

 **Monkton Church of England Primary School**

Safeguarding Lost or Missing Children Policy

Lead Person: Chris Marston

Policy Date: January 23

Review Date: January 26

Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

****Chair of Governors Executive Headteacher

Federation of Minster and Monkton Church of England Primary Schools

****

**‘In God’s Eyes, Everyone is Special’**

Our friendly village school, is an inclusive and caring community where each person is valued for their uniqueness.

Nurtured, in the loving hands of God, our enriching curriculum inspires and develops the whole child equipping them for the future.

Advocating fairness and compassion, we build relationships and trust with each other, allowing all to flourish.

**The Parable of the Good Samaritan**

*Luke 10:25-37 English Standard Version (ESV)*

*25And behold, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” 26He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?” 27And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.” 28And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.”*

*29But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?” 30Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. 31Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. 32So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. 34He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ 36Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?” 37He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”*

We believe that this Bible narrative represents our school because it shows that we recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of each child. We are a close community that respect and value each other.

Whether we are friends or neighbours, children or adults, we believe that each person is important and we love and care for everyone equally, welcoming those of all faiths and none.

We want the best for each individual with whom we share our lives and we want everyone to be part of our loving school family. Our actions demonstrate this, as with God’s help, we embody our Christian Foundations of Compassion, Forgiveness, Friendship, Justice and Trust on a daily basis.

**Monkton is a Church of England Primary School and our Christian Foundations are at the heart of everything we do. Every school policy is written with this in mind.**

**KEY FACTS**

* **This policy enables schools to deal promptly and professionally in a “worst case scenario” of a lost or missing child.**
* **It emphasises the responsibility for attendance, registers and keeping children safe.**
* **It requires schools to demonstrate collection and handover arrangements specific to the school.**
* **Procedures to follow should a child go missing or become lost are given.**
* **An Incident Report Form must be completed.**
* **With regards to early years children who become lost or missing, Ofsted and Local Authority Children’s Services must be informed.**

Contents

[**1.0 Purpose** 1](#_Toc111206241)

[**2.0 Definition** 2](#_Toc111206242)

[**3.0 Introduction 2**](#_Toc111206243)

[**4.0 Is the pupil at significant risk 2**](#_Toc111206244)

[**4.0 Steps to Keep Children Safe** 2](#_Toc111206245)

[**5.0 Procedures following a Child Reported Missing or Lost** 4](#_Toc111206246)

[**6.0 Following the Incident** 5](#_Toc111206247)

[**7.0 Procedures following a Child Missing from an Off-Site Location** 6](#_Toc111206248)

[**8.0 Monitoring & Evaluation** 6](#_Toc111206249)

[**9. Document control** 7](#_Toc111206250)

### Purpose

* It is essential that staff at Monkton CofE Primary ensure that positive steps are taken to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The safety and welfare of all our children at school is our paramount responsibility. Any child going missing from education or learning is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, particularly on repeat occasions.
* 1.2. The procedures outlined in this policy will be followed alongside the *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Whistleblowing Policy,* and any other relevant school policy or procedure.
* 1.3. All staff and volunteers understand what to do in the unlikely event that a child were to be lost or go missing either from the school building, site or during an off-site visit.
* 1.4. It is the Head of School’s responsibility to ensure that this policy is understood and followed.
* 1.5. It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and to always act accordingly.

### Definition

* 2.1 When a pupil’s whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or context the person may be the subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or others.

### Introduction

* This policy has been adopted in respect of any child who goes missing from our premises or wanders off from our care, even if they remain on site.
* This policy will be used in respect of all cases in which it is found that a child is lost or missing. It should be read in conjunction with our policy and procedure for *uncollected children (late collection) and the school Safeguarding Policy including managing allegations of abuse against staff and other adults.*
* At all times we will treat very seriously any evidence which shows that any member of staff has behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child (*see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for definition of harm*).
* Any consequent disciplinary matter against staff will follow our separate disciplinary procedure, in consultation with the Chair of Governors.
* Due consideration will be given by the Headteacher as to whether referral may be made to children’s social care. For example, where the child is in need of protection, early help or in need of other support.
* Staff are responsible for completing the attendance registers, including at after school clubs and activities. The register must be completed accurately and promptly. The law requires schools to have an attendance register which is compliant with the Regulations.

### Is the pupil at significant risk

* A pupil missing during school hours incident would be prioritised as significant risk where:
* The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child/young person is in danger through their own vulnerability. Vulnerability characteristics may include
	+ Children on a plan (Early help, Child in need, Looked after or Child Protection Plan)
	+ A disability and/or special educational needs
	+ Substance misuse
	+ Education health care plan
* The risk posed is immediate and there are grounds for believing that the child is in danger or there are indications of CSE, grooming or radicalisation)
* Have there been any past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?
	+ Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?
	+ Is there any known history of domestic violence?
	+ Is there concern about the parents/carers ability to protect the child from harm?
	+ Has there been any significant incident prior to the child’s unexplained absence?
	+ Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk e.g., FGM or forced marriage planned for the child?

### Steps to Keep Children Safe

* + Our procedures will always be managed with common sense and sound judgement. If a member of staff takes a child out of school, they are responsible for informing the parents and the school office.
	+ For children in the early years, we must only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to us by the parent/carer(s) in advance, and we must ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. We must take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors.
	+ At all times, parents can be assured that all children remain within the safe environment of our school/setting, including attendance at any outings. We ensure that proper precautions are taken to prevent children going missing.
	+ If any child is found to leave the premises without permission of the school and parents, they will be deemed to have broken the school’s code of conduct and the application of appropriate and proportionate sanctions will be considered by the Head accordingly.
	+ It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their child.
	+ It is the responsibility of the Head of School, to ensure that all staff are aware of the school’s procedures and that they will provide challenge and support to the school in the review of this policy.
	+ Particular care will be taken to register all children in each club or out of/after school activity that is run by the school. A register will be taken of each child’s attendance at every club or out of school activity. As a minimum, any unexplained absences will be reported immediately to the school office and to the Head of School by the responsible teacher so that swift and immediate action will be taken. In the absence of the Head of School from the premises at the time, the Deputy Head will always assume such responsibility. In the case of incidents occurring while children are learning outside the classroom on school visits, the visit leader will assume such responsibility, as agreed with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator on behalf of the Head of School.
	+ No child leaves our supervision and care without an appropriate adult. In order to achieve this

aim, we operate the following procedures at our school:

Children are always supervised; visitors are recorded arriving and leaving following the school signing in procedure.

To prevent a child going missing, a register is to be checked twice a day as well as outings registers, which are taken with the group and a duplicate left with the site coordinator. Children are handed over to parents by staff when they are collected from School at the end of each day, or after an extracurricular activity. Any change to going home arrangements must be confirmed to the Office by telephone or email. Any child being allowed to walk home alone must have written confirmation.

Closely monitor children during outings and off-site trips.

Always provide and maintain appropriate staff/child ratios.

Children are made aware of all boundaries around the school. *The perimeter of the setting is fenced and gated. There is security access to the main entrance.*

**If a child were found to be missing from a site, the following procedures would be followed:**

**a)**

* Staff inform the *Designated Safeguarding Lead (Head of School)* immediately. In his absence inform the Senior Leader.
* Call the register to check and establish which child is missing.
* Staff will check grounds and rooms to ensure the child has not hidden or been locked in anywhere within the boundary.
* Staff will risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform and establish a pupil’s whereabouts and timeframe.
* A member of the Senior Leadership Team will contact home.
* The Head of School/Senior Leader will contact and inform the police.

**b)**

* If a child insists on leaving the premises with the knowledge of the staff and cannot be persuaded by the staff to stay on site, parents/carers will be contacted immediately.
* If appropriate, and enough staff are available to enable one member of staff to leave the school setting with a mobile phone/radio, they will follow and observe as to where the child is going.
* If there are not enough staff to leave the site to observe the child the Head of School may decide the child is unsafe and call the police 999.

**c)**

* If a child is found to be missing while on an outing the trip organiser should contact the Head of School immediately.
* Keep the rest of the group together and check the register again.
* The accompanying staff and the children should look in the area for the child while waiting for the Head of School to advise them.
* The Head of School will follow procedure 1 and keep the trip organiser informed.
* Permission from parents is obtained for any educational visits. Parents are asked to sign a slip for each individual educational visit/series of visits.
* Staff can contact the school office who can access contact numbers.
* After school clubs will only take place when a completed register of pupils is taken, the situation has been risk managed and the school has obtained written consent from parents with contact numbers and details of how the pupils are to go home and who with.
* Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity in accordance with the school’s practice in maintaining confidentiality and our obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

### Procedures following a Child Reported Missing or Lost

* If a teacher suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity, they will contact the nearest member of staff and school office immediately.
* All remaining children will be kept safe in a secure place with adequate adult supervision, including assistance from other school staff if necessary.
* A full headcount will be taken by the teacher-in-charge and matched against the register; usually the class teacher or nominated person.
* A senior member of staff will make a thorough search of the building and/or site and immediate surroundings including storage areas and toilets. A thorough check of all exits will be made, to ensure all gates/doors are locked and there is no other way a pupil could have left the site. If something is discovered, the SLT member must be immediately informed.
* The following list held in the school office will be checked: attendance register, off site records, and other school clubs.
* If the child is not found after this initial search and/or approximately 10 minutes from the initial report of them deemed missing, the school office will inform the Head of School including where a child is found wandering or at risk of being lost or missing. The Designated Safeguarding Officer in school will be notified immediately and they will ensure that the parents have been informed by the responsible teacher. The Head of School, or SLT in the absence of the Head, will decide at which point the police will be called.
* All relevant emergency contacts for children will be used to inform parent/carer(s) accordingly. However, until such time as the child is safely returned to the care of the parent/carer(s), the Head of School remains responsible for the care and welfare of the child, including off-site.
* As soon as is practicable, an Incident Reporting Form will be completed by the Head of School and sent to the *Area Education Officer*. The visit leader (off-site) or responsible form/class teacher will make a contemporaneous record to provide full details of the incident in the school’s incident report book. A note will also be made on the school’s attendance register accordingly.
* Near misses will also be recorded and details fully provided in writing to the school’s *safeguarding & governance*. This Report must outline the steps being taken to avoid any repeat incident, communication with parents and actions to be taken following the risk assessment process to mitigate future risk.
* Any relevant policy and procedure must be reviewed by the school.
* If a missing child has any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted to be disclosed to the police or other agencies.
* A thorough search of the premises should continue until the child is found.

### Notifying the police.

* The information required by the police to assist in locating and returning the pupil to a safe environment is as follows:
* The pupil’s name/s, date of birth, status
* Where and when they went missing
* Previous, if any, missing episodes and where they went
* Who, if anyone, they went missing with
* What they were wearing
* Recent photo or detailed description
* Medical history if relevant
* Time and location of last seen
* Circumstances or events that could have made the child go missing
* Contact details of school and parents/carers

Whilst the search is ongoing, the school will continue to liaise with the police and act in accordance with police instructions.

* Option 1 – if the child returns before the police have arrived then the Police must be informed and own school procedures need to be followed.
* Option 2 - if the child returns to school of their own volition, then the Police must be informed and own school procedures need to be followed.
* Option 3 - if the police locate the child and bring them back to the school the Police will conduct the safe and well interview and the school will follow School procedure. Where a pupil has a known risk of being missing, a risk assessment for the pupil will be written and put into place.

### Following the Incident

* It is in everyone's interest to resolve what has happened as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation.
* The written findings of the investigation must be reported by the Head of School detailing:
* The date and time of the report
* What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff member responsible for the missing child
* When the child was last seen in the group/outing
* What has taken place in the group or outing 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.

All relevant policies and procedures will immediately be reviewed, and any revisions presented formally to the Area Education Officer within 5 working days.

* The parent/carer(s) will be involved at all times.
* The following receipt of our investigative report, the Area Education Officer will report their conclusions as to any next steps to further safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the care of the school.
* Where the parent/carer(s) remain concerned despite reassurances informally by the school, they may choose to use the school’s complaints procedure accordingly.

### Procedures following a Child Missing from an Off-Site Location

* The visit leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. At least two adults must stay with them.
* One or more adults should immediately start to search for the child.
* If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the visit leader must then contact the police by telephoning 999 (within the UK or similar equivalent number if overseas).
* The visit leader should alert the Head of School, or in the case of out-of-hours, the nominated school contact for the trip, that the police have been contacted.
* The school will make arrangements to notify the parents accordingly. The remaining procedures outlined above in sections 4 and 5 will then be followed.

### Monitoring & Evaluation

* This policy and our procedures will be reviewed annually and more frequently following should there be a near miss or missing child incident. Compliance with this policy is reported formally to the Governors with the Head reporting any changes including management actions accordingly.
* If, as a parent, you are not happy with the way that you or your child is treated by any member of staff you should consider raising your concern with the Head of School. You may find it helpful to refer to our formal complaint's procedure for guidance. This procedure emphasises the importance of resolving any concerns informally and at the earliest possible opportunity. We expect our parents to share any concerns informally with us so that we can continuously improve the quality of education at our school.
* Our school’s Leadership Team ensure that we monitor the quality and compliance of our accident and incident reports. The Head of School ensures that staff are sufficiently trained and experienced to be compliant at all times, particularly during school trips and visits.