

LEARNING TOGETHER TO BE OUR BEST

**DOVER PARK  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**Missing Child Policy**

Date agreed: January 2021

Review date: January 2024

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair Board of Governors

## Revision Record

Revision No.	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved	Comments
1	6 February 2015	AW	FGB	New school – New Policy
2	14 February 2017	AW	FGB	Amended
3	February 2019	AW	FGB	Review
4	January 2021	AW	FGB	Review

### Aims

- To minimise the possibility of a child being lost/missing at school.
- To minimise the possibility of a child being lost/missing on an educational visit.
- To outline the procedure that should be followed in the event of a child being lost at school or on an educational visit.
- To follow up a child having been lost at school or on an educational visit.

### Minimizing the possibility of a child being lost at school

At Dover Park Primary School children in Reception-Y4 are expected to be brought to, and collected from school by their parents or a known adult. Year 5 and 6 pupils are permitted to travel to and from school alone, with written permission from their parent/guardian. This minimizes the possibility of very young pupils becoming lost/going missing on the way to school.

Children enter the school through the front gate on Dover Street, the side gate entrances at Winton Street or Park Road or through the front door if late. This reduces the possibility of children arriving at school unnoticed. Gates are opened at 8.40am and staff are on duty at each gate until the gates are locked at 8.50am. Pupils cannot leave the school site unnoticed.

All children are registered between 8.50am and 9.00am and registers are returned to the office immediately after being taken via SIMS. Parents are asked to telephone the school before 9am if their child will be absent and they haven't already given notice about this through a leave of absence form. The registers are checked by the school administrator and any unexplained absences are followed up with a phone call home by 9.30am, to ensure that the school and parent knows the whereabouts of each child.

Registers are formally taken again at the beginning of the afternoon session. Class Teachers should immediately check with the school office if a child is unexpectedly not present for the afternoon session. Any children, who go in and out of school during the course of the day for appointments or the like, must be signed in and out by the parent at the school office. If the child cannot be accounted for, follow the procedure outlined below.

Staff should check whether all children are present at the beginning of each lesson (this need not be done with a formal register) and if not, establish whether the child has been in school that day. If necessary, send a TA/SNA or a note via a responsible pair of children to the school office to check.

Children are told that they must not open any of the doors or gates that create an exit to the premises and all doors/gates are either locked or alarmed. All staff are asked to be vigilant about any open doors and gates and ensure that they are closed and where necessary, padlocked immediately. If a child is waiting to be collected they must remain in the school office or within the main part of the school and be supervised by a member of school staff. Any child seen leaving the premises unaccompanied at any time of the day, should be challenged.

Class Teachers should all be present on the classroom door (EYFS) the class fire exit door (KS1) or the school playground (KS2), to see their class out at the end of the school day. Any uncollected children should be taken to the school office and NOT permitted to leave unaccompanied or with another parent, unless prior notice has been provided by the parent to the class teacher/school office. If prior permission has not been granted the parent/carer or adult on the school contact list must be contacted by phone and give verbal consent before the child is permitted to leave. Only pupils in Y5&6 can leave the premises alone and only with written parental permission.

All after school club leaders should check that the expected pupils are present at the beginning of the activity by taking a register. The office must be informed promptly that all the children are present or whether anyone is missing. Office staff must check the whereabouts of the child as outlined below, but checking first with the class teacher as to whether they saw the child being collected after school that day and by whom. It is usually the case that the child has been collected instead of attending a club but this must not be assumed. At the end of the club, the club leader is responsible for ensuring that each child is collected by their parent/carer or has permission to travel home alone (Y5&6 pupils only). If a child is not collected after an after school club, they should be taken to the school office, who will telephone their parents. They must remain in the office and be supervised until they are collected. If the child is not collected by 5pm social services should be informed.

After school club staff (Chatterbox & Cheeky Chimps) should check that children are on their list before taking them and should challenge where pupils who are on their list are not present.

### **Children in Years 5 and 6**

If parents wish children to cycle/walk to or from school unaccompanied at the end of the day, they must advise the Head teacher in writing or complete a consent form. Class Teachers will receive a copy of the letter acknowledging this arrangement. A list of such pupils will be kept in the office, on SIMs and in the pupil's file.

### **Minimizing the possibility of a child being lost on an educational visit**

The teacher in charge of the visit will have an accurate list of all children on the visit. All children need to be counted frequently throughout the visit, especially when they are re-grouping after a visit to the toilets or a shop etc. Depending on the nature of the visit, group leaders will also take responsibility for ensuring that their group is accounted for at certain times during the visit. Children should also be encouraged to take responsibility for each other and notice if someone is missing.

All the children and adults are given a safety briefing before an educational visit and a risk assessment must be completed and shared. All children should be reminded about remaining with their group leader or within a designated area.  
(Please refer to the Educational Visits Policy for further details).

### **Procedure if a child is lost at school**

- Establish with the class teacher/TA whether the child has been in school that day or whether they have gone on a legitimate visit and have been signed out. Check with the office to see if there is a message from the parent about collecting them early etc.

- Check with the office whether they know if the child has left the premises.
- Check that the child is not in a music lesson, an activity or in an after school club or at Chatterbox/ Cheeky Chimps.
- Without causing undue alarm, **establish where the child was last seen**; try to verify this with an adult rather than just a child's word.
- Ensure that the rest of the children are safe whilst a thorough search is conducted of the premises, inside and out by all non-teaching staff. Walkie Talkies will be distributed and search areas designated by the school office. Check everywhere, including unlikely areas, in cloakrooms, under coats, toilets, etc - anywhere a child could hide.
- Check all available exits and alarms.
- If all possibilities have been explored and the child cannot be accounted for, the Head must be informed (or Deputy in her absence) and the parents must be phoned.
- If the parents cannot account for the whereabouts of the child it will be necessary to phone the Police.
- Staff to establish a timeline of the child's movements that day so that emergency services know when and where the child was last reliably seen.

### **Procedure if a child is lost on an educational visit**

- Establish where the child was last seen and with whom.
- Inform group leader.
- If in groups, check with all the other groups to see if the child has joined a different group.
- Ensure that the rest of the children are safe whilst a thorough search is conducted of the area.
- Retrace previous steps/areas visited.
- Depending on the location of the visit, the group leader should inform any relevant authorities for their assistance in locating the missing child. E.g. information point, centre staff etc.
- The group leader should inform local police or other appropriate authority e.g. coast guard.
- The group leader should contact the Headteacher/Deputy at the school to inform of the situation and the action taken.
- The group leader should liaise with the Head about contacting parents and should inform the Head immediately the child is found.

### **To follow up a child having been lost at school or on an educational visit:**

Once a child has been found it is necessary to carry out an investigation to establish how the child was lost in order to minimise the likelihood of the event recurring. An incident form must be completed.

If the child was lost at school, the Headteacher will conduct an investigation into how this occurred and will address any matters arising from this.

If the child was lost on an educational visit the Group Leader will need to prepare a report for the Headteacher on the circumstances regarding the incident. The Head will address any issues arising from this and will liaise with the Educational Visits Coordinator regarding any amendments that may need to be made to the Educational Visits Policy.

## **Children Missing from Education**

Children's attendance will be scrutinised daily. If a child has been absent for longer than 3 days and the school has not been able to contact a parent or relative during that time the Education Inclusion Service will be informed and a home visit will be requested.

A CME form will be completed by the school and sent to the LA. Further information can be found in the following places.

[http://4lscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_child\\_miss\\_edu.html](http://4lscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_child_miss_edu.html)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/395138/Children\\_missing\\_education\\_Statutory\\_guidance\\_for\\_local\\_authorities.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/395138/Children_missing_education_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf)

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

- Safeguarding Policy and procedures
- Child Protection Policy
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Recording and information sharing
- Complaints
- Safer Recruitment
- E-safety
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-bullying
- Health and Safety
- Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person

***This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.***