

# Missing Child Policy



**Reviewed Autumn 2019 by Mrs Hewitt**

**This procedure will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if necessary**

**Approved By:**

**Signed.....Date.....**

## **Aims**

Children may not always be where they should be, rarely is this anything other than the children disappearing before turning up again of their own accord. At Dove Bank Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off the premises. Every care is taken to ensure our children are accounted for at all times. Every member of staff has equal responsibility in ensuring the safety of the children and knowing where they are.

All school buildings are used in such a way as to minimise the chance of the children removing themselves from the main group without being noticed, whilst allowing them a free choice of activities. However, in the unlikely event that it is suspected that a child has gone missing the following procedures will be followed to ensure we do all we can to find them.

## **Procedures**

### **1. Systems in place to minimise the risk of a child going missing**

- Children are marked against the attendance register.
- Staff must be aware of how many children are present and do regular head counts, particularly when moving between areas.
- When moving between areas, where possible one member of staff will be in front of the children, preventing them from running ahead, and another at the back ensuring all children stay together.
- Key workers/Teaching Staff/Teaching Assistants of children new to the setting should take extra care and ensure the children know the boundaries of where they can and cannot go.
- External gates are kept closed, and secured.

### **2. Child going missing on premises**

- The Headteacher will be informed and the staff will ensure all remaining children are satisfactorily supervised while retaining a safe and calm atmosphere.
- The registers are checked to make sure all the other children are accounted for.
- The Headteacher talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen
- A thorough search will be carried out of the building and the immediate surrounding area including the toilets, cupboards, and storerooms. Along with all other areas capable of hiding a child. School exits are checked to make sure they are still secure.
- If the child is located, two staff members to check whether he or she is injured. The Headteacher will call the child's parents to tell them what has happened and to record the conversation on the Child Protection concerns form where appropriate. Parents/carer to sign the form when they collect the child.
- After 15 minutes if the child is not found the parent/carer is contacted and the Headteacher reports the missing child to the police.
- On the arrival of the police and the child's parents/carer the Headteacher will be responsible for appraising them of all the information in respect of the missing child and what action has been taken
- The Headteacher will keep the team and parents informed of what is happening

### **3. Child going missing on an outing**

This describes what to do when children go on an outing from school.

## Missing Child Policy

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff make sure that all children stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that all other children are accounted for.
- The remaining group will position themselves at the exits to watch for the missing child.
- One staff member familiar to the child searches the immediate vicinity.
- Staff contact the venue's security who will handle a wider search.
- The school and Headteacher are informed and the Headteacher will contact the police.
- The Headteacher contacts the parent/carer, who makes their way to the school or outing venue as agreed with the Headteacher.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the transport/school.
- The Headteacher or a designated staff member may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

## After Event

- Following the incident, statements must be taken from all staff working in the group from which the child went missing. This should be done on the same day.
- As soon as possible after the incident the Headteacher must report the incident in the incident book and inform:- All parents/carers and Staffordshire LA (when appropriate)
- Review of systems and procedures looking at Risk Assessments and Training.