



**MEYNELL**  
NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Missing Child Policy

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<b>Committee:</b>	-
<b>Last Review/Update:</b>	March 2019
<b>Level of Change:</b>	-
<b>Next Review:</b>	May 2024

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## Meynell Primary School - Missing Child Policy

The welfare of children in our care is paramount. Children may go missing and **EVERY** member of staff has equal responsibility in ensuring the safety of all the children and knowing where they are.

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### Systems in place to minimise the risk of children going missing

- Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the premises and surrounding site are secure. These include:
    - Double handles to nursery doors with key pads
    - The entrance door to corridor is shut and locked; it is always supervised by a member of staff at arrival and departure times
  - During the handover of children on entry to nursery, one member of staff acts as a 'wicket keeper' ensuring that no child leaves the premises.
  - Children self "register" as they enter nursery to give staff a record of the children entering nursery. This takes place away from the entrance door.
  - The official attendance register is taken within 10 minutes of the start of nursery at 8.20am
  - The number of children attending recorded on a display board.
  - It is the responsibility of every member of staff to be aware of how many children are present and a quick head count should be taken at intervals during each session.
  - Children who arrive late must be recorded in the register and those who leave early should be marked out accordingly.
  - Extra care should be taken to be aware of the whereabouts of new children and ensure they know the boundaries of where they can and cannot go.
  - Parents will be advised of our security procedures. A notice briefly explaining the procedures will be displayed at all times and it will be discussed during initial parent conversation. Parents will be given the opportunity to discuss any concerns, particularly if their child has an adventurous nature.
  - Gates to play area are locked with all staff having code for padlock for emergency access.
  - Parents must be made aware of the need for supervision of children at all times especially while waiting for the school/nursery to open and of their responsibility to ensure that their child's arrival is noted, especially if they are arriving late.
  - Children should be counted before going out to play and when they all come back indoors. A member of staff should check the outdoor area to ensure no children are left outside. Once inside it must be ascertained that the correct number of children are still present.
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## **In the event of a child being found to be missing**

It is vital that prompt action is taken.

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### **1. Identify the missing child**

The missing child (children) should be identified and the last known whereabouts recorded. The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is noted as soon as possible. Staff must be vigilant in ensuring that all children are present.

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### **2. Inform leadership immediately**

The Head Teacher and the school office will be informed **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone, that a child is missing. Make sure that you provide all essential information:

- a) Full name
  - b) Address
  - c) Clothing - try to recall what the child was wearing!
  - d) Place/time last seen
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### **3. Supervise remaining children**

The senior member of staff in the nursery will arrange for the other children to be satisfactorily supervised.

The remaining children should be gathered together for a storytime/music session.

Without alarming them, the children should be asked if they have seen the missing child.

At least one member of the nursery/reception based staff **MUST** remain in the classroom. If the child returns it is important that a "known face" is in the room.

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### **4. Immediate actions (simultaneous)**

#### **a) Organise systematic search**

The search will be organised by the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher:

- ALL staff not responsible for a class MUST report to the main reception IMMEDIATELY. They will be deployed in the search for the child.
- See the appendix for basic organisation relating to the search
- Search areas should include school grounds and the immediate areas outside of school

## **b) Inform parents**

Parents will be informed by the Headteacher OR Assistant Headteacher—alarming them as little as possible.

- If they do not answer the phone a message must be left on any answering service before attempting alternative numbers.
- If parents do not answer the home phone number the **POLICE must be called before attempting other child contact numbers.**
- Parents should remain at home in case the child returns there.

Parents should be asked for any possible locations:  
e.g. grandparents, relatives, local park, etc.

## **c) Inform the Police**

Police contact should take place immediately.

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## **5. Check route home**

This is included in the search organisation and should be given priority.

The person doing this should:

- i. Take a mobile phone with them
  - ii. Maintain good contact with school
  - iii. Be capable of being calm and compassionate with parents if they are at home and the child has not yet appeared. It should be someone who knows the child.
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## **6. Record everything**

A record of events should be recorded immediately. All staff closely involved with the incident should make a note of what happened.

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## 7. Inform other people

As soon as possible after the incident the following people should be notified:

- The Local Authority Health & Safety Advisor
  - School Governors
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## 8. Dealing with reactions

Parents may be frightened, distressed or angry. Other parents may be anxious. Staff may feel shocked or upset.

All emotions must be dealt with sensitively.

**Until the situation has been fully investigated, all staff must refer any parent or media enquiries to the teacher in charge or Headteacher.**

No member of staff should comment publicly until a formal written response has been agreed.

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## Important expectations for all staff

- **EVERYONE** is equally responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of the children in their care
  - **EVERYONE** has the responsibility to know about this policy, understand their role and act in accordance with it at all times
  - **EVERYONE** is equally responsible for reporting potential health and safety hazards:
    - Record premises issues in the caretaker's book
    - Inform the headteacher or nursery manager for procedural issues
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## Disciplinary consequences

Failure to carry out school procedures or to do all that is reasonable to ensure a child's safety and well-being will be regarded as **GROSS MISCONDUCT** and dealt with in accordance with the school disciplinary procedure.

This can result in formal warnings or recommendation to dismiss a member of staff.

## Appendix 1 - Search organisation and record sheet

Area	Person(s)	Time search began	Outcome including time search completed
Route home			
All Nursery rooms including dining room, hall and toilets			
Stock cupboards etc			
Cloakroom areas and reception			
Children's centre rooms			
All outdoor play areas			
Car park			
Office areas			
Staff toilet areas			
Sensory Room			