

STROUD SCHOOL: MISSING CHILD POLICY

This policy is applicable to all pupils including those in the EYFS

The welfare of all of our children at Stroud School is our paramount responsibility. A child going missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including sexual exploitation and so called 'honour based' violence. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a child is missing from school, this policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care.

This policy was drawn up having had regard to the Independent School Regulatory Requirements (paragraph 7 and 15), Early Years Statutory Framework (paragraph 3.73) and Department for Education guidance Children Missing Education (September 2016).

Information for parents

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in a detailed policy document: 'Trips and Visits'. This can be found on our website [and can be provided to parents on request]. We review this policy annually in order to satisfy ourselves that it is robust and effective. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of very young children and read Part 1 of the DfE's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance.

If a child goes missing from the setting

- Make sure all the other children are safe (ie with responsible adults)
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Inform the Head of Department/Head teacher and DSL
- Check with the office who will check the signing out/ in register
- Check the child is not with matron
- Person in charge talks to staff to establish what happened. Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child
- Start a systematic search, based on where the child was last seen and with whom, and make sure all areas are covered, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms etc. where a small child might hide.
- Doors (in EYFS) are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out [and CCTV records] for signs of entry/exit
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out to attempt to catch up with him/her
- If the child is not found **within 30 minutes** the parent is contacted by the Head teacher or in their absence, the Deputy Heads (parents may be contacted earlier depending on the time of day i.e. at the end of the day) who will explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once
- After calling the parents, the Head teacher or DSL will inform the police.
- Complete a missing a child form
- The school would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.

- Inform the Chairman of Governors
- The school's insurers would be informed
- [If the child is injured] A report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

If a child goes missing from an outing where parents are not attending and responsible for their own child, the setting ensures that there is a procedure that is followed.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- One member of staff searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search
- Immediately inform the Head teacher and the DSL by mobile phone and the Executive Head
- The remaining children would be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable
- Ask the trip leader to ring the child's parents as soon as reasonably practicable to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion.
- If the child is not located after 30 minutes, trip leader to contact the Police
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chairman of Governors without delay
- The school's insurers would be informed as soon as reasonably practicable
- If the child is injured and is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days of the accident.

The investigation

- The Critical Incident Team carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time, or who were on the outing,
- The key person/staff writes an incident report detailing
 - The date and time of the report;
 - What staff/children were in the group/outing;
 - When the child was last seen in the group/outing;
 - What has taken place in the group/outing since then; and
 - The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Social Services may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- During the course of the investigation into the missing child, the school, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A Child Missing from Education (CME)

A Child Missing from Education (CME) is defined by the Department for Education (DfE) as 'a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more).' For more information on a child missing from education, please refer to our Child Protection Policy (p.10).

Procedure when parents fail to collect a child or when a child goes missing.

PLEASE PRINT IN BLACK OR BLUE INK.

To be completed by the registered person in charge

Name

Address

Tel No

The following child has not been collected The following child has gone missing Tick as appropriate

Name of child DOB Male Female

Address

Tel No

Name of parent/guardian

For child not collected
Date and time child should have been collected

Name of person who should have collected the child

The person is the Parent Guardian Emergency contact Tick as appropriate

For child gone missing
Date, time and location of disappearance

Who was responsible for caring for the child at the time he/she disappeared.

What was the child wearing?

Any distinguishing features?

Circumstances surrounding disappearance?

Parents contacted Yes No (Tick as appropriate)

What happens next

Signed by registered person (or deputy) _____ Date _____