Missing Child Policy

Last reviewed: September 2026

Next review due: September 2027

Purpose

- To as quickly as possible, locate a missing child, return them to safe custody,
- inform the relevant parties of the situation and invoke a review of the incident.

Background

Annually a risk assessment is completed of the safety and security of children. Central to the measures in place is the ongoing vigilance of the staff. In addition, there are specific times when attendance is checked:

- Register/headcount check at beginning of sessions (morning/lunch)
- When a parent or carer arrives to collect a child

Continuous vigilance by all staff

In the unlikely event of a child found to be missing the following procedure is to be followed.

Procedure

1. The member of staff instigates a search of the indoor and outdoor areas within the school in case a child is hiding. In the event the child is found the parent should be advised of the incident and review invoked.
2. School CCTV cameras to be checked by Admin Team and relevant update provided to Head and Deputy.
3. In the event of the initial search not resulting in the safe location of the child, the Headteacher or Deputy, and the Office should be informed immediately. Staff should use the 2-way school radio system as a means of communicating.
4. The Headteacher or Deputy may request assistance and ensure staff to child ratios are maintained.
5. The Headteacher or Deputy will delegate at least one member of staff to search the school grounds starting with the exit routes. In the event the child is found the parent should be advised of the incident and a review instigated.
6. If the child has still not been located, the parents, if not already on site, will be contacted, normally by the Office.
7. The Headteacher or Deputy will delegate members of staff to follow, normally on foot, the child's route home, taking a mobile phone with them. Other searches via car could be instigated if the Headteacher or Deputy feels it necessary.
8. If the child is not located after a search of the route home, the Headteacher or Deputy will inform the Police (999).
9. Once the Police arrive, formal responsibility for the search will pass to the Police, but the Headteacher or Deputy will ensure that the school staff make themselves appropriately available to assist further with the incident.

This policy is informed by the North Yorkshire Procedures entitled "Children who may be missing/ Lost from Education". This outlines the procedures needed if a child has gone missing from a school without notice being given by parents/carers or without the school being advised which school the child is to attend following re-location.