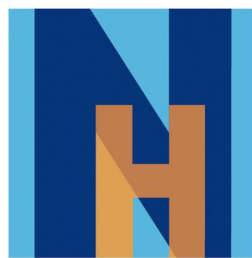


## **NORFOLK HOUSE SCHOOL & NURSERY**

# Missing Child Policy

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including in the EYFS



**Norfolk House**  
School

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## Procedures

The welfare of pupils is paramount. The school endeavours to ensure that no child goes missing and has measures in place to minimise the likelihood of this happening and take the necessary action, should the situation arise.

- Formal registration is taken at:
  - 8.50am and at 1.00pm for EYFS and Pre Prep.
  - 8:45am and at 1.00pm for Junior Prep.
  - 8:45am and at 1.30pm for Senior Prep.
- Children in the nursery and Pre-Nursery will be registered on arrival
- The staff maintain the appropriate high level of supervision throughout the day and are aware of the location of the children in their care at all times.
- When on excursions outside the school premises, staff implement strategies to maximise the safety and security of the children in accordance with the school's Health & Safety Policy and Educational Visits Policy.
- Staff undertake regular roll calls and head counts.

The above measures ensure that situations where a child could be lost are very limited. These are:

- Where a child wanders off on an off-site visit
- Where a child goes out of a door or gate left open on the school site
- Where a child is taken from the school site by an unapproved adult

The school has rigorous procedures for pursuing unexplained absences, including the aim to contact parents by 9.30am if a child has not arrived in school and the reason for absence is not known. This should ensure that staff become aware at the earliest opportunity of any child who may have gone missing on the way to school. In these circumstances, this policy will be followed.

School policies relating to health and safety and welfare, if strictly adhered to, should prevent any of the above occurring. However, should a child become lost, the following action will be taken:

### Lost at school

**In EYFS**, alert the Head of EYFS immediately, and also the Head, who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where, to eliminate any misunderstanding. A member of school office staff will check the signing out book to establish whether the child has been legitimately collected from school.

**For pupils in Pre Prep, Junior Prep, Senior Prep**, alert the Headteacher or Deputy Head immediately. A school mobile phone or walkie-talkie should be collected from the office.

Staff must be vigilant in respect of the safety of the other children with regard to supervision and security.

Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, a member of staff should be sent to search each of the following zones, keeping a calm manner and maintaining contact via mobile phone:

- Zone A – The school building – including any rooms that are only used for occasional lessons
- Zone B – The external parts of the school inside the school's perimeter

If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the police and parents must be informed. If the search moves to this level, the Critical Incident Policy procedure should be invoked. Meanwhile the office will make available

a photograph of the child (from database) and their description. Continue to search, opening up the area, keeping in touch via mobile phone. The child must be comforted and reassured when found. The headteacher will consider calling a fire drill to see if the pupil who is not accounted for arrives at the roll call point.

### **Lost/Found Missing in transit**

It may be that a pupil is found to be missing when the class or group has boarded a mode of transport. Good practice including the steps set out below will help to prevent such a scenario arising in the first place:

- Regular headcounts, including before leaving the school site
- A sufficient adult:pupil ratio
- Assigning specific adults to supervise specific groups of pupils. Note: this should apply even for more routine off-site travel, such as to weekly sports/PE venues
- If travelling by private coach, registering the pupils once they are aboard and before the coach departs
- If boarding a public bus or train (including London Underground), pupils should be directed to board before the staff members accompanying them. Once all pupils have boarded, the group leader should visually check no pupils are remaining at the bus stop/on the platform prior to the doors closing. All staff should then re-check that all members of their group are present and indicate this swiftly to the group leader.

If, despite the above steps, a child is found to be missing in transit. The following steps should be followed:

#### **If on a private/chartered coach/bus/school minibus:**

- If on the out-bound phase of the journey (i.e. travelling from school to a venue), the group leader should use a mobile phone to call the school and alert them to the fact that a pupil is missing and may have been left behind.
- The colleague at school who takes the above call should immediately inform a member of the Leadership Team, who will direct staff to search the site for the pupil.
- If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the police and parents must be informed. If the search moves to this level, the Critical Incident Policy procedure should be invoked. Meanwhile the office will make available a photograph of the child (from database) and their description. Continue to search, opening up the area, keeping in touch via mobile phone. The child must be comforted and reassured when found. The headteacher will consider calling a fire drill to see if the pupil who is not accounted for arrives at the roll call point.
- If on the return phase of the journey (i.e. travelling back from an external venue to school), the group leader should use a mobile phone to call the venue just departed and alert them to the fact that a pupil is missing and may have been left behind. The coach driver should be instructed to stop at the earliest safe opportunity to do so. At this point, while staff at the venue search for the missing pupil, staff aboard the coach should contact the School to alert them to what has taken place.
- If the pupil is found by staff at the venue just departed, the group leader should instruct the coach driver to return to the venue to pick the pupil up. The parents of the pupil in question should be informed of the incident as soon as the group returns. The school's Leadership team will then investigate the incident.
- If the pupil is not found by staff at the venue just departed, the group leader should immediately contact the school to alert them and should also contact the Police. The school should contact the parents. If the search moves to this level, the Critical Incident Policy procedure should be invoked. Meanwhile the office will make available a photograph of the child (from database) and their description. The Head may consider sending a colleague to the venue to assist with the search.

#### **If on public transport:**

- If a child is found to be missing on a public bus or train, the group leader should disembark the whole group at the next stop/station, where they should remain waiting while supervised by the other staff members
- The group leader should then return to the last station/stop at which the pupil was known to have been present. If the overall staff-to-pupil ratio allows, they should take another colleague with them. A colleague that is remaining with the group should be instructed to contact the school and inform them of what has taken place.

- Once at the previous departure station/stop, the group leader (and accompanying colleague, if applicable) should search the area, informing station staff (if travelling by train) that a pupil is missing and asking for their assistance.
- If the pupil is found, the group leader should bring the child back to rejoin the group safely via the fastest available means. The School should be updated.
- If the pupil is not found, the group leader should contact the Police, then inform the school, who should contact the pupil's parents.

### **Lost whilst off-site (including on sports fixtures)**

If a child is lost on an outing, the member of staff noticing the child missing should alert other members of the party and carry out a roll call/head count.

1. A member of staff (or the whole group if appropriate) should retrace their movements to the last place that the child was seen.
2. Another member of staff should alert the management/security services of the organisation being visited and the School office to let them know the situation.
3. Children on the visit should be asked for any relevant information if appropriate.
4. If the child is not found after fifteen minutes the police will be called and the School will alert the parents.
5. Staff will co-operate with the police and take any action as directed by them. If the search moves to this level, the Critical Incident Policy procedure should be invoked. Meanwhile the office will make available a photograph of the child (from database) and their description. The Head may consider sending a colleague to the venue to assist with the search.

### **Lost while overseas**

If a pupil goes missing while away on an overseas trip, the procedures in this policy should still be followed, in addition to which, the tour operator should also be informed and asked to assist. In a scenario where the pupil cannot be found swiftly, the Head may consider travelling or sending a colleague to the location in order to assist the staff already there.

### **Pupil removed from school premises by unapproved adult**

No child is allowed to leave the school site with an adult other than a parent without permission being received from a parent either by telephone or email. This rule must be rigorously enforced. In cases where a parent is legally denied access to their child all staff must be informed in writing of the circumstances together with a photo of the child and, if possible, the parent. If a child is seen (or believed) to be taken from the school site by an unapproved adult, the police and parents will be immediately informed.

### **Measures in place to ensure a child does not go missing include:**

- Information to staff about challenging unknown persons on the premises
- Requirement for all visitors to register on arrival with the office, present evidence of identity on their first visit and obtain a visitor's badge
- Boundary security regularly checked by health and safety and maintenance teams.
- Supervision of children at all times
- Sufficient staff to maintain ratios appropriate to the venue and the nature of the activity being undertaken
- Collection and non-collection policy for children
- Rigorous risk assessments for trips

### **Following up an incident**

When the situation has been resolved the Headteacher and SLT will review the reasons for it happening. This will include:

- Reviewing the incident with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Assessing the effectiveness of risk assessment procedures.
- Taking written statements from and interviewing staff involved.

- Collecting information from any other relevant adult witnesses, including officials from the venue where a child has gone missing off-site.
- Discussion, as appropriate with pupils.
- Informing Bellevue Head Office to discuss the review and agree any further action.
- If the incident requires reporting to Ofsted, in respect of RIDDOR or any other official body, such action will be taken.
- The incident and effectiveness of subsequent action taken will be reviewed at the next Health and Safety Committee meeting.

SLT will issue advice to staff and pupils and implement any necessary measures to ensure that it does not happen again.

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