



Missing Child Procedure

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
November 2020	November 2021	Rachel Kruger & Amber Collingwood	N/a

Introduction

Children’s safety is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

We will also ensure that a high level of care is maintained to other children while the following procedures are followed;

Child going missing in the setting

Stage One - Search systematically

- One member of staff to gather class and call the register to confirm that one named child is missing.
- All available staff to immediately check toilets, shared areas, rooms and playground to ensure the child is not hiding or locked in anywhere.
- Use the school walkie-talkie system to ask if anybody can see the named child.
- One member of staff to immediately inform the school office and the Principal or member of staff in charge and check whether the child has been signed out for an external appointment or has an internal appointment with a visiting professional (School Nurse/Speech Therapist etc.) The online register will need checking by office staff as soon as a missing child has been reported.
- A member of SLT will talk to staff to establish the time of the child’s last sighting, the clothes that the child was wearing, and the mental state of the child (happy, upset etc.).
- Staff will ensure that all other pupils are kept safe and closely supervised throughout the incident should it be during the school day. Calm should be kept in the event of a child reported missing at the end of the school day.

Stage Two

- After stage one is completed without resolution (no more than 10 minutes), school office staff will contact the police and parents/carers with parental responsibility.
- A member of staff on site will, at this point, get the missing young person's information sheet, which will include any information regarding health diagnosis, communication needs, places of interest and safety awareness/risk management.
- A senior member of staff on site will then instruct the staff involved in the search, to extend the search to the immediate area off site should the young person not be found on site, which will involve the use of some vehicles. The senior will give staff members specified areas to search to ensure all areas are covered. Staff involved in the search should keep the senior on site informed using mobile phones of where they have searched and the results. It is essential that while a search of the site and immediate area is carried out that all other radio traffic ceases except for emergency / assistance calls to ensure that information is relayed clearly.



Stage Three

- The Principal should communicate the incident to the appropriate Local Authority Office and the Chair of Governors.
- 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. The system the school uses is CPOMS (Child protection online monitoring service) and all staff should input any relevant information; including conversations with parents, carers, police, the Local Authority and any other person they feel has contributed to the collection of evidence.
- The Senior Leadership Team should conduct an internal investigation to establish how the situation occurred, how effective the response was and whether action could be taken to ensure it does not happen again. This information should also be collected in writing and onto the CPOMS system.

Child going missing on an outing

As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the staff members on the outing ask children to stand with their designated member of staff and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone missing.

- One staff member searches the immediate vicinity, but does not search beyond that.
- Senior staff member on the outing contacts the police and reports that a child is missing.
- The Principal is contacted immediately and the incident is recorded.
- Parents are contacted.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting as soon as possible.
- According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- All staff keep calm to avoid other children becoming anxious or worried.

Dealing with the media

Distressed parents/carers may contact the local press, or reporters may hear about the incident if the police are involved. All enquiries will be referred to the Central Bedfordshire Council Press Office on 0300 300 8701 or communications@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

When the child is found

We recognise that during the time a child is missing, however briefly, all involved, parents/carers and others suffer great fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when the child is found. We will accept that it is important to remember:

- That the child also might have been afraid and distressed and might now be in need of comfort.
- Remain calm, reassure the child and acknowledge it is not the child's fault.
- Ensure the child is not hurt.
- That the incident provides a good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises, and why.

After the incident

- We will review our current procedure.
- We will evaluate processes and make necessary adjustments to ensure future effectiveness.