

St Helen's School

Missing Child Policy

September 2022



1. Introduction

The School has a statutory duty of care to all its pupils to provide a safe environment and to ensure their health, safety and welfare at all times. Children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. The School, where reasonably possible, has more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. The School follows the statutory guidance on a secure setting for the EYFS.

2. Aims

The Aims of the Missing Child Policy are as follows:

- To ensure the safety and security of all pupils, including those in the EYFS.
- To ensure that we are able to find any child that goes missing, either in School or on an activity outside School as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- To communicate effectively and to an appropriate timescale with everyone concerned.
- To follow up incidents and to review procedures accordingly.

3. Missing Child Procedure (at School):

3.1 If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is missing at school, the class teacher or member of staff involved will liaise with the relevant Attendance Secretary immediately to ascertain whether the pupil concerned is on an approved educational visit, in a music or LAMDA lesson on-site, in the Library, or with the School Nurse or Counsellor. If this is not the case, the Attendance Secretary will inform (for Prep) Head of Prep, Deputy Head of Prep and Prep Acting Assistant Head or (for Senior) the Acting Assistant Head Pastoral, Director of Sixth Form and Assistant Head Sixth Form (for Years 12-13) and relevant Head of Year, to ascertain whether they are aware of any other reason for the absence. Following which, if the pupil's whereabouts are still unknown, the Deputy Head Pastoral will be informed. The Headmistress, Caretaking Team and the Front Office staff will all be alerted if necessary. The following actions will then be initiated, many of them concurrently:

3.1.1 The Head of Prep, Prep Acting Assistant Head, Acting Assistant Head Pastoral or Director of Sixth Form will talk to relevant staff and pupils to establish what has happened.

3.1.2 The Head of Prep, Prep Acting Assistant Head, Acting Assistant Head Pastoral or Director of Sixth Form will organise a thorough search of the building and grounds with assistance from the Caretaking Team and Front Office staff.

3.1.3 In the Prep School, doors and gates will be checked to ensure that the pupil could not have left the secure site. If there is reason to believe they could have left the site, the Police will be notified immediately.

3.1.4 In the Prep School, registers will be taken to ensure no other pupils are missing.

3.2 Should the child remain unaccounted for once immediate checks have taken place, the Head of Prep, Headmistress or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will contact parents or will designate another senior member of staff to do so.

- 3.3 If the parents are unable to locate or contact their daughter immediately, the Head of Prep, the Headmistress, Deputy Head (Pastoral), or senior member of staff chosen by them will contact the Police.

4. Missing Child Procedure (on a School trip):

- 4.1 The member of staff (or parent helper) in charge of the group from which the child goes missing will alert the members of staff in charge of all the other groups and the Party Leader.
- 4.2 The members of staff in charge of all the other groups will check no other pupils are missing and the Party Leader will gather the whole group together at a predetermined assembly point.
- 4.3 The Party Leader will inform the Emergency SLT Contact and Security at the venue. The Party Leader and Security will liaise and organise a thorough search for the missing pupil.
- 4.4 The Emergency SLT contact will inform the Educational Visits Co-ordinator, Head of Prep /Headmistress, and the Deputy Head (Co-curricular and Partnerships).
- 4.5 The Educational Visits Co-ordinator, Deputy Head (Co-curricular and Partnerships), Head of Prep or the Headmistress will contact the parents. Front Office staff will be informed if necessary.
- 4.6 If the parents are unable to locate or contact their daughter immediately, the Educational Visits Co-ordinator, Head of Prep or the Headmistress will contact the Police.

5. Reporting

- 5.1 Whether the incident occurs at School or on a trip, the member of staff directly involved will, once the pupil has been found, write a report detailing:
- The date and time when it happened
 - The staff who were present
 - When and where the pupil was last seen
 - What was taking place at the time
 - Estimate of time when the pupil went missing
- 5.2 A copy of this report must be forwarded to the Business Director for inclusion in the accident book.
- 5.3 The Headmistress will inform the Chairman of Governors if appropriate.
- 5.4 Any resulting child protection issues must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6. Monitoring

The Head of Prep will remind their staff at staff meetings of the procedures at the start of each academic year; the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will do the same in Senior School. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) / HR Manager will ensure new staff are familiar with the policy during induction. Detailed arrangements for the supervision of pupils and for action on a missing pupil are included in the Staff Handbook.

7. Review

The Deputy Head Pastoral will be responsible for the review of this policy annually and for evaluating the effectiveness of all procedures concerning supervision of pupils based on any incidents reported and in the light of any new legislation. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will review any incidents on school visits and discuss any proposed amendments to the procedures with the Deputy Head (Co-curricular and Partnerships)

Authorised by	Executive Team
Date	July 2022
Effective date of the policy	1 st September 2022
Date of Next Review	July 2023