Ditcham Park School

Missing Child Procedure

Approved by:	**Council**
Last reviewed on:	**November 2024**
Next review due by:	**November 2025**

Contents

POLICY STATEMENT 2

PROCEDURES 2

Checks on absence 2

Child going missing on the premises during the school day 3

Child going missing on an outing 3

Post incident follow up / The investigation 4

Policy Statement

This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS.

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.

Procedures

Checks on absence

- Pupils are formally registered in the morning and at the start of afternoon school (as detailed in the school's Supervision Policy)
- Office staff check the registers held on our management information system, and will follow up, by telephone, any absence which has not been accompanied by an absence form or email. Parents are expected to provide a reason for absence and inform the school on each day of absence.
- Pupils who fall ill during the day must report to the school reception desk. If the child goes to the first aid room or is sent home, the office staff will then inform teachers involved and will sign the pupil out if appropriate.
- If a pupil is collected by their parents during the day for an appointment, they must sign out
- Lesson-by-lesson attendance is monitored during the school day
- A list of pupils who are absent on a school trip or off-site for rehearsal etc. will be given to the school office before departure.

Child going missing on the premises during the school day

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, key staff (school office and SLT) will be notified via email.
- If the whereabouts of a pupil cannot be quickly established, the office will send out a whole-school email
- Senior Leadership Team, Estate Staff and other available staff will carry out a thorough search of the buildings and grounds. This will be coordinated by the school office and all staff searching will carry walkie-talkies.
- The estates team will conduct a search of both driveways.
- If following a thorough search of school grounds and immediate locality the child is not found, the child's parents and the police will be called and told the child as missing. If it is suspected that the child may have been abducted, the police are informed of this. Photo of child provided to police
- Activate critical incident response which may include a wider search involving local community
- The Headmaster /DSL contacts our Chairman of Governors and reports the incident.
- DSL logs incident with Childrens' Services.

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 adult and a register will be taken to ensure that no other child are missing.
- If the child has a mobile phone, a member of staff will attempt to contact them on that.
- One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that, staying in contact with the main group via a mobile phone.
- A senior staff member on the outing contacts the police and reports that child as missing.
- The Headmaster will be contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.
- The Headmaster will contacts the parent(s).
- Staff on the trip will take the remaining children to a place of safety as soon as possible.
- According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff where applicable, will remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing will be given to the police.

- An investigation is carried out and recorded by the DSL.

Post-incident follow up / Investigation

- The ISI are informed as soon as practicable and will be kept up to date with the investigation.
- The DSL carries out a full investigation, taking written statements from all staff and volunteers who were present.

  Each member of staff present writes an incident report detailing:

  - the date and time of the incident
  - where the child went missing from e.g. the school or an outing venue
  - which staff/children were in the premises/on the outing
  - when the child was last seen in the premises/or on the outing, including the time it is estimated that the child went missing
  - what has taken place in the premises or on the outing since the child went missing

- a conclusion is drawn as to what events led to the child going missing
- the Headmaster will speak with the parent(s) and will explain the process of the investigation
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff will be required to co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff and parents. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken ISI, ISA and the DfE are advised.
- The bursar will be informed; he/she will send information to the school's insurance provider.
- A submission of a Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission will be made by the Headmaster where appropriate.

.

- Amendments and modifications will be made to the procedure if necessary, and training and counselling will be provided to staff as required.
- Staff will be asked not to speak to the press unless given permission by the Headmaster.