Ladygrove Primary School and Nursery

LOST OR MISSING CHILD POLICY

(Includes uncollected pupils)

Written September 2025

Review date September 2027

RATIONALE:

Every effort is made to ensure the safety of all children whilst they are in our care at Ladygrove Primary School and Nursery. This policy sets out our procedures for maintaining safety and managing the unlikely event of a child going missing.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the **Head teacher's** responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on an annual basis. It is the responsibility of all **staff** to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

It is the **parent's** responsibility to ensure that they provide correct, updated contact information and know the procedures for the handing over of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.

It is the **Governors'** responsibility to ensure that they are aware of School's procedures and to challenge/support School in its review of this policy.

PROCEDURES AIMED AT REDUCING RISK OF A MISSING PUPIL:

Start of the Day for Parents and Children

- Ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from the parents to the staff and vice versa. The school is responsible for the safety of the site and Parents are responsible for their children's safety whilst in their care on the school site before school doors open.
- Clear procedures for welcoming pupils into school. Staff meeting and greeting on the classroom and corridor doors.
- School gates open at 7.30 for breakfast club. They are all closed by 9.00am and the main point of access after this time is through the main reception doors.
- Late children, who arrive after 8.45 am are signed in at the main office.
- The main entrance is used between the hours of 9.00am and 2.30pm once the external gates are locked.
- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – mornings and afternoons by the agreed times.

Outside Time/Lunch/Playtime

- When children are outside they are protected by fencing and locked gates and are supervised by adults at all times.
- If pupils leave the classroom to work in other parts of school, teachers ensure that adequate supervision is maintained and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is vigorously sought and maintained.
- All staff members on duty have a responsibility to politely but firmly refuse entry to an adult to the school building or playground unless they are already escorted by a member of staff or have a prior appointment to the school. Visitors to the school must wear visitor's badges.

Learning Times

- If a child leaves the learning environment without permission, the teacher must ensure that the child remains supervised, even if from a reasonable distance.
- Prior to the start of learning times i.e. lessons, it is the teacher's responsibility to collect the children. In the event of PPA, it is the staff in charge of PPA lessons who should collect and return the children.

Home Time & Uncollected Pupils

- Staff ensure that all pupils are collected by the appropriate adult. At 3.30pm a phone call will be made home. It is important that parents contact the school in the event of not being able to collect their children due to unforeseen circumstances. If children are not collected by 4.00pm after unsuccessful contact then Family Connect (01952 385385) or Safeguarding out of hours duty team (01952 676500) will be contacted by the school.
- We accept that there may be the odd occasion during a child's school life that parents may be late to collect, however if this becomes a regular occurrence, the headteacher will meet with the child's parents/ carers to discuss the reasons behind the failure to collect on a regular basis.
- Pupils, collected by an adult, must have sight of their parent/carer before they leave the relevant staff member. Year 5 and 6 pupils, if they are to walk home alone their parent must complete a walk home consent form which can be obtained from the school office. **Staff must ensure the children leave the site safely**.
- Younger children being collected by older siblings should be confirmed by parents with the school. However, if a member of staff has concerns about the ability of the sibling to take on the responsibility for their younger sibling, they should refuse the child until the parents collects the child.
- Teachers and TAs are aware of who will collect children at the end of the day. These details are held on our Scholarpak data base and are requested in the admission details when a child joins the school. Parents are required to notify the school of any change in the person who will be collecting. This is usually in the form of a phone call or e-mail which is then relayed to the appropriate members of staff. If an adult who isn't expected requests to take a child checks are then made by a phone call to ensure that they have authority to pick up. Pupils will not be allowed to leave with another adult until this permission has been sought.

Visits

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios are provided when pupils leave School premises. There must be good communication between the visit leader and School and the teacher must keep a list of pupils/groups to be taken on visits and be familiar with our **Emergency Plan procedures**.
- Parents / Carers are never left on their own with groups of children and should not be placed in a group with their own child, unless part of a specific risk assessment.
- Mobile phones must be taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at School.

After school clubs

- All pupils will be taken to After School Activity Club by a member of staff at the end of the day.
- Risk assessments should be in place for any after school clubs.

PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF A CHILD GOING MISSING

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing whilst at School, that member of staff must:

- Calmly inform a member of SLT (Senior Leadership Team), who will inform the most senior manager immediately;
- promptly but calmly round up all pupils to a pre-arranged area and a designated member of staff will engage the children by reading a story or arranging another suitable calming activity;
- count and name check all the pupils present against the register while the group are assembled in one place. At the same time, all other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and notify the SLT member and Headteacher if the child is found immediately;
- conduct a thorough check of exits to ensure gates/doors were locked and there were no other ways a pupil could have left. If a breach is discovered, this must be reported to SLT immediately;
- if the child remains missing, staff will begin a search of the wider area, including the immediate vicinity;
- if the child has still not been found from the initial report of them as missing, notifying parents in the first instance, but if not able to contact them then the police must be notified. When contacting parents/carers, ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child;
- try to remember and write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features, including if the missing child has any special medical or learning needs.

Pupil information will be shared with the police in the event that a search needs to be conducted.

MISSING CHILD WHILE OFF SITE, FOLLOW EMERGENCY PLAN PROCEDURES

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing whist off School premises:

- Visit leader must ensure safety of remaining pupils.
- A member of staff must notify the venue manager to ensure all exits are supervised or closed.
- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
- Visit leader should contact school to alert them in accordance with our School Emergency Plan.

<u>Child going Missing from School during the school day</u>

Guidance and checklist

- When a child goes missing from school during the school day there should be clear procedures in place to follow up on their whereabouts.
- All staff should be aware of these procedures.
- Ensure that registers are always up to date and that each child's attendance is accurately recorded.
- Police do not normally record or investigate reports of absences that are clearly truanting. Each case will need to be assessed on the known risks and whether the absence is out of character for the child.

- If a child's absence is reported to the police they will be treated as a missing person; it is therefore important that all reasonable efforts to trace a child should be made first.
- Once the absence is discovered the child's parents/carers should be contacted immediately. The nature of the absence should be discussed. If the parents/carers believe that there are risks involved, they should be told to inform the Police on 0300 333 3000 to make a missing person report.
- All missing children should be reported to the police by the end of the school day if not located AND you have been unable to inform their parents/carers.
- If you are not sure if a child should be reported to the police as missing, telephone them for advice
- For children not arriving at school at the beginning of the school day, school will follow non school attendance procedures; ensure that you have specific processes in place for children who fall into the high risk/vulnerable category.

When a child is identified as missing during the school day, complete the following checklist:

Name of pupil……..……..D.O.B……...

Action	
Ensure the child is not on the school premises (and that reception staff alert you immediately they receive any information)	
Check with the child's friends when they were last seen. (Establish from friends if the child has a mobile phone and if so attempt to make contact. Send a text message to them).	
Contact the child's parents/carers and advise they should contact the police if they have any concerns	
Contact absent parents (unless they are not allowed contact with the child)	
Contact any emergency contacts from the child's records	
If the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, or is a Child in Need inform the key social worker or if unavailable the team leader	
If the child is a child "at risk/vulnerable" report immediately to social care and the police (ensure any health concerns are communicated)	
If you are unsure if the child should be reported to the police, have an informal discussion with them. Ask to speak to a Police supervisor on 0300 333 3000	
If the child is still missing by the end of the school day and you have been unable to talk to the parents/carers, report them as missing to the police	
When the child is located, explore reasons for their absconding	

Date checklist completed:……(Copy to appropriate file)

Missing or Uncollected Child Policy 2025-27 - Document Status			
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