



**RGS**  
DODDERHILL

## **Missing Child Policy**

### **Introduction:**

The School has a statutory duty of care to all of its pupils to provide a safe environment and to ensure their health, safety and welfare at all times. This policy applies to the Nursery, Prep and Senior School and should be read in conjunction with the School's other policies including, but not limited to, the Safeguarding Policy, The Admissions and Attendance Policies and Procedures.

### **Aims:**

The aims of the Missing Child Policy are as follows:

- To ensure the safety of all pupils
- To ensure that we are able to find any child that goes missing either in School or on an activity outside of School as quickly as possible.
- To communicate effectively and to an appropriate timescale with everyone concerned.
- To follow up incidents and review procedures accordingly.

### **Missing Child Procedure (at School):**

If the class teacher or member of staff involved, including peripatetic music teachers, have concerns about the whereabouts of a pupil they should immediately inform the School Office. This should be done by either calling the internal extension, seeking assistance from another member of staff or sending a pupil with a message to the School Office. In addition, an email should be sent to the school office.

The office will then immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) all members of SLT and the School Nurse, so that they can assist in determining the pupil's whereabouts.

The IT department will be asked either by the DSL or by someone designated by them to try to trace, if possible, the pupil's iPad to see if this can assist with locating the pupil. (The IT department will ensure that any iPads loaned to pupils whose iPad is lost or being repaired are recorded as being in that pupil's possession so that they can try to trace the iPad if necessary and therefore possibly locate the pupil).

The office will then check with Learning Development, the Music lessons list, LAMDA lessons list, Counselling lists, School site supervisor and Relevant School trip lists to ensure pupils are not in any of these sessions.

If the pupil is not with any of the above staff, then the staff in the school office that are available at the time will begin a search of the School grounds. In most instances the DSL will direct staff accordingly, but if they are unavailable, the office Administrator and the School Nurse will contact the Deputy DSLs. Staff searching the site should carry walkie talkies or mobile phones.

- One member of staff to check the Goodman building;
- One member of staff to check the Atrium;
- One member of staff to check sport Hall, Link and Changing Rooms;
- One member of staff to check Maths and Science;
- One member of staff to check Hillcourt House and the Dining Room.

A member of staff will then be instructed by the DSL or the DSL themselves will speak to the missing pupil's friends to try to ascertain any relevant information. If the pupil is in Year Seven or above the DSL will seek to get the missing pupil's mobile telephone number. The DSL, or the relevant member of SLT, will then decide whether the telephone number should be called or a text sent via a friend in order to try to communicate with the missing pupil.

After 15 minutes, all staff involved in the search will meet back in the School Office. If the search has been unsuccessful the DSL, (or their Deputy), and the Head will be notified.

If there is a reason to believe the pupil has left the School (e.g. information provided by one of the missing pupil's friends), the DSL, Head or member of SLT will make the decision to call the pupil's parents. If the parents cannot be contacted the DSL, Head or member of SLT will try to contact any of the alternative contacts that the pupil's parents have provided the School with and the School may take the decision to seek advice from the Police.

If the parents are unable to locate or contact their child immediately, the DSL, Head or member of SLT will advise them to contact the police.

#### **Missing Child Procedure (on a School trip):**

The member of staff in charge of the group from which the child goes missing will alert the members of staff accompanying the trip and/or other party leader. The members of staff in charge of all the other groups will check no other pupils are missing and the Party Leader will gather the whole group together at a predetermined assembly point.

The party leader will inform the Emergency SLT Contact and Security at the venue. The party leader and Security will liaise and organise a thorough search for the missing pupil.

The Emergency SLT contact will inform the DSL.

The DSL, Head or member of the SLT will contact the missing pupil's parents.

If the parents cannot be contacted the DSL, Head or member of the SLT will try to contact any of the alternative contacts that the pupil's parents have provided the School with and the School may take the decision to seek advice from the Police.

If the parents are unable to locate or contact their child immediately, the DSL, Head or member of the SLT will advise them to contact the Police.

In the event of an emergency or that Senior Staff cannot be contacted, the party leader will need to decide when to contact parents and/or the Police or any other appropriate emergency service.

#### **Communicating Outcome:**

As soon as the missing child has been located, the DSL must be made aware and will then ensure that parents and all staff dealing with the matter are also made aware.

#### **Reporting:**

Whether the incident occurs at School or on a trip, the member of staff directly involved will, once the pupil has been found, write a report detailing:-

- The date and time when the pupil was reported as missing
- Which staff were present
- When and where the pupil was last seen
- What was taking place at the time

A copy of this report needs to be forwarded to the Director of Finance and Operations for inclusion in the Accident Book.

The Head will inform the Chairman of Governors if appropriate.

Any resulting Child Protection issues must be referred to the DSL and logged on MyConcern.

### **Reintegration and Follow-up:**

The pupil will return to school when all agencies supporting the pupil and their family have been consulted and agree that it is in the best interests of the pupil to do so. A member of the Pastoral Team, normally the DSL or a Deputy DSL, will oversee reintegration for the pupil, seek advice and guidance from any external agencies and liaise with the pupil's parents. The member of staff overseeing reintegration will take time to speak to the pupil, on more than one occasion if required, to seek to fully understand why they went missing and what the School can do to support the pupil. Such support could include, but is not limited to, offering sessions with the school counsellor, a referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Children's social care. In some circumstances issuing a sanction may also be appropriate.

### **Staff Training:**

The DSL, Head or member of the SLT will remind staff at staff meetings of the procedures at the start of each academic year. The DSL and the HR Manager are to ensure new staff are familiar with the Policy during induction.

Detailed arrangements for the supervision of pupils and for action on a missing pupil are included in the Staff Handbook.

Review: the DSL and The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be responsible for the review of this policy annually and for evaluating the effectiveness of all procedures concerning supervision of pupils based on any incidents reported and in the light of any new legislation.

Sponsor: Deputy Head (Pastoral) and DSL

Endorsed by the Chairman of Governors September 2019.

Reviewed: September 2020

Reviewed: August 2021

Reviewed: April 2023 with SAC as DSL and ACC as Acting Head

Reviewed: August 2023