



Faith, Family and Fascination

Missing Child Policy

Boutcher C.E. Primary School

Reviewed by: Megan Whitton

Last reviewed during: Autumn 2024

Next review due by: Autumn 2025

*“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”
John 13:34*

MISSING CHILD POLICY

Every effort is made to ensure the safety of all children at Boutcher CE Primary School. This policy sets out our procedures for maintaining safety and dealing with the unlikely event of a child missing.

Children are not allowed to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the Headteacher to do so, and then, only with an authorised adult. If a child does leave the premises without permission this policy is in place to ensure that every possible action is taken to ensure the quick and safe locating of the child.

Responsibilities

- It is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure all staff are aware of this policy and are aware of their responsibilities, what is expected and the procedures to follow.
- This policy is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to the guidance provided.
- It is the responsibility of all parents to provide correct contact information, updated as necessary. This information is renewed at the beginning of each academic year.

Objectives

- To locate any missing child as soon as possible.
- To ensure that the building, grounds and play areas are safe and secure during school hours.
- To ensure that teachers and support staff keep children under supervision at all times.
- To ensure that if a child goes missing whilst under the care of the school, he/she is located quickly and returned safely to the school.

Procedures to reduce the risk of a missing child

- Parents are advised that children should not be at school before 8.45am when the school gate is opened and the playground supervised. Those attending earlier for clubs should use the buzzer to gain access by office staff and will then be registered by the relevant school staff of the club that they are attending as being on the premises.
- A member of staff is on duty in the playground from 8.45 am and secures the gate at 9.00.am.
- When children are outside at break times and lunchtimes they are supervised by at least two adults.
- Class teachers take the registers promptly and accurately morning and afternoon
- If children leave the classroom to work in other parts of the school adequate supervision is maintained.
- All visitors to the school have to buzz the school office camera security system and speak to the office staff before they are admitted. If they have an appointment they will be signed in, receive a visitors badge and sign out on departure.
- All children are supervised at home time by staff until collected by an appropriate adult. If a parent is late, the child is kept in school under supervision until an appropriate adult arrives to collect them. Children in Year 5 or Year 6 whose parents want them to go home alone must provide written confirmation of this.

Registration

It is school procedure that parents are asked to inform the school before 9.am if their child is going to be absent from school. This is then appropriately marked in the class register. If a child is absent

MISSING CHILD POLICY

at the time of registration and a message has not been received, the office will contact the parents/carers immediately.

Procedures for the event of a child going missing:

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

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing child must inform the Headteacher and office staff immediately.
- The Headteacher will sound the fire alarm and all children and staff will assemble in the playground as in a normal fire drill. Teachers will take the registers. All other available staff will search the school and grounds and then the immediate outside area.
- If the incident occurs at home time the parents of the child's close friends or other adults who sometimes collect the child will be contacted to see if the child is with them or if they have any further information regarding their whereabouts.
- If the child has not been found after 10 minutes the office staff will contact the parents/carers.
- If the parents/carers have not been able to trace the child, the police will be contacted.
- If the child has any medical or Special Educational Needs these need to be disclosed to the police.

The incident should be relayed to other important agencies

- If the child has an allocated Social Worker, then they should be informed of the disappearance.
- If the child is a Looked After Child, the Social Worker should be informed.
- If the child has an EHCP plan then the funding Local Authority should be informed of the incident and the outcome.
- If the child remains a missing person, and the police become fully involved, then OFSTED should be informed.

When the child is found

- Staff members will care for and talk to the child, bearing in mind that he/she may be unaware of having done anything wrong or may have been afraid and distressed and be in need of reassurance.
- Parents and other agencies will be informed of the outcome of the incident.
- Staff will talk to the other children to ensure they understand that they must not leave the premises and why.

After the incident

- The Headteacher will discuss the events surrounding the incident with the child's parents/carers
- The Headteacher will carry out a full investigation, taking statements from all staff present at the time.
- A conclusion will be drawn as to how the incident happened.
- A written report will be produced and shared with Governors.
- Policies and procedures will be reviewed and amended as required.

MISSING CHILD POLICY

Trips and visits

When classes go out on trips, the following procedures are in place:

- Thorough risk assessments.
- Adequate staff/pupil ratios.
- Trip/visit form completed by the teacher providing clear information regarding the mode of transport, location of the visit, accompanying staff.
- Mobile phone numbers for all staff held in the office.
- Meeting places defined by the teacher so that all children and members of staff are clear about these when out of school on a trip.
- Children wear school wristbands when out on a trip to make them identifiable. These carry the school name and phone number so anyone finding a missing child can contact the school.
- Regular head counting of children by all accompanying staff.

If a child goes missing on a school trip

- The trip leader must ensure the safety of the remaining pupils
- One adult should go to the meeting place and stay there until informed otherwise by the trip leader.
- One or more adults should start to search the immediate area.
- The school must be informed if the child is not found within 10 minutes.
- The police and parents must be informed.
- If when found hospitalisation is required, a minimum of 2 staff members must go in the ambulance with the child.

Following the incident the same procedures must be followed as those following a child going missing from the school site.