Missing Child Policy for Off-Site Trips and Visits

Next to be reviewed: September 2026

Contents

If a child goes missing on a school visit

When the pupils arrive at the location for the trip then the member of staff should identify an area/placewhere the pupils should go if they get lost. They must also be given specific times for meeting up (as per Risk Assessment). If a child is missing and/or does not meet at an arranged time or location the following action will be taken:

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children werepresent.
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity whilst other methods of trying to contact the pupil may be used – ringing their mobile phone, using social media and their peers to try and locate them.
- If at a venue, contact the venue manager and arrange a search and to secure the venue.
- Inform the Headteacher and DSL that a child is missing and discuss the next step for those on the trip.
- The member of staff in charge of the trip or a member of staff at the school should contact the family. Parents/carers will then be asked to travel to the venue or setting if possible.
- Contact the Police and pass on details of the pupil including a photo if possible.
- The DSL may inform the LSCB and the school's LADO without delay (WSCP).
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigationby the local authority.
- Staff take the remaining pupils back to the transport/School/base if a residential trip or remain at the venue as agreed withthe Police and the Headteacher.
- Inform the Chair 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.
- A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident 'near miss' report. The school will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

Once the child is found:

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave thepremises/separate from a group on an outing.
- The appropriate member of SLT will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account ofthe incident (having discussed this beforehand with the LADO if necessary).

- Media queries should be referred to the Headteacher (after discussion with the LADO if appropriate).
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, [the purpose of the outing], the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.

If a pupil goes missing on a boarding trip and/or with a single member of staff

When pupils arrive at the location for the trip then the member of staff should identify an area/place where the pupils go if they get lost. They must also be given specific times for meeting up (as per the Risk Assessment).

As soon as it is noticed that a pupil is missing, the member of staff on the trip will carry out a headcount to ensure that all other pupils are present. Once it is identified who is missing the member of staff will try to ascertain when and where they were last seen. At the same time, pupils will be asked to try and contact the missing person by phone/social media.

If no contact is made, then there are a number of options depending on the trip location and the age of the pupils:

- Dependent on age, the present pupils are instructed to stay in one place – such as a building or a minibus. One member of the party is identified as the responsible child. The member of staff leaves their telephone number and a school contact number with them whilst the staff member goes to look for the missing pupil. The pupils remaining in the safe place are instructed to phone immediately if there is a problem or if the missing pupil returns. The member of staff should only search the immediate vicinity and not be away from the group for a prolonged period of time.
- If the age of the pupils, dynamics of the group or location dictates then the search of the immediate vicinity should take place by the member of staff with the present pupils.
- Pupils should not be sent off to look for another pupil
- Contact should be made with staff that are onsite to alert them that there is a pupil missing so that they are aware and can be prepared for any support they may need to give.
- A member of SLT should be informed (preferably the DSL or Headteacher) and advice taken on the next course of action. This may involve other staff going to join the group to search or bring the other pupils back.
- Staff contact the venue's security (if applicable) who will handle a wider search.
- Contact the Police and pass on details of the pupil including a photo if possible.

- The DSL may inform the LSCB and the school's LADO without delay (WSCP)The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigationby the local authority.
- Staff take the remaining pupils back to the transport/School/base if a residential trip or remain at the venue as agreed withthe Police and the Headteacher.
- Inform the Chair 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.