

Safeguarding: Lost or Missing Children Policy



HUDDERSFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

September 2017

KEY FACTS

- **This policy enables schools to deal promptly and professionally in a “worst case scenario” of a lost or missing child.**
- **It emphasises the responsibility for attendance, registers and keeping children safe.**
- **It requires schools to demonstrate collection and handover arrangements specific to the school.**
- **Procedures to follow should a child go missing or become lost are given.**
- **A SIRF (Serious Incident Report Form) must be completed.**
- **With regards to early years children who become lost or missing, Ofsted and Local Authority Children’s Services must be informed.**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 It is essential that Cognita as the Proprietor ensures that positive steps are taken to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The safety and welfare of all of our children at school is our paramount responsibility.

1.2 The procedures outlined in this policy will be followed alongside the Child Protection Procedures, Safeguarding Policy, Whistle-Blowing Policy and the Staff Disciplinary Procedure and any other relevant School policy or procedure.

1.3 All staff and volunteers understand what to do in the unlikely event that a child were to be lost or missing either from the school building, site or during an off-site visit.

1.4 It is the Headteacher’s responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, what is expected, the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed annually, or earlier if following an incident.

1.5 It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and to act at all times accordingly.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 This policy has been adopted in respect of any child who goes missing from our premises or wanders from our care.

2.2 This policy will be used in respect of all cases in which it is found that a child is lost or missing. It should be read in conjunction with our policy and procedure for Early Years - Non Collection of Children Policy and Safeguarding Procedures for Dealing with Allegations against Teachers and other Staff.

2.3 At all times we will treat very seriously any evidence which shows that any member of staff has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for definition of harm).

2.4 Any consequent disciplinary matter against staff will follow our separate disciplinary procedure, in consultation with our Human Resources Business Partner.

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2.5 Due consideration will be given by the Headteacher as to whether referral may be made to children's social care. For example, where the child is in need of protection or in need of services.

2.6 Staff are responsible for completing the attendance registers, including at after school clubs and activities. The register must be completed accurately and promptly.

3.0 Steps to Keep Children Safe

3.1 Our procedures will always be managed with common sense and sound judgment. If a member of staff takes a child out of school they are responsible for informing the parents and the school office.

3.2 At all times, parents can be assured that all pupils remain within the safe environment of our school/setting, including attendance at any outings. We ensure that proper precautions are taken to prevent pupils going missing.

3.3 If any pupil is found to leave the premises without permission of the school and parents, they will be deemed to have broken the school's code of conduct and the application of appropriate and proportionate sanctions will be considered by the Headteacher accordingly.

3.4 It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their child.

3.5 It is the responsibility of the Assistant Director of Education, on behalf of Cognita, to ensure that they are aware of the school's procedures and to provide challenge and support in the review of this policy.

3.6 Particular care will be taken to register all pupils in each and every club or out-of/after school activity. As a minimum, any unexplained absences will be reported immediately to the school office and to the Headteacher by the responsible teacher so that swift and immediate action will be taken. In the absence of the Headteacher from the premises at the time, the designated member of the Senior Leadership Team will always assume such responsibility. In the case of Learning Beyond the Classroom (school trips and visits) the Group Leader will assume such responsibility, as agreed with the Educational Visits Coordinator on behalf of the Headteacher.

3.7 No pupil leaves our supervision and care without an appropriate adult. In order to achieve this aim, we operate the following procedures at our school:

- Nursery:
 - Parents picking up children up from the Nursery at any time must collect them from the Nursery and sign them out with a member of staff.
- Junior School:
 - Parents picking up children in the Junior School during the day must collect them from the Junior School Office and sign them out.
 - Parents picking up children in the Junior School at the end of the school day must collect them from the playground. Pupils will only be released when staff see an appropriate named adult for each pupil. Further information can be found in our Supervision Policy.
- Senior School
 - Parents picking up children in the Senior School during the day must collect them from the Senior School Office and sign them out.

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- Parents picking up children in the Senior School at the end of the school day should collect them from the front of the Senior School buildings. Pupils can be given permission by parents to make their own way home. Further information can be found in our Supervision Policy.
- Sixth Form
 - Pupils in the Year 13 are allowed to leave the site during the day but the school must have received written permission from their parents and pupils must sign in and out at the Senior School Office as appropriate.
 - Pupils in the Sixth Form make their own way home but if they are being collected, then parents should pick up from in front of the Senior School buildings.
- After School, all pupils up to and including Year 11 are supervised in extra-curricular activities, the Homework Rooms or After School Care until collected by an adult.
- CCTV operates on all entrance/exit doors.
- Key pads operate on all entrance doors.

3.8 Permission from parents is obtained generically at the beginning of each academic year for educational visits, and once again specifically for any other trip considered to be high risk.

3.9 Mobile phones are taken by staff on every school visit and the contact numbers left at the school office. Pupils are instructed to contact the responsible teacher in the event of any unexpected incident or undesirable behaviour in the first instance before contacting their parents directly. This is because it is the school's responsibility to safeguard the pupil's health, safety and well-being while they are in the care of the school staff.

3.10 While staff are supervising children off site, the Safeguarding Educational Visits policy will apply at all times.

3.11 After school clubs will only take place when a completed register of pupils is taken, the situation has been risk managed, and pupils are dismissed in line with our Supervision Policy.

3.12 Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity in accordance with the School's practice in maintaining confidentiality and our obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

4.0 Procedures Following a Child reported Missing or Lost

4.1 If a teacher suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity, they will contact the school office immediately. Office staff will inform SLT.

4.2 All remaining pupils will be kept safe in a secure place with adequate adult supervision, including assistance from other school staff if necessary.

4.3 A full headcount will be taken by the teacher-in-charge and matched against the register; usually the class teacher or nominated person.

4.4 A member of staff will make a thorough search of the building and/or site and immediate surroundings including storage areas and toilets. A thorough check of all exits will be made if the lost/missing child is in

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Early Years, to ensure all gates/doors are locked and there is no other way a pupil could have left the site. If something is discovered, the SLT member must be immediately informed.

4.5 The following lists held in the school office will be checked: attendance register, off site records, and other school clubs.

4.6 If the pupil is not found after this initial search, and/or approximately 10 minutes from the initial report of them deemed missing, the school office will inform the Headteacher and Assistant Director of Education (Cognita Head Office), including where a pupil is found wandering or at risk of being lost or missing. The Designated Safeguarding Lead in school will be notified immediately and they will ensure that the parents have been informed by the responsible teacher. The Headteacher, or SLT member in the absence of the Headteacher, will decide at which point the police will be called.

4.7 All relevant emergency contacts for pupils will be used to inform parent/carer(s) accordingly. However, until such time as the pupil is safely returned to the care of the parent/carer(s), the Headteacher remains responsible for the care and welfare of the pupil, including off site.

4.8 As soon as is practicable, the Serious Incident Reporting Form will be completed by the Headteacher and sent to Cognita. The Group Leader (off site) or responsible form/class teacher will make a record to provide full details of the incident in the school's incident report book. A note will also be made on the school's attendance register accordingly.

4.9 Near misses will also be recorded and reported to the Assistant Director of Education and full details provided in writing to the school's governance panel or meeting. This Report must outline the steps being taken to avoid any repeat incident, communication with parents and actions to be taken following the risk assessment process to mitigate future risk. Any relevant policy and procedure must be reviewed and submitted to UK compliance committee for approval, via Assistant Director of Education.

4.10 All incidents will be reported to Greg Warwick/Nadia Burn, Head Office, for the attention of our insurers, as appropriate. Staff must try to remember and write down a description of what the pupil was wearing and any distinguishing features.

4.11 If a missing pupil has any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted to be disclosed to the police or other agencies.

4.12 A thorough search of the premises should continue until the pupil is found.

5.0 Following the Incident

5.1 It is in everyone's interest to resolve what has happened as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation.

5.2 The written findings of the investigation must be reported by the Headteacher to Cognita Head Office within 48 hours of the occurrence of the incident.

5.3 All relevant policies and procedures will immediately be reviewed and revisions presented formally to the Assistant Director of Education for approval within 5 working days.

5.4 The parent/carer(s) will be involved at all times.

5.5 Following receipt of our investigative report, the Director of Education will report his conclusions as to

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the next steps to further safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the care of the school to the UK compliance committee.

5.6 Where the parent/carer(s) remain concerned despite reassurances informally by the school, they may choose to use the school's complaints procedure accordingly.

6.0 Procedures Following a Child Missing From an Off Site Location (see also Critical Incident Management Plan)

6.1 The Group Leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. Where possible, at least two adults must stay with them.

6.3 One or more adults should immediately start to search for the child.

6.4 If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the Group Leader must contact police by telephoning 999/112.

6.5 The Group Leader should alert the school office, or in the case of out-of-hours, the nominated school contact for the trip, that the police have been contacted. The school will make arrangements to notify the parents accordingly. The remaining procedures outlined above in sections 4 and 5 will then be followed.

7.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 This policy and our procedures will be reviewed annually, and more frequently following a near miss or missing child incident.

7.2 If parents are not happy with the way that they or their child is treated by any member of staff they should consider raising their concern with the Headteacher. They may find it helpful to refer to the school's formal complaints procedure for guidance. This procedure emphasises the importance of resolving any concerns informally and at the earliest possible opportunity. We expect our parents to share any concerns informally with us so that we can continuously improve the quality of education at our school.

8.0 Other Associated Policies and Procedures

Special Educational Needs Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

Safeguarding: Procedure for handling Allegations of Abuse against Teachers & Other Staff

Complaints Procedure

Safeguarding Educational Visits Policy

Accidents & Incidents Recording & Reporting

Health & Safety Policy

Equality & Diversity Policy

Data Protection Policy

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Exclusion Policy

Safeguarding: Pupil Supervision Policy

Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Policy

Extra-Curricular and Enrichment Policy

Attendance Policy

Critical Incident Management Plan

Ownership and consultation	
Document sponsor (role)	Director of Education
Document author (name)	Rosalind Vahey – Head of Education Compliance
Specialist Legal Advice	n/a
Consultation	n/a

Compliance	
Compliance with	ISSR 2014, Keeping Children Safe in Education, The Education (Pupil registration)(England) Regulations 2006c. Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences RIDDOR 2013, Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014, Incident Reporting in Schools HSE 10/13.

Audience	
Audience	Heads, DSLs

Document application	
England	Yes
Wales	Yes
Spain	Yes

Version control	
Implementation date	September 2016
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Related documentation	
Related documentation	Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedure, Supervision Policy, Health and Safety Policy, After School Clubs and Activities, First Aid Policy, Learning Outside the Classroom, Special Educational Needs, Data Protection, Complaints Procedure, SIRF Form and Guidance, Critical Incident Management Plan, School Compliance Committee terms of reference, Safeguarding Governance Committee terms of reference