



Missing Child Policy

OVERVIEW:

At Cottingley Village Primary School children should never be allowed to leave the premises during school time without the Headteacher's permission. It is possible that on some occasions a child may leave the premises without the knowledge or permission of the Headteacher. This policy is put in place to ensure that every action possible is taken to ensure the quick and safe return of that child to school. This includes children who may go 'missing' at the end of the school day when parents come to collect them. This policy covers all aspects of school including after school clubs.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To locate any missing child quickly.
2. To ensure that all children are kept safely on the school premises during school hours unless they have the Headteacher's permission to leave.
3. To ensure that children who leave school during the school day only do so with the Headteacher's permission and that they are accompanied by an authorised adult.
4. To ensure that the building, grounds and play areas are safe and secure during school hours.
5. To ensure that teachers and staff keep children under proper supervision at all times.
6. To ensure that if a child 'goes missing' during the school day, they are located quickly and returned safely to the school.
7. If any child is reported 'missing' by a parent at the end of the school day, while on school premises, SLT staff are immediately alerted and key actions taken to ensure the child is found and safely returned to their parent.
8. If a child is 'found' on school premises by an adult (parent, visitor or staff) this is immediately reported to the school. A child should NEVER be taken off the premises by a parent without informing the school as this breaches safeguarding procedures for the individual and the school.

STRATEGIES:

1. If a child cannot be found by its teacher, the Headteacher, or most senior member of staff in school, must be notified **immediately and told when and where the child was last seen**. Time is of the essence and prompt actions must be taken by all.
2. The remaining children will be left safe in the care of suitable staff. All other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the child's classroom, play areas, storage areas, toilets, the school building and the school grounds.
3. If the child is not found within a short period of time (max 10 mins), the police will be called by the Headteacher or staff member in the Headteacher's absence.
4. Members of staff, who are not supervising children, will be sent to search the area in the immediate vicinity of the school.
5. If a child goes missing during an outing or school visit, the teacher in charge must ensure that the remaining children are safely cared for by the other staff and adults. An urgent but thorough search should be made of the immediate vicinity and if the child is not found quickly (max 10 mins) the police must be called and the Headteacher notified.
6. As soon as possible, the parents will be notified that their child is missing.
7. The LA will be notified by the Headteacher that a child is missing.
8. If a member of staff finds the child the Headteacher must be told at once. Parents, police and other authorities will be notified.
9. The Headteacher will investigate how the incident occurred and will take appropriate action to ensure that similar events do not happen again.
10. Parents who are unable to pick up their child from school, due to unforeseen circumstances, in Nursery, Reception, Year 1, 2, 3 and 4 will put into place the school's 'password' system: Sometimes we all experience difficult circumstances; the car breaks down, there has been a road traffic accident, the bus didn't turn up. As a result of this you, parent of a child at primary school, you are unable to pick up your child at 3.15pm and this can be very stressful as it is an 'unforeseen emergency'. The password system is for such circumstances when an adult, who is picking up a child, is 'unknown' to the school.

How it works:

- The parent calls someone who is able to pick up your child, give them a 'word' as a 'password' that they must use at school.
- The parent also calls the school, explain who will be picking up your child and tell the school your chosen 'password'.
- When this adult comes to collect your child they give the password to the school and the school is then assured that the right person has come to collect your child and they are safe to leave the building.

For children in Upper Key Stage 2 parents will be expected to put a note in their planner or call the school and tell us who is picking up their child. This links with the KS2 picking up/walking home alone procedure that the school has in place.

11. It is a parent's responsibility to inform the school of any change to the main adult who picks their child up from school. If the school is not aware of any change they are within their rights to keep the child at school and not allow them to leave and demonstrates a proactive approach to safeguarding any child. Any adult picking up a child must be 'known' to the school.
12. If a child is believed to be missing at the end of the school day when parents have come to collect their child, this must also be reported to the Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team without delay.
13. If the school becomes aware that a parent has taken a child from school premises without the school's awareness or permission safeguarding actions will be taken which will include:
 - i) Contacting the parent involved and making it clear the breach that has occurred.
 - ii) Contacting children's social care.
 - iii) Contacting the police, if appropriate.
 - iv) Writing to the parent after the event and making it clear that if such a breach was to occur again the additional actions the school would take.
 - v) Inform the governing body of the situation.
14. Any missing child incident will be recorded on the missing child form (please see appendix A)
15. Any child not collected at the end of the school day by their family will be taken to the school office. The school's procedure for left children will then be put into operation.

OUTCOMES:

The safety of all children will be given our highest priority. A missing child should be an extremely rare happening. This policy is designed to put into place swift and effective actions to locate any missing child and to notify and involve parents and the authorities at every appropriate point.

Reviewed March 2022

Cottingley Village Primary School



Missing Child Report (Appendix A)

Name of child:	Class	Date:
Where went missing:	Time:	Reported by:
Actions school has taken:		
Outcome:		
Informed parents: Time/date/who/how	Informed Social Care: Time/date/who	Informed Police: Time/date/who
Follow up actions if required:		