



Thornton in Craven Community Primary and Nursery School



Missing Child Policy

The safety of our pupils is our priority whilst they are in our care at school. This policy sets out our procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

Responsibilities:

It is the Head teacher's responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, to ensure relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities, what is expected and the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis.

It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.

It is the responsibility of governors to ensure they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge/support the school in its review of this policy.

Procedures aimed at reducing risk of a missing pupil

Start of the day

- Ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from staff to them and vice versa.
- Clear procedures for welcoming pupils into the breakfast club and school. Staff meeting and greeting on the door.
- Pupils use side entrance and walk independently into their classrooms.
- Side gates are locked at 9.15am with the exception of the main entrance gates.

During lesson time

- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – mornings and afternoons
- If children are working outside there is an adult with them at all times.
- All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are locked when pupils are playing outside. The exception is the main gate.
- If pupils leave the classroom security to work in other parts of the school ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained
- External classroom doors are locked at playtime and dinner time or when staff are out of the classroom for an extended period

Play time

- Staff on playground before pupils come onto the playground.
- External gates locked, with the exception of the main gate
- Exit/ entry doors are closed behind the last member of staff as they come off the playground

Dinner time

- As above
- Headteacher is available at dinner time should they be needed.

Home time

- A clear expectation that children are collected from school promptly at the time their child's class finishes (or at the specified end of any enrichment activity) or booked into the after school club.
- A clear expectation that parents notify school in good time if they are going to be late to collect their child.
- Gates opened to allow access for parents
- Pupils are collected by their parent/carers from the playground
- Member of staff on the exit door
- All staff are aware of who can go home and with whom. Admin will inform an adult in class if there is a change to 'usual' collection.
- Staff to be responsible for their own class and ensure that all pupils are collected by the appropriate adult
- Staff to contact the parents of any child who has not been collected by 3.40pm

Visits

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
- Adequate communication contact and a list of pupils/groups to be taken on visits out of school.
- Mobile phones taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school
- Shared mobile numbers of the adults on the visit.

After school clubs

- Thorough risk assessment in place
- Register of pupils with contact numbers and details of how the pupils are to go home and who with.

Procedures in the event of a child going missing

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while at school:

- Member of staff who has noticed the missing child will calmly inform the nearest member of the SLT
- AT THE SAME TIME all other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and notify the SLT member immediately if the child is found
- A thorough check of all exits to be made to make sure all gates/doors were locked/bolted and there are no other ways a pupil could have left the school. If

- something is discovered this needs to be drawn to the attention of the staff immediately
- Staff will begin a search of the area immediately
- The safety and care of other pupils is paramount so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other pupils in the school must be adequately maintained while the search continues
- If the child has not been found after 10 minutes from the initial report of them as missing then parents should be notified. The Head teacher or next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted. When contacting parents or carers please ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child
- Staff to write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features
- If the missing child has any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted to be disclosed to police or other agencies

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises:

- Visit leader must ensure safety of remaining pupils. At least 2 staff must stay with them
- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
- Visit leader should contact school to alert them
- If the child is not found within 5 minutes Visit Leader must contact police by phoning 999
- Visit leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangements to notify parents, after which procedures above to be followed.

Procedures in the event of a child seen running off the premises

In the event of a child being seen leaving the premises:

- The member of staff witnessing this must inform the most senior member of staff immediately available or, if none is available, send a message to the office via a reliable messenger without losing sight of the child if possible
- The member of staff should report to the Headteacher where they last saw the child and the direction the child was heading
- The member of staff should then return to their normal duties unless otherwise directed by the Headteacher
- As a general rule, staff should not pursue a child beyond the school boundary however in certain circumstances it may be appropriate to do so, e.g. to retrieve a child who has accidentally wandered out of an open gate or to follow/retrieve a child with special needs who has deliberately left the premises but in doing so does not understand the gravity of their action.
- Staff are expected to use their professional discretion in deciding whether it is appropriate to go beyond the school boundary in pursuance of such children.
- If a child is followed beyond the school boundary, the member of staff must behave in a manner which is not threatening to the child.
- The member of staff must not run after the child as this may cause the child to run into a dangerous situation, e.g. the child might run into a road without looking out for traffic in an attempt to evade the pursuing, running adult.
- In exceptional circumstances where a child is known to be liable to run off the premises, the school may prepare and enact contingency search plans involving

named staff. When enacting these plans staff should be mindful not to put themselves or the child at risk.

Child Missing Education Procedures

If at any point any member of staff at Manor Road becomes aware that a child may not be receiving an education, they must notify the Headteacher without delay. The Headteacher should then refer the matter to the LA Children Missing Education team so that the matter can be investigated. Relevant forms can be found at:

<https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/children-missing-education>

A Child Missing Education (CME) is defined as a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll and not receiving an education via other means – for example, via Elective Home Education or an alternative provider such as a college. However, a child may still be at risk of missing education or missing out on education even if they are on a school roll and such cases should also be reported to the Local Authority.

This includes but is not limited to situations where:

- A child is on roll but has been excluded and no alternative provision is in place after 6 days
- A child has not been attending school and a home visit reveals that the family may have moved away
- A child has moved into the area but no arrangements have been made to access a new school
- A child has moved out of the area (this includes moving outside of the UK) or is about to move out of the area but no arrangements have been made to access a new school
- A child has been offered a school place, but parents have refused the place offered and the authority is not aware of alternative arrangements for the child's education
- A child is identified as a Child Missing Out On Education (on roll but not attending and no measures in place to address the non-attendance)

Advice regarding Child Missing Education is available from the CME team on 01609 532477 or e-mail: CME.Coordinator@northyorks.gov.uk or julie.hodges@northyorks.gov.uk

Policy written by: Suzie Brown

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Policy to be reviewed: As required