



DITCHAM PARK SCHOOL

*Where every child is known and valued*

## Missing Child Policy and Procedures

Compiled by	Head of Juniors
Approved by	SLT
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## Missing Child Policy and Procedures

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### **Policy Statement**

This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS.

Children's safety is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made, through the implementation of our outings procedure and our exit/entrance procedure, to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

### **Procedures**

#### ***Checks on absence***

- Pupils are formally registered in the morning and at the start of afternoon school (as detailed in the School's Supervision Policy)
- Office staff check the registers held on our management information system, and will follow up, by telephone, any absence which has not been accompanied by an absence form. Parents are expected to provide a reason for absence and inform the school on each day of absence.
- Pupils who fall ill during the day must report to the office. If the child goes to the first aid room or is sent home, the office staff will then inform teachers involved. If a pupil is collected by their parents during the day for an appointment, they must sign out and in, and the office staff inform the teachers involved.
- At the start of each lesson the teacher will make enquiries about any pupils who are absent and, if unsure, will send a message to the office.
- A list of pupils who are absent on a school trip or off site for rehearsal etc. will be given to the school office before departure.

#### ***Child going missing on the premises during the school day***

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, all staff will be notified via email.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.



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- Senior Leadership Team, Estate Staff and other staff, not teaching at the time, carry out a thorough search of the buildings (including toilets), gardens and grounds.
- The DSL, DDSL and /or headmaster talks to our staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- Search of both school drives undertaken by the Estate Staff.
- Office staff to inform local farmers and ask them to look out for pupils on the drives / in the fields.
- If the child is not found, we call the police immediately and report the child as missing. If it is suspected that the child may have been abducted, the police are informed of this.
- The parent(s) are then called and informed.
- Railway to be informed – on advice of Police.
- A recent photograph and a note of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- The Headmaster /DSL contacts our Chairman of Governors and reports the incident.
- DSL logs incident with Childrens' Services.

### ***Child going missing on an outing***

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the staff members on the outing ask children to stand with their designated adult and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- If the child has a mobile phone, a member of staff will attempt to contact them on that.
- One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- A senior staff member on the outing contacts the police and reports that child as missing.
- The Headmaster / Head of Juniors / Head of Seniors is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.
- The Headmaster / Head of Juniors / Head of Seniors contacts the parent(s).
- Staff take the remaining children to a place of safety as soon as possible
- According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff where applicable, should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing is given to the police.



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- An investigation is carried out and recorded by the DSL.
- Our staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.

### ***Post incident follow up / The investigation***

- Ofsted and / or ISI are informed as soon as possible and kept up-to-date with the investigation.
- The DSL carries out a full investigation, taking written statements from all our staff and volunteers who were present.
- The teacher concerned together with a representative from the Senior Leadership Team speaks with the parent(s) and explains the process of the investigation.
- The parent(s) may also raise a complaint with School or Ofsted / ISI / DfE.
- Each member of staff present writes an incident report detailing:
  - The date and time of the incident.
  - Where the child went missing from e.g. the school or an outing venue.
  - Which staff/children were in the premises/on the outing and the name of the staff member who was designated as responsible for the missing child.
  - When the child was last seen in the premises/or on the outing, including the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
  - What has taken place in the premises or on the outing since the child went missing.
- The report is counter-signed by the senior member of staff and the date and time added.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all our staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff and parents. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted/ ISI/ ISA / DfE are advised.
- The Bursar is informed; he/she will send information to the School's insurance provider.
- A submission of a Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission will be considered and made by the Headmaster where appropriate.
- Senior Leadership Team meet to assess whether school procedures require modification in the light of experience.



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- Amendments and modifications made to procedure if necessary, and training and counselling will be provided to staff as required.
- Staff are asked not to speak to the press unless given permission by the headmaster.