

INSTOW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

MISSING CHILDREN POLICY – 2024

Rationale

This policy has been written and should be read in conjunction with the school's Health and Safety policy. It is also linked to the Safeguarding Policy.

Purpose and aims of the policy statement.

The purpose of this policy statement is to give all staff a clear understanding of how to respond and who to inform should they discover a child is missing.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide a clear procedure which is understood and effectively implemented by staff;
- Enable the missing child to be located as quickly as possible and given the appropriate level of safety and security commensurate with the pupil's age and emotional/behaviour maturity.

Staff need to be mindful that a child can go missing at any time of the day. These times and examples of the occasions providing opportunities for a child to go missing are:

Occasions when a child goes missing:

- a. From an indoor lesson, for example, when a child is allowed to leave the classroom to go to the toilet
- b. From an outdoor lesson for example during PE lessons
- c. Travelling around the school for example assemblies or playtime.
- d. On a school trip
- e. Other times such as at the start or end of the school day
- f. Where a child is taken from the school site by an unapproved adult

Our Educational Visits Policy outlines the risk assessments that are made as part of taking our children off-site. We also have on-site checks daily to ensure the safety of our children for example taking the registers in the morning and afternoon. However,

in the highly unlikely event that a child should go missing the following procedures will apply.

This applies to all situations where:

- a. Having arrived at the school, a child goes missing.
- b. A child goes missing whilst on a trip organised by school or pre-school. The most senior member of staff to co-ordinate this procedure, either directly, or by phone if the children are on a trip. If the incident happens whilst on a trip, the trip leader will inform the most senior member of staff at school; this should include the Head Teacher or SLT member when possible.
- c. The school has rigorous procedures for pursuing unexplained absences, including the aim to contact parents by 9.30am if a child has not arrived in school and the reason for absence is not known.

What to do next

- Class teacher to gather all children on the trip/at the school into one place and check the register against the children you have.
- Identify which child/children are missing and inform the most senior member of staff at the School.
- Check all exterior doors and gates are secure if in the school.
- If on a trip, check the immediate area.
- At least one member of staff stays with the children in each classroom while Senior member of staff starts search. Most senior member of staff would inform office staff and teaching assistant. 3 staff then search - main school building, bottom pitch and Look Out and then Top Pitch. If out on a trip, keep the appropriate ratio with the children and dispatch any others to search vicinity.
 - If at school and the child is not on the premises the 3 staff do a quick search of car park, field next to school and top of the lane.
- Police will be contacted immediately after this, approximately within 2 minutes of searching the area
- Staff will continue to search and regroup to re-assess after 10 minutes.
- Staff dispatched to search must remain in contact with the classroom and office, or the trip leader.
- If on a trip, most adults and all children return to the centre or to school after the ten minute search. However, two members of staff should await the arrival of the police to

the location of the incident. You may need to ask a member of staff from school to join you to help to get the children home.

· Senior member of staff meanwhile to gather the relevant information on the child: D.O.B, where last seen and a basic description.

The most senior person in the School will:

1. Inform Police on 999 and hand over all relevant details of the child/children.

2. Call the parents to inform them and let them know what is being done.

3. Call Social Services (where necessary)

4. Call Chair of Governors

· After the event, the team will reflect on the incident and the procedure to see if anything can be learned from the process and if any measures can be taken to improve.

· The incident and effectiveness of subsequent action taken will be reviewed at the next Full Governing Body meeting. HT and SLT will issue advice to staff and pupils and implement any necessary measures to ensure that it does not happen again

Signed: Chair of Governors:

January 2024, to be reviewed January 2026.