department will ask staff regarding the pupil's whereabouts and instigate an immediate search of the building;
- At this stage, the case should be escalated immediately to the Head, DSL or, in their absence, a Deputy DSL - who will assume the responsibilities below as 'Person In Charge' (PiC).
- For children in the EYFS, if a pupil cannot be located promptly, the police and parents will be contacted immediately, in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework.
- The Person in Charge (PiC) will ensure that:
 - 1. Staff teaching/supervising that pupil prior to the disappearance are asked whether they have seen the missing pupil;
 - 2. Fellow pupils are asked whether they have seen the missing pupil;
 - 3. Levels of supervision and security for all other children are maintained (see 'Need for Calm during an Incident' below).
 - 4. The School intercom system will also be used to alert all staff.
- Staff will conduct a search of the entire School site including such areas as the changing rooms, toilets and outbuildings. Staff will use School radios wherever possible to keep in contact whilst continuing the search.
- Depending on the time of day, the PiC may sound the fire alarm to ensure that a whole-School roll call is taken.
- If the pupil is still missing after all of these checks, the PiC will ensure that a decision is made to notify parents/guardians and the police.
- Once the police are informed, all staff will be asked to remain on site and await further instructions.
- When the search is stood down, or the child returns, all personnel on alert will be informed of the conclusion of the incident.
- Once the child has been located, the child will be given reassurance and caring support and returned to his/her classroom.
- Once the situation has been resolved an internal investigation will take place to examine how the incident occurred and to put immediate measures into place to ensure that it does not happen again.
- The DSL will consider whether the circumstances indicate any wider safeguarding concerns, whether Early Help or Family Help may be appropriate, whether referral to Children's Services or the Police is required, and whether the incident should be shared with the Local Authority as part of Children Missing Education procedures.

- The incident will be recorded in writing on an incident report form which will be recorded contemporaneously on CPOMS, including actions taken, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions.

2. Missing Pupil(s) on a School Trip

If a child is discovered to be missing on a school trip:

- The teacher in charge of the trip will make all members of staff/adults on the trip aware of the missing child. Remaining children will be told to stay with their group and further head counts carried out.
- The teacher in charge will ensure, in the meantime, that levels of supervision and security for all other children are maintained (see 'Need for Calm during an Incident' below).
- If applicable, the teacher in charge will alert the local management at the trip's venue to the situation and encourage their staff to take part in the search.
- All available staff and helpers will make a thorough search of the location and its immediate surroundings.
- If the pupil is still missing after all of these checks have been carried out, the Head, Senior Deputy Head or next most senior member of staff at the school will be informed. The Educational Visits Coordinator will also be informed by the staff at school.
- The teacher in charge of the trip or the venue management should then contact the Police for help and advice. The remaining members of the trip party should remain at the venue until such time as permission to leave is received from the police.
- The Head (or another member of the SLT) will call the pupil's parents to inform them of the situation and the action taken.
- Once the child has been located the child will be given reassurance and caring support and returned to join their fellow pupils.
- When the child returns, it is also important that all personnel on alert are informed of the conclusion of the incident.
- The Educational Visits Coordinator will be involved in the post-incident review where appropriate to identify any learning for future visits.

Need For Calm during an Incident

In carrying out all of the above checks, it is very important that pupils are kept calm and that any sense of desperation or excitement is kept to an absolute minimum wherever possible.

Follow-Up Action

Appropriate safeguarding responses will be put in place for any child who goes missing from School. These will be determined on a case by case basis but may include referral to Children's Services under the School's safeguarding policy and procedures. In particular, the School will inform the local authority of any pupil 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.

The School will also work with the Local Authority as part of its Children Missing Education (CME) procedures, ensuring safeguarding responses are proportionate and effective.

Consideration will be given to inviting the parents/guardians to help counsel the child and give any relevant background information. The child may also need support from an appropriate member of staff.

Members of staff responsible for dealing with an incident under the terms of this policy will complete an Incident Report at the earliest opportunity, in accordance with the school's Incident/Accident Policy.

If disciplinary action is considered appropriate, that process will be managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy.

The School will consider whether the incident highlights any wider issues relating to supervision, site security, pupil wellbeing or individual safeguarding needs, and will update risk assessments where appropriate to reduce the risk of recurrence.

Marion Wright
Senior Deputy Head - Pastoral
August 2026