

|  |
| --- |
| **Missing Child and Non-Collection Policy & Procedures** |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Review Date** | **Headmistress** | **Proprietor** |
| **July 2019** | **July 2022** | **Zoe Sylvester** | **Brian Berkery** |

This policy should be read alongside all the Broadhurst School’s policies and procedures especially with regard to the EYFS and to the overarching Safeguarding and Staff Behaviour Code of Conduct Policy and Procedures.

**Aims**

Every effort is made to ensure the safety of pupils whilst they are in the school’s care. We take all necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of our children. The safety and security of the children in our care at our School are paramount. Every care is taken to ensure that the children are accounted for at all times when they are in our care. The School is responsible for minimising the risk of missing children and acting appropriately in the event that a child is identified as missing. This policy also sets out our procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

**Legislation**

* section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (added by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
* Education Act 1996 (section 7, 8, 14 and 19)
* Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 4 and 38)
* Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
* Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2016

Although the above legislation focuses on children of compulsory school age \*, we follow the guidelines and statutory regulations to ensure all the children who attend our school do not go missing.

\**Children are of "compulsory school age" on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday. Children becoming 5 years old between 1st January and 31st March are of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term after 1st April.*

**PREVENTION- Risk Mitigation Procedures**

**Registration**

Our children are registered by their class teacher signing them in on a school management information system. After the morning session children have left, the register is taken again as children arrive for the afternoon session. Registers for previous years are stored safely. To prevent a child going missing on the third day of absence, if we have not been notified of any reason for the absence, this will be followed up and parents phoned.

**Trips**

When there is a trip off the school premises, it is the responsibility of the staff taking the trip to ensure that a register is taken and regular head counts made; this will depend on the nature of the trip, the mode of transport used and the location of the trip (see Educational Visits and Risk Assessments Policy).

**Out of classroom**

The children are supervised at all times, whether in the classrooms, during break time, lunch time or in the garden where due regard to the Supervision of Children Policy is made to ensure appropriate levels of supervision at all times.

**Collection**

At the end of the school day or session, the children are only allowed to leave the school premises if their parent or an adult approved by their parents has come to collect them. All parents must sign in the going home book to give permission for someone else to collect their child. These are kept outside the classrooms so they are accessible to all staff that may dismiss the children.

The school doors are never open during the day except at the beginning and end of sessions when both doors are supervised, at all times, by a member of staff.

If no approved adult is there at normal pick up time, the child will be supervised whilst enquiries are made and until they are collected. (See procedure to be followed if a parent fails to collect a child in Non-Collection below).

When a child is collected from school during the school day, whether due to illness or a prearranged appointment, they must always be collected from the child’s classroom so that a note may be made to amend the register to record the fact that they are no longer on the premises and the office is notified.

Pupils are not allowed to leave the School premises by themselves. Pupils are instructed and aware of the boundaries of where they can and cannot go at all times of the day. It is the responsibility of the member of staff on duty, whether teaching or supervising play, to ensure that the children remain safe. Any visitors to the school must sign in at the main door, when arriving and leaving (see Visitor and Site Security Policy).

**Missing Child Procedure**

In the unlikely event that a child has gone missing the following procedures will be followed:

* one member of staff should carry out a head count to check and establish which child is missing
* check with the School office immediately to see whether the child has another commitment e.g. school assessment, external appointment etc and inform the Headmistress, or another senior member of staff in her absence, of the situation
* the senior member of staff present will ensure all staff maintain the safety and well‐being of other children present
* information with regards to the child’s last sighting and potential whereabouts to be gathered
* a systematic search of the school building will be co-ordinated by a senior member leading the operation
* all available staff will check grounds and rooms to ensure the child has not hidden or been locked in anywhere within the boundary, in particular toilets, cupboards or other areas of a size capable of hiding a child. This search should take no longer than 10 minutes
* enquiries may be made of any other adults in the vicinity
* if the child is not found after approximately 10 minutes, the Headmistress or senior member of staff will endeavour to contact the parents of the missing child by telephone. If the parents can be contacted,
* they should be asked for any information of anywhere else their child may make his/her way to e.g. relatives, grandparents, and friends. They should be advised that the school will be contacting the emergency services and that a member of staff is searching the route that the child may have taken home
* if after approximately 15 minutes since the child went missing, the parents have not been contacted, the Headmistress or Senior member of staff will contact the police
* once police arrive all relevant information about the child will be given. The police will then take over the search
* staff must try to remember and write down any descriptions of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features. If the missing child has any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted, to be disclosed to police or other agencies
* this phone call should occur no less than 15 minutes after the child’s absence was first noted
* 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

**Missing on a trip**

When on excursions off the school premises, staff implement strategies to maximize the safety and security of the children in accordance with the school's Educational Trips policy. Full risk assessments are carried out and the trip leader carries a list of all the children’s names.

The number of children is checked regularly through frequent head counts. Permission from parents/ guardians is obtained for each trip. Mobile telephones are taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers are left at school on the trip information form.

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises:

* the Group Leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils
* one or more adults should immediately start searching for the child
* the Group Leader should contact school to alert them
* if the child is not found within around 10 minutes, the Group Leader must contact police by telephoning 999
* the Group Leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and the School will make arrangements to notify parents, after which the procedures described above will be followed
* the Group Leader will remain with the police to comfort the child when found and maintain regular contact with the school
* the remaining staff will return to the school with the rest of the children, if off-site

**When the Child is Found**

* two members of staff will care for and talk with the child, bearing in mind that he/she may be unaware of having done anything wrong or, alternatively, may also have been afraid and distressed and may now be in need of comfort
* other adults present will take the opportunity to speak to the remaining children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises and why

**After the Incident**

* the Headmistress will sensitively discuss with the child’s parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child
* if appropriate, a short meeting will be held at the end of the session/start of the following session or a note sent home with the children to give parents brief, accurate information about the incident, as soon as possible, for reassurance
* liability should not be discussed until the incident has been fully investigated
* staff and parents should be asked to refer any enquiries they have or any enquiries from the media, about the incident, to the Headmistress

**The Investigation**

* the key person/staff will write an incident report detailing:

- the date and time of the report

- what staff/children were doing in the group/outing

- when the child was last seen in the group/outing

- what has taken place in the group/outing since then

- the time it is estimated that the child went missing

* a conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened
* if the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff will co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Social Care and OFSTED may be involved if it seems likely that there is a safeguarding children issue to address
* the incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and is recorded in the accident/incident book; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution
* OFSTED is informed
* School’s insurance company is informed

**We will maintain regular updates of contact details for parents/carers, especially mobile phone numbers in the case of emergency.**

**CHILDREN AT PARTICULAR RISK OF MISSING EDUCATION DUE TO OTHER FACTORS**

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, so it is vital that the School and local authorities make judgements on a case-by-case basis. Although not exhaustive, the list below presents some of the circumstances that the School and local authorities should consider when establishing their CME policies and procedures:

**Pupils at risk of harm/neglect–**Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected, schools should follow local child protection procedures. However, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to children’s social care (and the police if appropriate). Local authority officers responsible for CME should check that a referral has been made and, if not, they should alert children’s social care. The Department’s statutory guidance *Keeping children safe in education* provides further advice for schools and colleges on safeguarding children.

**Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families**–Research has shown that many children from these families can become disengaged from education. Although many are settled, some GRT families move regularly and their children can be at increased risk of missing education. Local authority Traveller Education Support Services (TESS), where these exist, or the named CME officer within the local authority, can advise schools on the best strategies for ensuring the minimum disruption to GRT pupils’ education, for example dual registration with other schools or the provision of electronic or distance learning packages where these are available.

**Children of Service Personnel** – Families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently – both in the UK and overseas and often at short notice. Schools and local authorities should contact the MoD Children’s Education Advisory Service (CEAS) on 01980 618244 for advice on making arrangements to ensure continuity of education for those children when the family moves.

**Missing children and runaways–**Children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as missing education. Further sources of information about missing children are listed at the back of this document.

**Children who cease to attend a school** – there are many reasons why a child stops attending a School. It could be because the parent chooses to home educate their child. However, where the reason for a child who has stopped attending a school is not known, the School and local authority should investigate the case and satisfy itself that the child is receiving suitable education.

**Children of new migrant families–** Children of new migrant families may not have yet settled into a fixed address or may have arrived into a local authority area without the authority becoming aware, therefore increasing the risk of the child missing education**.**

**See Admissions and Registration Policy for guidelines.**

**PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH A NON-COLLECTED CHILD**

**The following procedures are to be used in circumstances where:**

* pupils are collected late
* pupils are not collected
* it is not safe for pupils to go home unaccompanied
* there are concerns about supervision before and after school (childcare by a sibling/pupil walking to or from school alone)
* there are concerns about a parent/carer’s ability to offer safe care, because they are under the influence of alcohol/drugs or there are concerns about their mental health state

In the event of a child not being collected from the School at the end of their session, the following procedures will be followed:

If the child should only be in school for the duration of their school day and has not been collected by their appointed time, either at lunchtime of end of afternoon session:

1. The parents must inform the School of the names of any adults that may collect their child from the School.
2. If there is a change to the normal collection, then our parents must inform the school office or class teacher. The class message book is also available every day for parents to write in, informing staff of any changes. If an older sibling or other relative is asked to collect a pupil, they must be 16 years or over of age.
3. If an adult who is not due to arrives to collect a pupil, the parents must be called before allowing the pupil to leave the School premises.
4. A member of staff will contact the School office to see if the school has been informed of any reason for the delay in collecting the child.
5. The School secretary/office member of staff will use contact details of the child to locate parents.
6. In the event that a pupil is not collected from the setting by an authorised adult and no contact has been established with the parents/carers within thirty to forty-five minutes of the usual collection time, the School will follow their child protection procedures, i.e. Police will be informed and a safeguarding referral to the children’s services will be made.
7. Continuing efforts will be made to contact the parents or a carer using the contact details for the child or any other contacts given by the parent.
8. The child will remain in the care of a member of staff at all times.
9. The School secretary will keep a record of pupils who have been collected late and parents will be written to and re-informed of the actions that could be taken. If a pupil is persistently collected late, a meeting with the Headmistress will be called. If the lateness persists with no plausible reason, the matter maybe dealt with as a child protection issue of neglect.
10. The designated safeguarding lead or deputy will keep detailed, timed records of the action taken and calls made and under no circumstances should staff go to look for the parent/carer or take the pupil home with them.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Headmistress:** |  | **Date:** |  |
| **Proprietor:** |  | **Date:** |  |