



**DULWICH PREP LONDON**  
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## **EARLY YEARS MISSING CHILD PROCEDURES**



**Person responsible for these procedures:**

Head of Early Years

**This policy was last reviewed in:**

August 2023

## **EARLY YEARS - MISSING CHILD PROCEDURES**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Early Years Section is committed to keeping the children in our care safe at all times. There are procedures and risk assessments in place to ensure that children do not go missing. See in particular:

- Arrangements for Supervision of Pupils Throughout the School Day;
- Arrivals, Departures and Late Collection Procedures;
- Rainbow Club Procedures;
- Educational Visits Procedures;
- General Inside Risk Assessment;
- Field Lunchtime Risk Assessment;
- Ecology Risk Assessment (covering the wood and field); and
- One Off Risk Assessments (e.g. for educational visits and events in school environs).

### **2. ONSITE**

In the unlikely event of a child being lost while in our care the following procedures will be followed:

- The notified staff will obtain the name (first and surname) and description of the child (including what they are wearing) and as much information as possible about the circumstances.
- Staff will ensure that the safety of everyone else on site is not compromised.
- As soon as a child is thought to be missing, the Early Years Head of Section (HoS) and the Early Years Receptionist / Secretary will be told. In the event the HoS is absent this role will be covered by the AHoS.
- The Early Years Receptionist / Secretary will use the walkie talkie and class buzzer system to inform as many staff as possible and ask if they have seen the child.
- An immediate search must be started:
  - The maintenance person to the car park;
  - HoS to the main road from the main gate;
  - AHoS to the wood;

- Playleaders to the playground;
- General, PE and Skills & Strategies teachers to the main gate;
- The Domestic Staff will search the kitchens and medical room;
- Teachers remain with the children ensuring that they stay calm and are adequately supervised; and
- If safe to do so, the Early Years Practitioners can search the building.
- Staff leaving the building should take mobile phones (and walkie talkies) if available and stay in contact with the school.

### **3. IF A CHILD GOES MISSING AT PICK UP TIME (E.G. ONCE DISMISSED)**

- If a child goes missing at the end of the day, once dismissed, the notified staff will obtain the name of the adult picking up and tell them to notify the Early Years Receptionist / Secretary when the child is found (so staff can stop looking).
- The notified member of staff will tell the HoS/AHoS/Early Years Receptionist/ Secretary who will tell other staff.
- Staff will be deployed as follows:
  - The maintenance person to the car park;
  - HoS to the main road from the main gate;
  - AHoS to the wood;
  - Playleaders to the playground;
  - Pastoral & Skills & Strategies teachers to door; and
  - The Early Years Receptionist/Secretary to ring all classes to ask them to look.
- Once the child has been found the staff member/parent/carer who finds the child must report to the Early Years Receptionist immediately so they can communicate this to everyone looking.

### **4. IF A CHILD IS LOCATED IMMEDIATELY**

If a child is located immediately:

- Staff will check whether the child has any injuries and if they do, call for the assistance of a paediatric first aider or School Nurse or ambulance if necessary.
- If the child is unwilling to return, call the HoS or AHoS or Early Years Receptionist /

Secretary to get the class teacher or a key person that the child trusts.

- The Key Workers or HoS will make a report of the incident and inform the parents.

## **5. IF A CHILD IS NOT LOCATED IMMEDIATELY (WITHIN 10 MINUTES):**

If a child is not located immediately (within 10 minutes):

- The HoS or AhoS or School Receptionist / Secretary will contact the police using 999.
- The police will want to know:
  - Where you are (address of setting);
  - Details of the child's next of kin;
  - A detailed description of the child including date of birth, sex, working from head to toe to include as much of a description of clothing as possible;
  - The circumstances of the incident including anything that may have triggered the disappearance;
  - How long the child has been missing;
  - Where the child was last seen; and
  - Who is looking for the child and where they are.
- The incident must be documented so far, including any conversations and advice from the police.
- The HoS will contact the parents/carer and calls must be made until the child is found.
- The Head Master and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed.
- The HoS and AHoS are responsible for staff deployment to ensure sufficient adult to pupil ratios so that the safety of the children is not compromised.

## **6. WHEN A 'MISSING' CHILD IS FOUND:**

When a 'missing' child is found the following procedure will be followed:

- Talk to, take care of and comfort the child, if necessary.
- All staff will be told.
- The HoS will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The HoS will inform the police.
- Media queries should be referred to the Critical Incident Team.

- The Head Master will oversee a full investigation.
- All the staff involved will be required to provide written statements as soon as possible after the event.
- The incident report will cover: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the length of time that the child was missing and how they appeared to have gone missing and how and where they were found.
- The relevant whole school policies, Early Years Procedures and Early Years Risk Assessments will be reviewed to ensure that the systems in place are effective.
- All Early Years staff will be informed of the changes in a staff meeting.
- The Early Years pupils will be reminded about how to keep safe – through class circle times and assemblies.
- The HoS will make a report for the Health and Safety Committee and present this at a meeting.
- The Head Master, Bursar and Head of the Early Years will inform others as required e.g. the local safeguarding board, governing body, ISI and insurers and cooperate fully with any investigation.

## **7. IN THE EVENT THAT A CHILD IS LOST DURING A SCHOOL TRIP**

Children are provided with a Lost and Lonely card to keep in their pocket. The cards give the school name and phone number, the trip destination and contact number and information about what to do if you are lost.

In the event that a child is lost during a school trip the following procedures will be followed:

- As soon as a child is thought to be missing on a school trip the staff should tell the Visit Leader immediately.
- The Visit Leader is responsible for staff deployment to ensure sufficient adult to pupil ratios so that the safety of the children is not compromised. She/he will organise for some staff to search for the missing child and others to supervise the children.
- Supervising staff will carry out an immediate head count to ensure that all the other children are present.
- Other staff will search the immediate vicinity.
- The Visit Leader will contact the Venue Manager to ask for assistance with the search.
- The Visit Leader will inform the Head of the Early Years Section (deputy designated

Safeguarding Lead) by phone.

- If the child is not found after ten minutes the Visit Leader should contact the Police.
- The Head of the Early Years Section will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened and what steps have been set in motion. The parents will be asked to come to the venue/school at once. The parents will be kept informed and assigned a primary point of contact.
- The Head of the Early Years Section or Assistant Head of Section will inform the Head Master or another member of SLT and a critical incident will be initiated.
- Staff will take the remaining children back to school when deemed appropriate to do so.

## **8. WHEN A 'MISSING' CHILD ON A SCHOOL TRIP IS FOUND**

When a 'missing' child on a school trip is found, the following procedure will be followed:

- Talk to, take care of and comfort the child, if necessary.
- The Visit Leader will inform the Head of the Early Years Section.
- The Head of the Early Years Section will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Head of the Early Years Section will inform the police.
- Media queries should be referred to the Head Master and the Critical Incident Team.
- The Head Master will oversee a full investigation.
- All the staff involved will be required to provide written statements as soon as possible after the event.
- The incident report will cover: 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 they appeared to have gone missing and how and where they were found.
- The relevant whole school policies, Early Years Procedures and Early Years Risk Assessments will be reviewed to ensure that the systems in place are effective.
- All Early Years staff will be informed of the changes in a staff meeting.
- The Early Years pupils will be reminded about how to keep safe – through class circle times and assemblies.
- The Head of the Early Years Section will make a report for the Health and Safety Committee and present this at a meeting.

- The Head Master, Bursar and Head of the Early Years Section will inform others as required e.g. the local safeguarding board, governing body, ISI and insurers and cooperate fully with any investigation.

*These procedures are reviewed at least annually and more frequently if required.*

*Statutory Framework for EYFS 2023*