



Protocol for dealing with missing children

This protocol deals with three categories of "missing" children:

- 1) *A child who is "suddenly" not there e.g. when a parent arrives to collect a child, they have disappeared despite being seen a few moments earlier*
- 2) *A child who has not arrived home at the end of the school day*
- 3) *A child who has run away from school*

1) The child has suddenly gone missing

- Stay calm.
- Ask children and or adults in the immediate vicinity if they noticed anything.
- Check the location where the child was last seen quickly – if possible use another adult.
- Check wider location quickly, if possible (e.g. school grounds / school building, checking to see if all playground gates are locked, **including the binstore gates**). If it is not possible to leave the class group, send a child to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher requesting help urgently.
- Systematically check the wider location, including more members of staff.
- If the child has not been located within 10 minutes ask a member of the SLT to contact the child's parents. If diverted to voicemail, request that they call school as soon as they get the message. **Do not** leave a message to say that their child is missing. If it is **certain** that the child is in the school grounds it will not be necessary to contact the parents.
- Once the parent has been informed, request that they inform school as soon as their child is found.
- Once the parents have been informed, contact the Police.
- After the event, the child will receive sanctions appropriate to their specific situation.

2) School is informed that a child has not arrived home

- Note the time of the call and the name of the person reporting the child missing. Take a contact telephone number.
- Seek the class teacher (or PPA cover person) and check dismissal arrangements. Check if the child had mentioned any variation to their usual routine (e.g. going to the park on the way home / walking home with a friend).
- Phone the person who reported the child missing with any information gathered however limited in nature. (Also check that the child has not since arrived home). Recommend that the reporting person calls any friends or family to whom the child may have gone. Recommend that the police be informed.
- Ask that the school be informed as soon as the child is found. Give the school mobile number. School mobile will be accessed by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and remain switched on beyond the end of the school day.

3) A child has run away from school

- The class teacher should be informed if she is not already aware, that the child has absconded.
- If it is not possible to leave the class – e.g. no other adult present, send a child to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher requesting help urgently, then follow the procedure outlined in section 1) above.