



## The Study Prep WIMBLEDON

### **MISSING CHILD POLICY & PROCEDURE FOR LATE COLLECTION**

The Study Preparatory School is committed to ensuring the welfare of its pupils. This Policy sets out the protocols for dealing with a pupil who goes missing from the School premises or on a School outing. The School's Attendance Policy and Safeguarding Policy set out the procedures for dealing with a pupil who is routinely absent from School without authorisation.

This Policy applies to all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

#### **Part One: Missing Child Policy**

All perimeter gates and exit doors are locked during the School day. In the unlikely event of a pupil being lost within the School or on a School trip, our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions without delay:

##### **Missing from School**

- A register will be taken to ensure all other pupils are present
- All staff will be alerted
- A thorough search will be made of the premises (including checking doors and gates for signs of entry and exit) including everywhere a small child might hide

If the child is still missing, the following steps would be taken without delay:

- Inform the Head/ Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Parents will be contacted
- Police will be contacted
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to the home to attempt to catch up with the child
- The Chair of the Governors will be informed
- The Head will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The School would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- 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)

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 full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

The School will always consider the wider circumstances around a pupil going missing from School and whether there are wider safeguarding concerns that may need to be addressed in line with the School's Child Protection policy. A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

**Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing on an outing/School trip:**

- A staff member on a School trip will carry a school mobile with him/her at all times
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- An immediate head count will be carried out in order to ensure all other pupils are present
- Immediately inform the Head/ DSLs by mobile phone
- Staff at the venue will be alerted
- A thorough search of the venue will be conducted
- The Head will contact parents informing them of what has happened and what steps are being taken
- Immediately contact the police
- The School would cooperate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- The Head will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The Chair of the Governors will be informed 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.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. The school will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

**Actions to be taken by staff once the child is found:**

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil
- Speak to the other pupils to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Head will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Head will undertake a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/ Local Children Safeguarding Board)
- Media queries should be referred to the Head
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and pupils, when the pupil was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the length of time that the pupil was missing and how she appeared to have gone missing, and focus on lessons for the future.

Consider whether actions need to be taken in line with the School's Child Protection policy where there are concerns about the welfare of the child.

## **Part Two: Procedures to be followed by staff when a pupil is not collected on time**

If a pupil is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, the School will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. If there is no answer the teacher will call the emergency contact numbers held for the pupil. During this time, the pupil will be safely looked after.

If a pupil is not collected from an after School club or After School Care within 15 minutes of the agreed collection time, the club lead will take the pupil to reception at either site. All relevant contact numbers will be called by staff present. The pupil will be safely looked after.

If a pupil is at Beverley Meads, or another off-site location, and the staff have had no response following persistent calls, the off-site staff should arrange for the pupil to be brought back to school (in liaison with the HMT member on late duty).

If after persistent calls with no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers, or the emergency numbers, and it is time to close the premises at the end of the day, the Head or Deputy Head will contact the Social Care Duty Officer at Merton Council Social Care, who will make emergency arrangements for the pupil and will arrange for a visit to be made to the pupil's house and will check with the Police. The School will produce a full written report of the incident.

The School will look after the pupil safely throughout the time that they remain under the School's care, until such a time as they have been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to prioritise the pupil's safety.

The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a pupil from School or who are late without a valid reason or who are persistently late. If any concerns about the pupil's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the school's procedures as detailed in the Safeguarding, Staff Code of Conduct and Child Protection policies.

**Policy Reviewed: February 2022**