



# St Hilda's School

HARPENDEN

*Caring, Curious & Confident*

## MISSING CHILD POLICY

Name of Policy	Missing Child Policy
Reviewed by	Dan Sayers
Review Date	9 February 2024
Next Review Date	February 2025
To be Read in Conjunction with	Pupil Supervision Policy Educational Visits Policy Attendance and Admissions Register Policy
Legislation Referenced	

Unless otherwise stated, all Policies of St Hilda's School apply to the school in its entirety. This comprises all staff and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the Junior School (Key Stage 1) and the Senior School (Key Stage 2).

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all pupils at St Hilda's School is of paramount concern. Every adult who works at the school has been advised that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. Staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that they are in the school's care.

The Missing Child policy details the actions to be taken if:

- A child goes missing from the School.
- A child goes missing on a School outing.
- A child does not attend School without authorisation.
- A child is absent from School due to ill health.

**If there is any cause to believe that the child may have been harmed or is at risk of being harmed, has a history of going missing or is known to be at risk of exploitation, then the police must be called immediately on 999**

## 2. ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL

The school's procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child is found to be missing, the following actions are required:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children are present
- Inform the Headteacher or a member of SMT
- Ask all adults and children if they are able to recall when they last saw the child
- Ensure the safe supervision of the remaining children
- Arrange for as many staff as possible to search throughout the school for the missing child
- Check all doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit

If the child remains missing, the following steps should be taken:

- The Headteacher should notify the Police after 15 minutes
- The Headteacher should contact the child's parents to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion, requesting that they come to the school immediately
- The Headteacher should instigate a second search of the school premises and grounds
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff should set out on foot in that direction
- The Headteacher should inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board
- The school should cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
- The Headteacher should inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors
- The Insurers should be informed

- If the child is injured when found, a report should be made under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) to the HSE (Health & Safety Executive)

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child is found should be made for the incident report. A full debrief and discussion will take place as soon as is practical after the event. If appropriate, procedures will be adjusted to take account of lessons learned.

### **3. ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING**

- An immediate head count should be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children are present.
- An adult should search the immediate vicinity.
- Supervision of the remaining children should be ensured. If appropriate, back up assistance should be requested.
- The Headteacher should be contacted immediately by mobile phone.
- The Headteacher should contact the child's parents to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion, requesting that they come to the school immediately.
- Contact venue manager to arrange search, in liaison with Headteacher.
- The Police should be contacted by the Headteacher (or Deputy Head if unavailable) after 15 minutes.
- The Headteacher should inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board
- The school should cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
- The Headteacher should inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors
- The Insurers should be informed.
- If the child is injured when found, a report should be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child is found should be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary. A full debrief and discussion will take place as soon as is practicable after the event, and findings will be shared with all staff.

### **4. ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND**

- Take care of the child and comfort as necessary
- The Headteacher should speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Headteacher will undertake a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/Local Children Safeguarding Board)
- Media queries should be referred to the Headteacher
- The investigation should involve all concerned and include written statements
- The report should be detailed, to include: time, place, names and numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the

purpose of the outing, the length of time that the child was missing and how they appeared to have gone missing, and any lessons for the future

- When appropriate, all children should be addressed as to the dangers of leaving the premises or separating from a group on an outing

## **5. PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD DOES NOT ATTEND SCHOOL WITHOUT AUTHORISATION**

If a child is absent from school without notice, attempts to contact parents by 9.30am will be made by telephone and by email. If no response is received from either parent or guardian (at least two emergency contacts are kept on file for each pupil), the responsible adult will be contacted. If no contact is made within a reasonable time, a home visit may be instigated by the Headteacher.

The School recognises its legal duty to report certain attendance issues to the local authority – specifically, ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence), failure to attend regularly, and deletion from the school register when the next school is not known. In this last case, the school is required to report the circumstances as soon as possible to the local authority in which the pupil lives. Please refer to the Attendance and Admissions Register Policy.

## **6. WHERE A CHILD IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL DUE TO ILL HEALTH**

If a child is absent for a significant period due to ill health, and the parent requests it, the School will provide appropriate school work via email and worksheets.

## **7. FURTHER INFORMATION**

### **7.1 Pupil Supervision Policy**

The Pupil Supervision Policy describes:

- The arrangements for handing over children to the care of their parents at the end of the day
- The qualifications of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in school
- The arrangements for registering the children in both the morning and afternoon
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building
- The supervision of the playground

### **7.2 Educational Visits Policy**

The School's Educational Visits Policy describes supervisory arrangements for children participating in visits. All new staff receive a thorough induction regarding effective supervision of all children.