**BEWSEY LODGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**MISSING CHILD POLICY**

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| Date of Review | September 2023 |
| Date of next Review | September 2026 |

**Part One: Missing Child Policy**

**Our Safeguarding Mission Statement**

Our mission is to ensure that all children and adults are safe from harm at all times and can thrive in an environment which is secure and free from abuse or bullying of any kind.

We work hard in creating a welcoming atmosphere which develops the social and emotional needs of everyone; supporting, questioning, loving. At our school people are nurtured, valued and treated equally. Worries, concerns and thoughts are listened to and addressed in an environment of mutual respect.

At our school we are proud to feel:

**SAFE SECURE LOVED**

**Policy Statement**

At Bewsey Lodge Primary School, children’s safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times. Every attempt is made to ensure that our children are safe and secure. This includes carrying out detailed risk assessments, from which procedures for routines have been developed, ensuring adequate staffing levels are always in place and carrying out carefully managed exit/entrance procedures to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. Staff will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during the day. Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise.

The aim of this policy is to contribute to the safeguarding of the children in our care through the provision of effective and clear procedures to be followed in the event that a child’s whereabouts cannot be immediately accounted for.

**Objectives**

* To outline the responsibilities of staff, including Governors and parents/carers in relation to a missing child.
* To provide clear procedures to reduce the risks of a missing child.
* To provide clear procedures to locate any missing child quickly, whilst ensuring a high level of care is maintained for other children.
* To provide actions to follow after a child has been found.
* To provide details of how to manage people after a child has gone missing.

**Responsibilities**

It is the Headteacher’s responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, what is expected, the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis. It is the responsibility of all staff to sign to say they have read and understood the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure they provide two emergency contact details and update these as necessary. They also need to know the procedures for the handover of their child at the beginning and end of sessions. If a parent/carer takes a pupil out of school during the day, they must sign them out at the office and back in again, when they return.

**Procedures Aimed at Reducing the Risk of a Missing Child**

**Start of the school day**

* Parents/carers are responsible for their child/ren until they enter the school building in a morning and as soon as they leave the school building in the afternoon.
* Children are allowed into their classroom, through the classroom door, between 8.45am and 8.55am. Classroom doors are then locked at 8.55 am. Nursery children enter through their classroom doors between 8.30am-8.50am for the morning sessions and 12.30-12.40pm for the afternoon sessions. Add details of new procedures
* A member of Nursery staff stands at the main gate and lets parents/carers in for the end of morning/start of afternoon sessions.
* After these times parents/carers will need to bring their child to the main school office to sign them in.

**Lesson times**

* Staff mark registers promptly and accurately. Completed registers must be returned to the school office by 9:15am and again before 1:30pm.
* All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside areas are closed when pupils are playing outside.
* If pupils leave the classroom to work in other parts of the school, the class teacher must ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.

**During play/lunchtimes**

* Duty staff should be on the playground before pupils come out.
* External gates remain closed.
* Staff patrol all areas on the playgrounds throughout the session.
* Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members are available at playtimes and lunchtimes.
* All Key Stage One and Two classroom doors are locked after play/lunchtimes.
* Head counts/registers are carried out at the end of play/lunchtimes.

**During home times**

* The gates are opened at approximately 3:00pm for parents to enter the school grounds.
* Pupils leave by their classroom doors.
* Staff call the children when they see the parent/carer.
* For children who are not collected on time please see our Pick Up/Drop Off Policy.
* Children in Y5 and Y6 are allowed to walk home on their own. For these children parents/carers must provide a written letter informing school of this and if necessary a discussion with parents/carers may need to take place. Younger children may walk home but the above procedure will need to take place and a discussion with parents/carers will be had.
* **Educational visits**
* Thorough risk assessments are carried out
* Adequate staff/pupil ratios (at least following national guidance and often in excess of this) are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
* Additional support is put in place for those pupils who require it.
* Permission from parents/carers is obtained for any school trip.
* Dates of any school trips are shared with the office and entered in the school diary.
* Mobile phones are taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.
* When possible a member of staff to drive to venue.
* **After School Clubs**
* Thorough risk assessments in place.
* A register of pupils is taken at each session.
* Consent forms are obtained from parents and details of how the pupils are to go home and who with.
* A member of staff is to be assigned to any after school club run by an outside agency.
* **Little Links**
* Little Links staff bring EYFS and KS1 children to the classroom at the start of the school day and collect them from the classroom at the end of the school day. KS2 children do this independently.
* Children are only allowed to Little Links if they have been registered by their parents/carers.
* Attendance registers are completed at each session.

**Procedures to follow if a child is found to be missing**

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, the following procedures would be followed:

* Inform the class teacher and member of the Senior Leadership Team.
* Check that the child has not been collected by a parent/carer for an appointment or is not at a music lesson, intervention etc.
* The class teaching assistant/s will carry out a thorough search of the building, including outside areas, toilets and storage areas. Doors and gates are to be checked for signs of exit/entrance.
* The class teacher will recount the children and ensure that they remain safe and adequately supervised.
* Ask appropriate adults and children calmly if they can say when they last remember seeing the child.

**If the child is still missing the following steps would be taken**

* Inform the Headteacher and Designated Senior Lead for Safeguarding (DSL).
* The Headteacher/DSL to notify the Police.
* The Headteacher/DSL will ring the child’s parents/carers and explain what has happened, what steps have been taken and ask them to come to the school at once. Parents/carers will be asked to bring a recent photograph of the child.
* The Headteacher/DSL to arrange for staff to search the school premises and grounds again. Staff will also be sent to search the area in the immediate vicinity of the school.
* The Headteacher/DSL would inform the Local Authority (LA) Safeguarding Team and follow any advice given.
* Staff will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
* The Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors and Ofsted.

**If a child goes missing on a school trip the following procedures will be followed**

* The person in charge is informed.
* The person in charge to carry out a head count to ensure no other child has gone missing.
* The person in charge will assign other members of staff to search the area ensuring that enough staff are left to supervise the remaining children.
* The person in charge will contact the school and the police.
* The Headteacher/DSL contacts the child’s parents/carers. Parents/carers will be asked to bring a recent photograph of the child.
* In an indoor venue the person in charge will contact the venue’s security.
* Staff to take the rest of the children back to school.
* One member of staff to remain at venue.

**Actions to be followed by staff once the child is found**

* Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.
* Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises without permission, if this is appropriate.
* The Headteacher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an

account of the incident. Liability should not be discussed until the incident has been fully investigated by the Headteacher and the LA.

* The Headteacher will promise a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Services/ Local Children’s Safeguarding Board).
* Any enquires; including media queries should be referred to the Headteacher.
* Inform insurers, if appropriate.
* A full report will need to be written by all staff involved, covering, time, place, numbers of staff and

children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the length of time that the child was missing and how they appeared to have gone missing.

* Complete any other appropriate reports.
* Amend policies and procedures, if appropriate.

**Managing People**

* Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
* The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person responsible for the safety of that child. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
* Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Members of the SLT need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
* The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others.
* When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom should be the Headteacher.
* No matter how understandable the parent’s anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
* The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children’s questions honestly but also reassure them.
* In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The Head and the Governors will use their discretion to decide what action to take.