**Aims**

The purpose of this policy is to give all staff, teaching and non-teaching, a clear understanding of how to respond and who to inform should they discover a child is missing

* from the class
* from the site
* from home
* from the country
* including after leaving the BSM

Staff need to be mindful that a child can go missing at any time of the day. The times and examples of the occasions providing opportunities for a child to go missing include:-

a) From an indoor lesson

This could occur when a child is allowed to leave the classroom unaccompanied by an adult and fails to return;

* to go to the toilet,
* to collect something from his/her bag in the cloakroom
* being sent to another class or teacher
* undertaking errands for the teacher

b) From an outdoor lesson

This could occur when the class are outside the building with the children spread out and/or engaged in a variety of activities that make it is easy for a child to wander away unnoticed;

* during games lessons on the playground or field
* during other outdoor lessons,
* at the beginning or end of outdoor lessons when children are getting changed or using the toilet, drinking fountains etc.

c) Travelling about the school

This could occur when the children are spread out and beyond the teacher’s direct total supervision.

* going to and from the hall or outdoors before and after a PE lesson
* going to and from the gym before and after assembly
* going to and from the classroom at the beginning/end of lunch/break times.

d) Other times

These include:

* at the start of the school day when children are freely moving about the grounds and building
* to get to their cloakroom and classroom
* at break and lunch times
* at the end of the school day when children and parents are freely moving about
* during off-site lessons such as PE, including during transporting to PE sites
* on school visits

A register is taken at least twice a day in school, in the morning and afternoon, and each lesson in Senior. In addition, registers are taken on residential trips, with the group and a duplicate left with the relevant Head of School/Reception.

On trips, children are made aware of the boundaries of each activity at briefings.

**On discovering a child is missing**

It is important that the person who discovers a child is missing knows what to do. The action taken will depend on who discovers the child is missing. Therefore, the following action should be taken by the following personnel.

**Voluntary helpers’ responsibilities**

Notify the teacher immediately. If the teacher is not available they must inform the classroom support staff if there is one, or, if there is not, the nearest available teacher. They should state the name of the child (if known) or a description of the child (if the child’s name is not known to them), what the child was last seen doing and where, and how long since they last saw the child. Thereafter they should assist with any organised search for the child as directed by the teacher or the Head.

**Classroom support staff responsibilities**

Notify the class teacher immediately. If the teacher is not available they must inform the nearest available teacher. They should state the name of the child and what he/she was last seen doing and where, and how long since they last saw the child. Thereafter they should assist with any organised search for the child or supervision of the rest of the class as directed by the teacher or the Head.

**Lunchtime supervisors’ responsibilities**

Notify a teacher immediately, or the Deputy or Head (whoever is found first). They should state the name of the child (if known) or a description of the child (if the child’s name is not known to them), what the child was last seen doing and where, and how long since they last saw the child. Thereafter they should assist with any organised search for the child or supervision of the rest of the children as directed by the Lunch Supervisor or the Head or Deputy.

**Teachers’ responsibilities**

Conduct a search of the immediate surroundings, i.e.

* indoors - in the classroom (looking under tables, work surfaces and other possible hiding places such as cupboards), adjacent work areas and classrooms, nearby cloakrooms and toilets.
* outdoors - in the immediate area where the child was last seen including looking under bushes and up trees, behind the portacabins, etc.

[NB The teacher may quickly arrange for another adult (e.g. support staff or neighbouring teacher) to supervise their class while they conduct any search away from the class for which they are responsible].

If this initial search does not find the child the teacher shall inform a senior member of staff or the Deputy who will begin a wider search of the school buildings and grounds including searching public areas in other parts of the school e.g. library areas, toilet and cloakroom areas, corridors, hall, other classrooms, etc.

**Deputy Heads’ responsibilities**

Lead the management of the situation. Ensure that the class from which the child is missing is supervised. Lead the search for the missing child by checking the class room or location where the child went missing from then a wider search of the school site or location, asking for support from other staff as necessary directing others where to search. If possible, try to contact the child by phone.

If this search does not discover the missing child within a reasonable time the teacher must inform the relevant Head of School and the Principal (directly or via the school office) of the missing child and the facts surrounding the child’s disappearance.

**Head/Principal’s responsibilities**

When the Head or Principal is satisfied that the child is not on the premises s/he will contact the child’s parents and inform them of the situation and enquire if the child has returned home. They will also seek approval to call the child’s mobile if they have one. If the child is at home the parents will be informed by telephone of the known facts surrounding the child going missing. If the child is not at home the Head or Principal will, in consultation with the parents, begin a search outside of the school premises. If the parents cannot be contacted at home the Head or Principal (or other adults as directed by the Head or Principal) will begin a search outside of the school’s immediate premises. This may include a visit to the child’s home if this is near the school. If the child is not found within a reasonable length of time (dependent on the age/emotional maturity of the child) the Head, Principal or other staff if so directed by them will inform the police and, as appropriate, the social services (Tribunale di Minori) and the Chair of Governors of the child’s disappearance. Thereafter the Principal will follow the instructions of the police regarding the continuation of the search for the child.

**Child goes missing from an off-site location (eg from PE or whilst on a school visit)**

From PE

* Contact the relevant SLT member immediately
* Staff will check grounds and rooms to ensure the child has not hidden or been locked in anywhere within the boundary of the PE location
* If possible, staff to phone the child on their mobile
* A member of SLT will travel to the site, if possible one member of PE staff to stay on site until the member of SLT arrives, other PE staff to return with children to school
* The Principal will be informed and contact the parent/carers and the police if necessary.

On a school visit

* If a child is found to be missing while on a school trip the staff supervising should contact the relevant Head of School immediately
* Keep the rest of the group together and check the register again
* While one member of staff supervises the rest of the group, the other members of staff should look in the area for the child while waiting for the Head/Deputy to advise them
* If possible, staff to phone the child on their mobile
* The member of SLT will decide on the course of action depending on the location, timing, circumstances of the trip and keep the staff on the outing informed of the course of action

**Missing Children Seen Running Off the Premises**

If, during the search, the missing child is seen leaving the premises, the member of staff witnessing this must inform the most senior member of staff immediately available if possible or, if none is available, send a message to the office without losing sight of the child if possible.

As a general rule staff should not chase a child beyond the school boundary for fear the child becomes scared and runs away. Instead they should report to a senior member of staff and available colleague and explain where they last saw the child and the direction the child was heading so that this information can be communicated to staff, the parents or police as appropriate. The member of staff should then return to their normal duties unless directed otherwise by the senior member of staff to help in the search. A senior member of staff and colleague will then follow the child, keeping them in sight and communicating if possible via a mobile.

* + If a child insists on leaving the premises with the knowledge of the staff and cannot be persuaded by staff to stay on site, parents/carers will be contacted immediately.
  + If appropriate, and enough staff are available to enable one to leave the site with a mobile phone, the staff member with a member of SLT if possible will follow and observe where the child is going, keeping them in sight and communicating if possible via a mobile with school. If a child is followed beyond the school boundary the member of staff must behave in a manner that is not threatening to the child. They must not run after the child as this may cause the child to run into a dangerous situation, e.g. the child might run into a road without looking out for traffic in an attempt to evade the pursuing, running adult.
  + If there are not enough staff to leave the site to observe the child an SLT member may decide the child is unsafe and call the police.

In exceptional circumstances where a child is known to be liable to run off the premises, the school may prepare and enact contingency search plans involving named staff. When enacting these plans staff should be mindful not to put themselves or the child at risk.

**Investigations**

When a missing child has been located and safely returned to school, the child’s family or the police, the Principal/Head will conduct an investigation into the circumstances of the child going missing. This is in order to identify any factors that need to be addressed by the school or communicated to the parents to prevent a recurrence of the child going missing.

**Monitoring**

The School is aware that a pupil failing to attend School regularly or being absent without the School’s permission is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. If a child does not attend school and no reason is given for their absence, parents/carers will be contacted to ensure they are aware of the pupil’s absence from school and can inform school about the reason for the pupil’s absence. Pupils who have been recorded as missing from School, without reason, for a continuous period of 5 days or more are monitored closely and if there is a concern that they are at risk of ‘going missing from education’ the Italian authorities will be alerted/consulted if it is considered appropriate.

**To be read in conjunction with:**

Children Missing in Education - Statutory Guidance September 2016

Safeguarding Policy

Accident and Incident Recording Policy

Educational Visits