



**HORRIS HILL**

FOUNDED 1888

# **Missing Child Policy & Procedures**

(including when a child is not collected on time)

<b>Policy reviewed:</b>	<b>September 2020</b>
<b>Policy approval:</b>	<b>Reviewed by Policy Audit Committee October 2020 Approved by Full Governing Board November 2020</b>
<b>Date of next review:</b>	<b>September 2021</b>

## INTRODUCTION

The 'National Minimum Standards' requires that staff working within the school know and implement the school's policy in relation to children going missing and their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for children who are missing, including working with police where appropriate.

## CONTENTS OF POLICY

This policy consists of two parts, the first covering a missing child and the second covering the procedure to be followed by the school in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appointed time.

Parents should have their attention drawn to the existence of both procedures. The policy should be kept under regular review and updated to keep pace with changes to DfE and ISI guidance.

## **PART ONE: MISSING CHILD POLICY**

### INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all of our children at Horris Hill is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a child is missing from school, this policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care.

### REGISTRATION

- Morning registration for all pupils takes place in the morning in Form Tutor time with a member of staff and the information is recorded on the school database. If a pupil is still absent by 9.00am and there has been no communication from the parent informing the school of an absence or there is no official record of a school obligation then the school secretary will contact the parent for further information. The school holds at least two contact numbers for each pupil.
- A second registration for pupils takes place after lunch in forms with a member of staff and the information is recorded on the school database. If there is an unexplained absence then the member of staff responsible for the registration must inform the school secretary to establish the whereabouts of the pupil. If it is not known where the pupil is then the Headmaster or a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) must be informed.
- A register for boarding pupils is also taken at the end of the day in each boarding house and a record kept in house. If a boarding pupil is absent from this registration then the member of staff responsible for taking that registration must inform either the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster or the Head of Boarding.

All staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of pupils as outlined in the school's Supervision of Pupils Policy and Guide to Duty document which is available electronically on the school system.

Where there are changes affecting the child (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.

#### ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL

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, we would carry out the following actions during the working day:

- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts
- Check the Health Centre
- Check with Reception who will check the Day Boy signing out sheet and the electronic diary
- Check the electronic registration entries to see when the pupil was last signed in
- Ask all of the adults and pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil
- Occupy all of the other pupils in their classroom(s), or areas where they would normally be
- Inform the Headmaster/Head of Pastoral or a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) who will act as a base to which all searchers must report once they have looked in their allocated area so that a log can be taken, the search is thorough and widened as necessary.
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search the school grounds
- Arrange for staff to be available to search the immediate grounds off the premises

A record is kept by the school of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

If a pupil is missing at bedtime or in the early hours, or they fail to return from 'leave out' at the appointed time, we would carry out the following actions:

- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts
- Carry out a thorough search of the boarding area
- Ring the Health Centre
- Consult the senior member of boarding staff on duty in School (see duty rota)
- Check exeat forms or any other information before contacting the senior member of staff on duty who will then deal with the matter if there is not a suitable explanation.

If the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- The Headmaster, or the staff member deputising for him, will ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/Headmaster would notify the Police.
- The Headmaster or the person deputising for him would arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out to attempt to catch up with him

- The DSL would inform the school's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the Hampshire Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP).
- The school would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- Inform the Chairman of Governors
- The school's insurers would be informed
- If the pupil is injured a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

**Key Safeguarding contact details are listed in the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

During the course of the investigation into the missing pupil, the school, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other pupils were present
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- Inform the Headmaster/DSL by mobile phone
- The Headmaster or the person deputising for him would ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion.
- Contact the Police
- The DSL would inform the HSCP LADO.
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chairman of Governors
- The school's insurers would be informed
- If the pupil is injured a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. The school will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

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 pupils to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Headmaster or the member of staff deputising for him will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the HSCP if necessary)
- The Headmaster will undertake a full investigation (if appropriate involving the HSCP)
- Media queries should be referred to the Headmaster (after discussion with the HSCP if appropriate)
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements

- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, [the purpose of the outing], the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.

### DUTY TO REPORT

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

The school also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

The School shall inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). This will assist the local authority to:

- a) fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education; and
- b) follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect or radicalisation.

Action will be taken in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

### **PART TWO: PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME**

Children are only allowed off site with adults/carers with parental responsibility or where permission has been given by the parent. No child will be allowed to leave the premises unsupervised.

If a child is not collected within half an hour of the agreed collection time, the pupil's parents/guardians should be contacted. If there is no answer, the school office will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after. If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers by the time the boarders go over to their houses, the pupil will continue to be looked after on site under the care of the boarding house team for the appropriate age of the pupil. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception class) must always be in the care of an appropriate adult.

A record will be kept of incidents where parents/guardians do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.