



St Mary & St Thomas Church of England Primary School



Lost Child Policy

**Author: Headteacher
Owner: CEO/Directors
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We are a rights respecting school. All our policies and procedures are written and reviewed to ensure that children's rights, as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, are respected and promoted and this policy ensures:

Article 19: Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

For more information on the convention and the rights of each child visit: <http://www.unicef.org.uk/>

STATEMENT OF INTENT

In the event of a child becoming lost, whilst in the care of the school, we will immediately put into place the procedures detailed below. These ensure that a systematic approach to finding the child is taken and consideration is given to the levels of risk to the child.

AIM

We will ensure that:

- a search is made for the child as soon as they are discovered missing
- parents and authorities are notified at the appropriate stage
- a high level of care is maintained to other children whilst procedures are followed.

PROCEDURES

If a child goes missing from school:

- The Principal/most senior member of staff will be informed.
- The teacher in charge will carry out a thorough search of all the rooms in the building, outside on the playground and the perimeter of school grounds.
- All staff not directly working with a class will be asked to search the school.
- The remaining children from the missing child's class will be gathered together and registered to check that no one else is missing. The children will be asked whether they have seen the child who is missing, as will all adults, so that it can be established as to who was last to see the missing child, when they saw him/her and where.
- The doors and gates will be checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The teacher in charge will talk to staff to establish what has happened.
- If the child is not found, the parent or carer is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.
- If the child lives within walking distance of the group, one adult should make the journey on foot in order to potentially catch up with the child, should they be on their way to their home, where possible.

If a child goes missing from an outing, the school ensures the following procedures are put into place:

- As a child is noticed missing, the group leader will perform a head count to ensure that no other child is missing. A member of staff will search the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The person in overall charge will be informed and the Principal/most senior member of staff will be informed and make their way to the venue.
- Assistance will be sought from the venue to make a thorough search.
- The police will be called.
- Parents will be informed from school
- In an indoor venue, the staff will contact venue security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child isn't found.

When the child is found

- A member of staff will care for and talk to and reassure the child.
- Other adults present will speak to all children to reinforce the need not to leave the premises and why.
- A referral to Social Care will be made if the child isn't found at the end of the school day.

After the incident

- The class teacher with a member of SLT will sensitively discuss with the child's parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child.

- If appropriate, a letter will be sent out to reassure parents.
- Support will be provided for the child.
- Staff will be asked not to speak to the media.

The investigation

- The Principal will arrange for a full investigation taking written statements from all staff present at the time.
- The class teacher along with SLT will write an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the incident
 - Staff/children present
 - When child was last seen and by whom
 - The date and time of the report
 - What action has been taken since
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened and any necessary changes to practice made if applicable.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff will co-operate fully. In this case the police will handle all further aspects of the investigation.
- The Directors will be informed.
- School will keep full details of the incident.