

Talbot House Preparatory School

Missing and Uncollected Child Policy

Missing Child and arrangements for children who are not collected Policy

The safety of our pupils is our priority whilst they are in our care at school. This policy sets out our procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

1. Responsibilities

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 on a timely basis. It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

Staff are responsible for completing Attendance Registers. They must be completed accurately and promptly according to guidelines. Completed registers must be returned to the school office before 9:30 am and again before 1:45 pm.

If a member of staff takes a pupil, group or class out of school they are responsible for informing parents and staff at the school office.

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 at the beginning and end of sessions.

2. Procedures Aimed at Reducing Risk of a Missing Pupil

Start of the school day:

- The school should ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from staff to them and vice versa.
- There are clear procedures for welcoming pupils into school. The school doors are closed at 8:45 am. After this time pupils report to the main school office via the main entrance.
- Teachers are in their classroom from 8:30 am.

During lesson time:

- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – morning and afternoons and return them to the school office.
- All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are closed when pupils are in school.
- If pupils leave the classroom security to work in other parts of the school, the class teacher must ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained.

During playtime:

- Duty staff should be on the playground when pupils come out.
- External gates remain closed. Staff patrol all areas in the playground throughout the session.

During lunchtime:

- As above

During hometime:

- The gates are opened at 3:15pm for KG and R children, 3.25pm for Years 1 and 2 and 3.30pm for Years 3 and above.
- Pupils leave by assigned exits.
- Pupils are collected by their parent / carer. Staff call the children when they see the parent / carer.

Children who are not collected:

- Children who are not collected wait with their Teacher. They are then taken to the school office, where the classteacher inquires if there are any messages and/or rings the child's parents. After 3.45pm, the child may wait in Tea and Prep until the parent arrives. The Headteacher or Designated Person will be notified. Every effort will then be made to contact the parent/carer, or failing that, the emergency contact, before the Tea and Prep ends.
- In the case of a pupil not being collected and no contact being made WITHIN 45 MINUTES OF THE USUAL COLLECTION TIME, the school will ring the Duty and Advice Team at the appropriate Social Services to discuss the concerns and ask advice.
- Social Care will give advice and make appropriate checks. School will continue to be responsible for trying to contact the parent/carer/emergency contact and to keep Social Care updated about the situation.
- If there are any concerns about the welfare of the parent/carer, Social Care may ask the local Police to visit the home address; please note that the Police cannot themselves provide a place of safety for a child(ren).
- If attempts to contact a parent/carer are still unsuccessful, the School and Social Care will jointly take responsibility for arranging for children to be transported to the Social Care team, (or other appropriate venue) who will arrange a place of safety. This is considered to be a last resort and parent/carers should do their best to ensure that this is not necessary. Social Care will notify the school of the child's placement and provide contact details as appropriate. It will be the intention to return the child to the parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.

Educational visits:

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff / pupil ratios (at least following national guidance and often in excess of this) are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
- Permission from parents is obtained generically at the beginning of each academic year and once again specifically for each trip.
- Mobile telephones taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.

After School Clubs:

- Thorough risk assessment in place.
- A register of pupils should be taken.
- Consent forms should be obtained from parents with contact numbers.

3. Procedures In The Event Of A Child Going Missing

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

1. If a teacher suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity, they contact the nearest member of SMT and school office immediately. The SMT member and any teaching assistants will carry out a thorough search of the building, including outside areas, toilets and storage areas.

2. The following lists held in the school office will be checked:
 - Attendance Registers
 - Off site record
 - Music lesson lists
 - Lists of those attending other schools (eg Transition activities)
3. If necessary, staff will promptly but calmly round up all pupils to the hall and a designated member of staff will supervise the children. The safety and care of other pupils is paramount so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other pupils in the school must be adequately maintained while the search continues.
4. Staff will count and name check all the pupils present against the register while the group are assembled in one place.
5. A thorough check of all exits will be made, to ensure all gates / doors were locked / bolted and there are no other ways a pupil could have left the school. If something is discovered this needs to be drawn to the attention of the SMT immediately.
6. If the child is still not found after this initial search, the office is to inform the Headteacher .
7. If the child has not been found after 10 minutes from the initial report of them as missing then parents should be notified. The Headteacher or next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted. When contacting parents / carers, staff will ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child.

Parents will be informed followed by the police (999) within 10 minutes of the first alert.

8. Staff must try to remember and write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features.
9. 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.
10. The Class Teacher is spoken to gain further information and asked to confirm if he / she attended the previous sessions.
11. A thorough search of the school buildings continues and is carried out by senior members of staff with the help of other members of staff available.

Particular attention is paid to:

- Rarely used rooms
- Toilets
- ICT room
- All classrooms
- School hall
- School grounds

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

1. The Group Leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. At least two adults must stay with them.

2. One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
3. The Visit Leader should contact school to alert them.
4. If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the Group Leader must contact police by telephoning 999.

The Group Leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangements to notify parents, after which the procedures described above will be followed.