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**Executive Head Teacher: Mrs A Flack**



**Weston St Mary  
CE Primary School**

## **Missing Child Policy and Procedure – Weston St Mary Primary School**

### Statement of Intent

The safety of pupils is paramount, and is given the highest priority at all times both on and off the school premises.

Every attempt is made to ensure that the security of pupils is maintained at all times throughout the school day through the rigorous implementation of the school's:

- Registration procedures (completed at 8.50am and 1.00pm)
- Pupil absence monitoring procedures (including 'first-day absence' calls)
- Entrance/exit procedures at the beginning and end of the school day,
- Off-site Educational Visits Policy (Evolve)
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.

### Missing Child

If at any time during the school day a child is noticed as missing the following procedure will take place:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff will alert a senior member of staff.
- The senior staff and any other available staff will carry out a thorough search of the school buildings, playground and other outdoor areas including the field and forest school area.
- The registers will be checked to make sure no other child is missing.
- External doors and gates are checked to establish whether there has been a breach of security.
- If the child is not found, the parent/guardian is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police (101)
- The police will want to know:
  - Where you are.
  - The name of the child.
  - The next of kin of the child.
  - A detailed description of the child (going from head to toe, clothing etc.)
  - When they were first noticed missing.
  - When and where they were last seen.
  - Circumstances of the disappearance (any trigger, arguments etc.).

- Who is looking for the child at the moment, where they are and their mobile phone number.
- When the police arrive they will co-ordinate the search and staff will comply fully with their instructions; staff should continue to search unless instructed by police to stop.

### **Follow-up to the incident**

- When the child is found their needs and those of the parent are paramount. Emotions are likely to be running high, and this should be considered when trying to establish what happened immediately before the child left the school premises.
- It should be established whether the child is injured or has been harmed in any way, and the appropriate action taken.
- After the search there will be a need to meet with staff to re-assure them and to take the opportunity to de-brief.
- An incident report should be completed by the staff member co-ordinating the search and handed to the designated Child Protection staff member. This will be placed in the school's Safeguarding File.
- The Executive Head Teacher will inform the Chair of Governors and any other relevant body as appropriate.
- A Risk Assessment review will take place in the area from which the child went missing as soon as possible, and no longer than 3 days after the event. Any identified security improvements should be put in place as soon as possible.
- A meeting should be held with both the parent and the child to establish how the incident occurred, and what actions or support will be necessary to prevent such an incident from happening again in the future.

This may include:

- Pupil Support with the involvement of the Head of School/SENCo, other staff member or identified professional.
- An individual risk assessment being reviewed or put in place.
- A behaviour or learning support plan being reviewed or put in place.
- A 'check-in' or buddy system being established.
- Potential referral to an external agency where the pupil's safety, mental or emotional health and well-being are felt to be at risk.
- A sanction being applied in line with the school's Management of Learning Policy, if appropriate.
- The incident should be discussed at the next staff meeting and any recommendations for improvements in the procedure should be made to the Governing Body.

### **Missing Child (Off-Site School Visits)**

If a child goes missing from an educational visit where parents are not attending and responsible for their own child, the following procedure applies:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the visit ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- One staff member will search the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The staff contact the police using a mobile phone and report the child as missing

- The person in charge informs the Executive Head Teacher who will then liaise with the police, inform the local authority and contact the family.
- If appropriate, the Executive Head Teacher may make their way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security staff who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.

#### Investigation following the safe recovery of the child

- The Headteacher, with the support of the police if appropriate, carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.
- An Incident Log Sheet should be completed detailing:
  - The date and time of the report
  - Staff/children were in the group
  - When the child was last seen in the group
  - What has taken place in the group since then
  - The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
  - Any other relevant details, including the recovery of the child.
  - 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.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and to the Local Authority Health and Safety Officer as appropriate.

#### Missing Child from Parental Care

At busy times of the day and during family events at school children occasionally go missing from the care of their parents.

In order to try to ensure that the child is found quickly and safely the above procedures will still apply.

#### Arrangements at the end of After School Clubs

Every After School Club will have a register of children attending.

Unless permissions have been obtained in writing to the contrary, all pupils will be handed over to their parents at the end of the club by a member of staff.

#### Children Walking Unaccompanied Recommendations

##### **Walking to School and Walking Home Alone**

To keep traffic to a minimum outside the school and the immediate area, thus helping to keep it safe for everyone in the community, and to provide the healthiest start and end to the school day for pupils, we recommend that pupils walk to school from home as much as possible, or that parents leave the car at a reasonable distance away and walk from there.

Weston St Mary Primary School recommends that children are accompanied to and from school by an adult until Year 4. However, legally the decision and responsibility for children walking alone remains with parents/carers and they may make the decision to allow their child to walk unaccompanied when

appropriate for the individual child.

If a parent wishes their child to walk home unaccompanied then the school will need written permission from the parent/carer.

In order to help children of Year 5 and 6 develop the skills they need to stay safe, both in preparation for secondary school and outside of school, we encourage parents of children from Year 4 onwards to consider allowing them more independence, depending, of course, on the ability of the individual child to cross roads and keep safe, the journey they have to make and their experience in making that journey.

Becoming more independent, when parents are confident their child has the road safety skills, may start with your child arranging to meet up with friends and walk into school together, either from home or from a set meeting place. However, it is the parent's choice and responsibility for the school journey and the decision about when your child is ready to walk independently will remain with the parent. If you would like to discuss this with the school, please contact the Executive Head Teacher.

During the winter months, we recommend that parents ensure their child wears bright, light clothing, carries 'high visibility' items and/or carries a torch, as appropriate.

Children may ride bicycles or scooters to school with parent's permission. Pupils must dismount at the gate as no riding of either is allowed once on the school property. Helmets should be worn at all times.

**Procedure approved:**

**June 2018**

**Signed:**

**A Flack (Executive Head Teacher)**

**Signed:**

**J Waters-Dewhurst (Chair ILB)**