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**MISSING CHILD POLICY**  
**(including EYFS)**

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**(October 2023)**

### The School Mission Statement

To live and learn in harmony,  
Caring for each other;  
Treating everybody as a sister and a brother;  
Reflecting Christ's actions and His message  
too, By striving for excellence in all that we do

Persons responsible: Head Teacher and staff.

Date adopted: February 2013

Most recent policy Review: October 2023

Date of next policy review: October 2024

### INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all of our children at the Ursuline Preparatory School Ilford is our paramount responsibility. 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. 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.

### INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Our companion document, "Information for Parents" describes:

- The arrangements for handing over children to the care of their parents at the end of the day
- The qualifications of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in school
- The arrangements for registering the children in both morning and afternoon
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building
- The supervision of the playground and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the school

All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision by the Head of Early Years/ Deputy Head.

## ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL

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:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present;
- Inform the Head of the Early Years Department/Deputy, if not present;
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child;
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s) by continuing with the timetabled session or reading to them;
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults (all available adults), to search everywhere within the school, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a small child might hide;
- Check the doors, gates [and CCTV records] for signs of entry/exit

If the child is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- Inform the Head Teacher, who is also our Child Protection Officer/Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Ask the Head Teacher, or Deputy Headteacher, to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once;
- The Head Teacher, or Deputy Headteacher, would notify the Police;
- The Head Teacher, or Deputy Headteacher, would arrange for more staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds;
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her;
- The Child Protection Officer would inform Redbridge Safeguarding Children's Partnership;
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by children's social care;
- Inform the Chairman of Governors;
- The Insurers would be informed via the bursar when appropriate;
- If the child is injured a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.

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.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING This should be read in conjunction with our whole school EDV Policy.

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present;
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child;
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity and inform site (place of visit) staff, where available;

- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search;
- Inform the Head Teacher/ Child Protection Officer by mobile phone;
- The remaining children will be supervised whilst a thorough search was implemented;
- Ask the Head Teacher to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue/ the school at once, depending on the circumstances;
- Contact the Police;
- The Child Protection Officer would inform Redbridge Safeguarding Children's Partnership;
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care;
- Inform the Chairman of Governors;
- The Insurers would be informed when appropriate;
- If the child is injured a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.

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.

#### ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF 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 the premises/separate from a group on an outing;
- The Head Teacher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident;
- The Head Teacher will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/ Redbridge Safeguarding Children's Partnership);
- Media queries should be referred to the Head Teacher (see Emergency Closure/Crisis Management Policy);
- 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, lessons for the future.

#### CHILDREN WHO ARE MISSING FROM EDUCATION

A child going missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and as such the school is obliged to take action to act in the best interests of the child. The school understands its duty to report to the Local Authority any cases referred to in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023 in relation to student absence where permission has not been granted and a student is absent for a continuous period of more than 10 days or when a student fails to attend school regularly. If the child is regularly absent, or there is a pattern to their absence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the appropriate LADO to pass on this information and for guidance.

Our school will inform our respective relevant local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

We will notify the relevant authority as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the student's name from our register.