



MISSING CHILD POLICY

Date Agreed: January 2021

Review Date: January 2022

Signed: _____
Chair of Governors

**Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Academies Trust
St Blasius Church of England Primary Academy
Missing Child Policy**

Revision Record

| Revision No. | Date Issued | Prepared By | Approved | Comments |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|----------|---|
| 1 | January 2020 | CW | LGB | Reviewed policy |
| 2 | January 2021 | CW | LGB | Reviewed policy: amendments to school day timings (see addendum) as a result of COVID-19, changes to children permitted to walk to/from school unaccompanied. |
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Aims

- To minimise the possibility of a child being lost/missing at the academy.
- To minimise the possibility of a child being lost/missing on an educational visit.
- To outline the procedure that should be followed in the event of a child being lost on an educational visit.
- To follow up a child having been lost at school or on an educational visit.

Minimising the possibility of a child being lost at the academy

The majority of children are brought to the academy by their parents. Very few arrive independently and this minimises the possibility of them becoming lost/going missing on the way to the academy.

Children enter the academy via the playground or through the main entrance if late. This reduces the possibility of children arriving at the academy unnoticed. The playground gate is opened at 8.30am and locked at 8.45am. Two members of staff are on duty at the gate. Once a child has entered they are not allowed to leave during this period. The gate remains locked until 3.00pm, when parents collect their child/ren from the class teacher at the end of the day.

All children are registered between 8.45am and 8.55am and registers are returned to the office immediately (electronically) after being taken via SIMS. Parents are asked to telephone the academy in advance if their child will be absent and they haven't already given notice about this through a 'Request to remove a child in education during term time' form. The registers are checked by the office administrator and any unexplained absences are followed up with a text and/or phone a call home by 9.30am, to ensure that the academy and parent knows the whereabouts of the child.

Registers are formally taken again at the beginning of the afternoon session. Class Teachers should immediately check with the academy office if a child is unexpectedly not present for the afternoon session. Any child who goes in and out of the academy during the course of the day for appointments or the like, must be signed in and out by the parent. If the child cannot be accounted for, follow the procedure outlined below.

Staff should check whether all children are present at the beginning of each lesson (this need not be done with a formal register) and if not, establish whether the child has been in the academy that day. If necessary, send a TA or responsible pair of children to the academy office to check.

All children are told that they must not open any of the doors or gates that create an exit to the premises. All staff are asked to be vigilant about any open doors and gates and ensure that they are closed and where necessary, padlocked immediately. If a child is waiting to be collected from the main entrance, they must be reminded not to open the doors, even if they see someone they know come to the door. Any child seen leaving the premises unaccompanied at any time of the day, should be challenged.

Class Teachers should all be present on the playground to see their class out at the end of the school day, unless they have Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time; an HLTA will cover their class and take on this role. Any uncollected children should be taken to the academy office and NOT permitted to leave unaccompanied or with another parent, unless prior notice has been provided by the parent to the class teacher/academy office.

All after school clubs and after school care should check that the expected pupils are present at the beginning of the activity. The office must be informed promptly that all the children are present or whether anyone is missing. Office staff must check the whereabouts of the child as outlined below, by checking first with the class teacher as to whether they saw the child being collected after school that day and by whom. It is usually the case that the child has been collected instead of attending a club but this must not be assumed. At the end of the club, the club leader is responsible for ensuring that the child is collected by their parent. If a child is not

collected after an after school club, they should be taken to the academy office, who will telephone their parents.

Children in Years 4, 5 and 6 only

If parents wish children to cycle/walk to or from school unaccompanied at the end of the day, or walk home from an after school club, they must advise the academy office in writing. Class Teachers will receive a copy of the letter acknowledging this arrangement. A list will be kept in the office and in the pupil's file. Children younger than this will not be permitted to do so unless there are exceptional circumstances and an agreement is in place. The academy strongly advises parents to consider if their child is mature enough to do so, if the route is safe and promotes the use of before school breakfast clubs and after school fun clubs provided by Furze Hill Preschool.

If it is felt that, due to the distance/route, method of travel, or individual characteristics (eg maturity, additional needs) of the child, this is not considered safe, permission may not be granted. Older siblings in the academy will not be permitted to accompany younger children without an adult present.

Minimising the possibility of a child being lost on an educational visit

Please refer to the staff handbook and Offsite Activities Guidance for further details. The teacher in charge of the visit will have an accurate list of all children on the visit.

Procedure if a child is lost at the academy

- Establish whether the child has been in academy that day or whether they have gone on a legitimate visit and have been signed out. Check with the office to see if there is a message from the parent about collecting them early etc.
- Check with the office whether they know if the child has left the premises.
- Check that the child is not in a music lesson, ELSA session or other activity or in Breakfast/After School Care.
- Without causing undue alarm, establish where the child was last seen; try to verify this with an adult rather than just a child's word.
- Ensure that the rest of the children are safe whilst a thorough search is conducted of the academy premises, inside and out by all non-teaching staff. Walkie Talkies will be distributed and areas designated by the academy office. Check everywhere, including unlikely areas, in cloakrooms, under coats, toilets, etc - anywhere a child could hide.
- Check all available exits and alarms.
- If all possibilities have been explored and the child cannot be accounted for, the Principal must be informed (or Vice/Assistant in his/her absence) and the parents must be phoned. If the parents cannot account for the whereabouts of the child it will be necessary to phone the Police. It will be helpful to know when and where the child was last reliably seen.
- Where an adult sees a child leave the school premises, they must not follow the child off-site or cause them to run away, although if possible, retain a line of sight. In this instance, the Police should be called first and then the parent informed.
- If the Police have been called, the Academies Officer must be notified.
- The Academy Emergency Plan should be followed with regards to possible media interest. Further guidance can be provided by the Academies Officer.

To follow up a child having been lost in the academy or on an educational visit:

Once a child has been found it is necessary to establish how the child was lost to minimise the likelihood of the event recurring. An incident form must be completed and changes to risk assessments etc may be required. If the child was lost in the academy, the Principal will conduct an investigation into how this occurred and will address any matters arising from this.

If the Police have become involved the Trust may conduct an external investigation.

Addendum: Revised School day timings during COVID-19 outbreak

The following timings were put in place in September 2020 to support appropriate social distancing. Any changes will be communicated to parents via the usual methods (e.g. email, newsletters, Class Dojo).

| Year Group | Start time | Home time | Entrance/exit |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Reception | 9:00 | 2:45 | Gate by main entrance |
| Year 1 | 9:00 | 2:45 | Slope by Furze Hill |
| Year 2 | 8:55 | 2:50 | Car park entrance |
| Years 3 & 4 | 8:50 | 2:55 | Playground gate |
| Years 5 & 6 | 8:45 | 3:00 | Playground gate |