



# Missing Child Policy

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<b>Last review date</b>	May 2018
<b>Next Review date</b>	May 2021
<b>Review Cycle</b>	3 Years
<b>Statutory Policy</b>	No
<b>Publication</b>	Website. Sharepoint/Policies

## **Missing Child Policy**

The staff at TSSMAT takes the safety of the children very seriously and will take every precaution necessary to ensure that the children in their care do not leave a session unaccompanied. The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is soon discovered. Staff will undertake periodic head counts using the key person system in addition to the registration procedure.

If, in the event of a member of staff not being able to account for child's whereabouts, the following action will be taken:

We will:

- Gather the remaining children into one large group, with one/two adults, leaving the remaining adults to search.
- Ask the children, without alarming them, if they have seen the child that is missing.
- Ensure all adults are aware of the situation and inform the CEO, Headteacher, and Director of Business.
- Establish who last saw the missing child, where and when.
- Check all rooms in the building.
- Check the immediate outside area.

### **Parents**

The Trust will:

- Call the child's parents to warn them that the child may be attempting to get home.
- If they are unavailable the Trust will use the emergency contact number.
- Ensure that, if the child lives within walking distance of the school, one adult will make the journey on foot in order to catch up with or intercept the child if possible.
- Remember, that as soon as parents are informed, they will need advice and support.

## **Police**

- If the above steps do not locate the child, the police will be called.

## **Recording**

We will start to build a record as soon as is possible in the incident log, this will include:

- The last definite sighting of the child.
- Any unusual behaviour of the missing child or other children.
- How many children were on the premises?
- How many adults were on the premises and who?
- What steps have been taken and when, by whom.

## **Response**

We will be clear about the circumstances surrounding the incident and will respond sympathetically to questions without implications or admission of responsibility.

## **Dealing with the media**

Distressed parents may contact the local press, or reporters may hear about the incident if the police are involved. All adults will be asked to refer all enquiries to the agreed spokesperson.

The spokesperson for the schools is the Chief Executive Officer of The Small Schools Academy Trust.

## **Informing other parents**

We recognise that other parents will need to be given brief, accurate information as rapidly as possible. We will ensure that this happens by:

- Calling a short meeting when parents/carers collect children or
- Talking to parents/carers when they arrive at the next session, or
- Sending a note home with each child.

## **When the child is found**

We recognise that during the time a child is missing, however, briefly, all involved, parents and others suffer great fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when the child is found. We will accept that it is important to remember:

- That the child also might have been afraid and distressed and might now be in need of comfort.
- Remain calm, reassure the child and acknowledge it is not the child's fault.
- Ensure the child is not hurt.
- That the incident provides a good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises, and why.

#### **After the incident**

- We will review our current procedure.
- We will evaluate processes and make necessary adjustments to ensure future effectiveness.