

# **REDDIFORD SCHOOL**

## **Missing Child Policy & Procedures for when a child is not collected on time (including Early Years Department)**

In conjunction with Reddiford's  
'Safeguarding Policy' and 'Prevent Policy'  
for children missing education.

Also, the Registration Policy

This policy consists of two parts, the first covering a missing child and the second covering the procedure to be followed by the school in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appointed time. Parents should have their attention drawn to the existence of both procedures, in for example, the policy covering the information for parents of EYFS and Early Years Children. There are also clear linkages between this policy and policies on Child Protection and Safer Recruitment, all of which apply to the Early Years Department in exactly the same way as they apply to the whole school. The policy is regularly reviewed and updated to keep pace with changes to the EYFS framework.

#### Related policies

- Safeguarding/ Child Protection
- Health and Safety Policy (including EYD) inc. trips
- Risk Assessments for Trip (including EYD)
- Policy for Induction of New Staff, Governors and Volunteers.
- Recruitments Policy.
- Prevent Policy

#### **Part One: Missing Child Policy**

The welfare of all Reddiford children is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that they have 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 they are in our care.

#### **Information for parents**

Various school policies describe:

- 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 the morning and the afternoon.
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building.
- The supervision of the playground

All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of very young children.

**Action 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 the register in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- If a child is missing inform the Head Teacher and Head of Department.
- Ask all adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child.
- Occupy all the other children in their classroom(s) eg by reading to them
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the Department, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, toilets where a small child might hide.
- Check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit.

If the child is still missing after no more than 30 minutes (15 mins EYFS), the following steps would be taken:

- Ask the Head of Department/Head of school 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 Head of Department/Head of School would notify the Police.
- The Head of Department/Head of School 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 in case they are heading that way.
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- Inform the Chair of Governors.
- Ofsted would be informed – EYD.
- The Insurers would be informed.
- If the child is injured when found 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.

If a child goes missing at the end of the day, during the dismissal process, there is always the possibility that they have been collected by another adult and the teacher has missed this. Of course, due diligence is always given to the dismissal process but the possibility cannot be ruled out. The following action will be taken;

- The teacher will ask the other staff and children if they have noticed the missing child going with another adult.
- The teacher will check that they have not gone to a school club unexpectedly.

- All the adults listed on the child's dismissal form will be phoned.
- The teacher/dept secretary will be in constant contact with the parents in case there is any news.
- If the Head Teacher/Dept Head agrees with the parents that the child cannot be accounted for after 30 mins then the police will be called.
- Further action will be on the advice of the police.

**Action 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- and a register taken.
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity.
- Contact the venue Manager and arrange a search.
- The remaining children would be taken back to school or occupied by an appropriate number of staff.
- Inform the Head of Department and Head Teacher.
- Ask the Head of Department/Head Teacher 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/ the school] at once.
- Contact the Police.
- The DSL would inform Harrow Social Services.
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- Inform the Chair of Governors.
- Ofsted would be informed – EYD.
- The Insurers would be informed.
- If the child is injured when found 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.

**Action to be followed by staff once a 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 Head of the Department/Head Teacher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Head of the Department/Head Teacher will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/Harrow Strategic Safeguarding Partnership)
- Media queries should be referred to the Head Teacher.
- 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: Procedure to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time.**

If a child is not collected within the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers and place the child in our extended day facilities so that they are looked after safely.

We will continue to try and contact the parents or carers but if the child is not collected by the end of the extended day activities the person responsible for the activity will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child.

If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers, or the emergency numbers when the premises are closing, (school closes at 6.00pm) the person caring for the child will contact the Social Care Duty Officer and, if possible, the Head of the Department and Head Teacher. Social Care 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.

**We undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care.**

*We acknowledge the assistance provided by guidance documents prepared by the following public bodies, charities and not for profit organisations:*

- *The DfE*
- *The Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI)*
- *The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)*
- *The Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS) for their assistance with this document*

**Registration process (taken from the Registration Policy)**

Reddiford School takes an attendance register twice a day at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Parents are encouraged to telephone/email the school and inform them of the reason for their child's absence. If the absence is known in advance e.g. a medical appointment, then an authorised absence form would be completed. In the event of an unexplained absence, when the register closes at 9.00, the school office will telephone the parent/guardian and inquire the reason for the absence.

If a reason for the child absence is not ascertained before 10.00. despite phoning and emailing then the designated child protection officer will be informed and a decision made as to whether to inform social services taking into consideration the level of risk established. Obviously, every effort will be made to ascertain why the child is absent and if they are in any danger.