



LEWES OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Missing Child and Non Collection of Children Policy and Procedures

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PART ONE: MISSING CHILD POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all of our children at Lewes Old Grammar School 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 of EYFS and Early Years Children" 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

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in a detailed policy document: "Educational Visits for EYFS Children." Both documents are on our web site and can be provided to parents on request. We review these policies regularly (at least once a year) in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. All new staff receives a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of very young children.

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 Foundation Stage Co-ordinator, Head of the Junior Department and the Headmaster
- 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 as appropriate
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within school, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a 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 Headmaster, Head of the Junior School, Foundation Stage Co-ordinator as appropriate and the DSL's
- Ask the Headmaster, Head of the Junior School or Foundation Stage Co-ordinator as appropriate 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead, Head of the Junior School, Headmaster or the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator would notify the Police
- The Head of the Junior School, Headmaster or the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator as appropriate would arrange for 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, if it was thought they could have gone home
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board and LADO
- The school would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Children's Services
- Inform the Chairman of Trustees
- Ofsted and ISI would be informed
- The School's Insurers would be informed
- 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

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- The remaining children would be taken back to school
- Inform the Head of Early Years, Head of the Junior School, the Headmaster and the Designated Safeguarding Leads by mobile phone
- Ask the Head of Early Years, Head of Junior School and/or Headmaster 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 or the school at once
- Contact the venue Manager and arrange a search
- Contact the Police and a designated staff member is to remain at the venue until they arrive
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board and LADO
- The school would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Children's Services
- Inform the Chairman of Trustees
- Ofsted and ISI would be informed
- The School's Insurers would be informed

- 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 Foundation Stage Co-ordinator, Head of the Junior School and/or Headmaster will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator, Head of the Junior School and/or Headmaster will promise a full investigation if appropriate involving Children's Services/ Local Children Safeguarding Board and the LADO
- Media queries should be referred to the Headmaster
- 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.

PART TWO: PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent and/or carers. If there is no answer, the Head of the Nursery Department, The Head of the Junior School, or the Headmaster, or the teacher who is on duty or responsible for the trip will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after. If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a period of one hour from when the premises are closing or the trip returning, the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator, Head of the Junior School or Headmaster will contact the Children's Services Duty Officer on the following contact details:

Referral and Assessment Team

Duty and Assessment Team – West 01323 747373

Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5.00pm Friday - 8.30am – 4.30pm

Emergency Duty Service: 01273 335905 (after office hours)

Email: duty.0-19datwest@eastsussex.gov.uk

Under no circumstance do staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.

The Child stays in school in the care of two fully vetted workers until the child is safely collected by the parents/carers or by a social care worker.

Children's Services will make emergency arrangements for the child and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police. We will make a full written report of the incident.

Information for EYFS Parents

EYFS

Statement of intent

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedures

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator calls the police and reports the child as missing and then calls the parent.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator will carry out a thorough search of the building and outside areas.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator contacts the Head of Morley House and reports the incident. The Head Teacher carries out an investigation immediately.

Child going missing on an outing

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator and/or other staff back in the setting. If the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

- 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 staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator contacts the Head of Morley House and reports the incident. The Head Teacher carries out an investigation immediately.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator, or designated staff member may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator together with the Head of Morley House, speaks with the parent(s).
- The Head Teacher will carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:
 - the date and time of the report.

- what staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
- when the child was last seen in the group/outing.
- what has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
- 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. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see 'Dealing with Incidents' section of the Health & Safety Policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator and Head Teacher need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator and the other should be the Head Teacher. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.

- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The Head Teacher will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

Non-Collection of Children Policy

Statement of intent

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day, the setting puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child.

Aim

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult, we will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Methods

- Parents of children starting at the setting are asked to provide specific information which is recorded on our Registration Form:
 - home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative;
 - place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable);
 - mobile telephone number (if applicable);
 - names, addresses and telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent;
 - who has parental responsibility for the child; and
 - information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.
- On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they inform us in writing (in their child's daily communication book) of how they can be contacted.

- We operate a family password system in the setting. If someone other than the usual adults are to collect the child from the setting, they will be asked for the family password. If this is not known, we will not allow the child to be released until we have contacted the parent or authorised adult for permission.
- On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they provide us with written details (in their child's daily communication book) of the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child. To verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child, the setting will ask for the family password.
- Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number.
- We inform parents that we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our child protection policy in the event that their children are not collected from the setting by an authorised adult within one hour after the setting has closed and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises.
- If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we follow the following procedures:
 - The child's daily communication book is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines;
 - If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work;
 - If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form - are contacted;
 - All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers;
 - The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in the daily communication book;
 - If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children;
 - We contact our local authority Duty & Assessment Team: 01323 747373
Emergency Duty Service out of hours number: 01273 335905 or 335906
 - The child stays at the setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker.
 - Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative, if they are unable to do so, the child will be admitted into the care of the local authority.
 - Under no circumstances do staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.

- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.
- Ofsted may be informed: (telephone number: 0300 123 1231)
- Our local Pre-school Learning Alliance office/Pre-School Development Manager may also be informed: Mrs Sheelagh Mahoney (South Division: 020 7697 2599).

Recommended review period: Annual
Review by: DSL, Compliance and HR Manager
Date reviewed: September 2017
Date to be reviewed: September 2018