



# HOWE GREEN HOUSE SCHOOL

## MISSING PUPIL POLICY

ISI Reference	14b
Issue Number	4
This policy is endorsed by	Governing Board and the Head
This policy is owned by	The Head
Review Body	Education Committee

Most Recent Revision Date	May 2021
Last Reviewed by Governors	May 2021
Period of Review	Three yearly
Next Review Date	May 2024
Previous Reviews	3

To be made available	YES
To be on website	YES
Internal staff only	NO
Internal students only	NO
Internal staff and students	YES

## **Missing Pupil Policy**

### **Howe Green House School**

**This Policy also includes Little Oaks Nursery and Before and After School Provision**

#### **Statement of Intent**

The governors and staff of Howe Green House School fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the intellectual, social, physical, and moral development of the individual child.

#### **Aim**

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

#### **Procedures**

We will ensure a search is made for the child as soon as we become aware that a child is missing. Parents and authorities will be notified at the appropriate stage, and a high level of care will be maintained to other children at the school whilst procedures are followed.

The children in the Foundation Stage are always accompanied to other areas of the school, such as the playground and Bayford Hall. Children from Year 1 may at times be permitted by a member of staff to walk to another area of the school, such as the toilets, but will be accompanied by another child or an adult depending on the circumstances.

Children in Year 3 and above may be permitted to walk alone to another area of the school such as to a PE or Music lesson.

Howe Green House School is situated on a secure site with perimeter fencing and electronic gates. Consequently, there are a limited number of situations where a child could go missing but in the event of this happening the following procedures will be followed:

- The Head of Nursery, Prep or Pre-Prep will be alerted immediately (Heads of Department)

- In the absence of the relevant Head of Department, the Headteacher or another member of the Senior Management Team will be alerted.
- Enquiries will be made by the Head of Department of the relevant members of staff, as to when the child was last seen and where.
- If appropriate, enquiries will be made by the Head of Department of the remaining children as to when the child was last seen and where.
- The Head of Department will appoint a person or people to immediately carry out a thorough search of all rooms in all buildings, boot rooms, gardens and outside areas.
- The remaining children will be gathered into one large group, e.g. for a story to ensure their security and well-being.
- Doors and gates will be checked by the Groundsman and Caretakers to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The administrative staff will check the signing in log to ascertain who is on the school site.
- Closed Circuit Television Camera (CCTV) footage will be checked by the Bursar for sightings of the child.
- If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes, the parents and the police will be informed.
- The search will continue, widening the area until the police arrive.
- Staff will ensure the safety of the other children with regards to supervision and security whilst a search is taking place.

**If a child goes missing from an outing, where parents are not present, the following procedures will be followed:**

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing will ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- At any venue, the staff will contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- One designated staff member will search the immediate vicinity whilst the other adults will supervise the remaining children.
- The Head of Department, Headteacher or SLT members will be informed as appropriate, if s/he is not present on the outing.
- The Head of Department, Headteacher or an SLT member will make their way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
- Staff will take the remaining children back to the school.
- The Head of Department, Headteacher or Deputy Head will contact the child's parents or carer and report the child missing to the police.



### **When the Child Is Found**

- Two members of staff will care for and talk with the child.
- When the situation has been resolved the members of staff should review the reasons for it happening and implement measures to ensure that it does not happen again.
- An incident form will be completed and signed by the parents and the Head of Department and the Board of Governors Education Committee will be informed.
- Records of incidents will be filed securely by the Head of Department.

**The procedures outlined below, for the Nursery, should be read in conjunction with this policy**

### **Missing/Lost child - Nursery**

#### **Policy statement**

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times. Every attempt is made through carrying out the collection procedure and the exit/entrance procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. The children in the Foundation Stage are always accompanied to other areas of the school, such as the playground and Bayford Hall and the children in Nursery remain in the setting at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

#### **Procedures**

##### **Child going missing on the premises**

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the setting Manager.
- The setting Manager will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The setting Manager talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Ensure the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security whilst the search is taking place
- CCTV camera footage will be checked for sightings of the child.
- If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the parents and the police must be informed.
- Continue the search, widening the area until the police arrive.

##### **Investigation**

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.

- The setting manager together with the head speaks with the parent(s).
- The manager and head, carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the setting.
- The key person/Manager writes an incident report detailing:
  - The date and time of the report.
  - What staff/children were in the Nursery and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
  - When the child was last seen in the session.
  - What has taken place in the session since the child went missing.
  - The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.

### **Managing people**

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Setting leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the setting leader. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the setting Manager and the other should be the Head. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult

time. The Head and or the Governors will use their discretion to decide what action to take.

- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

Reviewed by Education Committee of Governing Board.

**Headteacher: Deborah Mills**

**Signed: Nicky Barker King, Chair of Education Committee**

Date: May 2021

Next Review: May 2024