



BEESTON HALL SCHOOL

14b - MISSING CHILD POLICY

Person responsible: Deputy Head Pastoral

Reviewed: September 2023

Next review: September 2024

MISSING CHILD POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The safeguarding of children in our care is paramount. Every member of staff has equal responsibility in ensuring the safety of the children and knowing where they are. Every member of staff should know what the procedures are if a child is identified as missing.

Risk Mitigation

Steps taken to minimise the risk of children going missing (this should be read alongside the Supervision Policy):

- Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the premises and surrounding site are secure.
- Staff rotas are drawn up at the start of each term to ensure that appropriate levels of supervision are in place, particularly at break times.
- The attendance register is taken twice a day, morning and afternoon, and the registration details are passed on to the School Office. In the evening and weekends registrations are also taken by the boarding staff team as well as by staff overseeing extra-curricular activities.
- Children who arrive late (after the morning registration period which ends at 0825) must sign in at the School Office on arrival.
- The whereabouts of new children should be noted with care in particular and they are also given a 'Shadow' or a 'Boarding Buddy'.
- Steps must be taken to ensure that children know the boundaries of where they can and cannot go at all times of the day.
- Gates and doors are kept closed and, where appropriate, secured.
- Parents must be made aware of the need for their own supervision of children at all times especially at arrival and departure times; before and after sign out the children are the responsibility of parents. As well as the formal registration system all day children sign in as they arrive and sign out when they leave the school.
- Once inside, staff taking lessons after a break should ascertain that the correct number of children is present. All staff should therefore familiarise themselves with the weekly music and LS lesson timetable, copies of which must be on display in every form tutor room.

If a child is found to be missing within the school grounds

1. The missing child should be identified and the last known sighting recorded.
2. The member of staff with responsibility for the class which the missing child is part of will ask the other children calmly if they have seen the missing child.
3. A message will be sent to the School Office, who will check the registers, check for messages and inform the Senior Management Team.
4. An immediate systematic search will be carried out to see if the child can be located in the surrounding area.
5. A systematic search of the school building will be co-ordinated by a member of the Senior Management Team. This will include anywhere a child might hide: toilets, cupboards, dining room, classrooms, changing areas, pavilion, boot room, telephone boxes, Library, all play areas, all outside areas, including the car parks.
6. The activation of the whole school fire alarm which will complement any existing head count and may encourage the missing child to make their presence known.
7. The member of the Senior Management Team will then inform the Headmaster who will inform:
 - a) The parents – when he is satisfied that a thorough search has been undertaken. A time of approximately 30 minutes should have elapsed before this step is taken. If the parents can be contacted they should be asked for any information of anywhere else their child may make its way to e.g. relatives, grandparents, and friends. They should be advised that the school will be contacting the emergency services and that a member of staff is searching the route that the child may have taken home.
 - b) The police, if the parents cannot be contacted.
 - c) The chairman of Governors.

If a child is found to be missing on a school trip¹:

1. The missing child should be identified and the last known sighting recorded.
2. The pre-arranged rendezvous point must be checked.

¹ All staff who organise a school trip should seek guidance from the External Visits Co-Ordinator and follow the procedures outlined the relevant External Visits and Risk Assessment policy and procedures.

3. The lead member of staff will arrange for the other children to be supervised. The children should be asked calmly if they have seen the missing child. The last head count location will be verified.
4. Representatives of the venue will be informed and asked to assist in a systematic search to see if the child can be located in the surrounding area.
5. The School Office will be contacted, checked for messages and the Headmaster informed.
6. A systematic search of the wider environs will be co-ordinated by the lead staff member utilising all resources available. The Headmaster will decide if additional staffing resources can/should be provided to assist.
7. The Headmaster will inform:
 - a) The parents – when he is satisfied that a thorough search has been undertaken. A time of approximately 10 minutes should have elapsed before this step is taken.
 - b) If the parents can be contacted they should be asked for any information of anywhere else their child may make its way to e.g. relatives, grandparents, and friends. They should be advised that the school will be contacting the emergency services and that a member of staff is searching any route that the child may have taken.
 - c) The police, if the parents cannot be contacted.
 - d) The joint chairs of Governors.

Record of Events

A record of the events must be kept by the Headmaster. This must include:

- Date, time and location of disappearance;
- Who was responsible for the care of the child at the time;
- What was the child wearing;
- Any distinguishing features;
- Circumstances surrounding disappearance;
- An accurate record of the time scale of events and when parents and emergency services were contacted;
- Subsequently, details of the outcome, lessons learnt and any changes to procedures required as a result.
- **Training** - New staff will be provided with this policy and information via the staff handbook. Information will be provided to staff on any changes to the arrangements via staff meetings.