



Devonshire House Preparatory School

## Missing Child Policy

*This policy is for the Junior School and Upper School*

Written by: Mr Henry Keighley Elstub	September 2022
This Policy is the responsibility of the Head and is annually reviewed.	
Reviewed:	July 2024
Next review:	July 2025

### **1. Procedure in the Event of a Parent Failing to Collect their Child at the Appointed Time**

No child will be released into the care of an unknown adult. In the event of a child being collected by someone unknown to the school, the school office and class teacher must be notified beforehand by phone, email or letter. Change of collection letters are available in the offices. The office will forward any changes to the form tutor before the end of the day and also to the SLT teacher on gate duty.

In the event that a child is not collected at the appointed time:

1. Reassure them.
2. The child can be looked after in the library or by the class teacher until 4.30pm. If the child has not been collected by 4.30pm, the member of SLT on duty should be informed.
3. The class teacher or school secretary telephones the person who usually collects the child in order to notify them that their child has not been collected.
4. If the person is unavailable leave a message and contact the child's father/mother or Nanny/Carer (as listed on the child's contact details on ISAMS).
5. If the parents are unable to collect their child, they can make necessary arrangements for someone to pick them up.
6. If the school are not able to make contact with any of the above people, telephone the nominated emergency contact and arrange for the child to be collected.
7. If a child attending After School Care (Aktiva) is not collected by 6pm, the member of Senior Leadership on duty is contacted. They contact parents, and if unable to make contact, they telephone the Nanny/Carer or nominated emergency contact.
8. The member of SLT will remain with the child until they are collected and the Head will be informed.

## **2. Procedure in the Event of a Missing Child**

### **In School**

1. Teacher to call the school office to let them know that the child has not turned up at the lesson.
2. The school office will contact a member of the SLT who will co-ordinate the search.
3. An initial search will be made by all available staff; looking in all possible areas in the local school environment, i.e. No. 4, No. 6, playground areas etc. At No.6g, the music rooms (stables), reading hut and forest area would also be searched.
4. Contact the Head and Facilities team to help do a more thorough search, two to look around the school, and two to check school gates, look outside the front of the school and up and down Arkwright Road, Lyndhurst Gardens or Fitzjohn's Avenue and surrounding roads.
5. This is all done within 15 minutes
6. If the child has not been found, then the Deputy Head, or the Head to notify parents
7. Deputy Head, or the Head to then notify the police

### **To help prevent a child going missing in school:**

1. The front doors in all buildings are closed during the school day.
2. There is a member of staff on each door each morning to prevent children from leaving after they have been dropped off.
3. Members of staff on door duty are vigilant at all times. Staff should not be talking to parents.
4. The attendance register is taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and all staff are aware of who is absent. If a child goes home early due to illness or collected early, teachers are made aware by the office and the pupils leave via the offices where they sign out.
5. Form tutors are in the playground each day handing children over to parents/carers at dismissal time. One Staff member stands at the gate in 6g and number 2 as a second check to ensure pupils only leave with a parent.

In the case of unauthorised absence the school is vigilant in following up all such cases. In the case of any concerns the school would inform the Local Authority immediately of the child's absence.

### **During school trips:**

1. Teachers and parents to look after the rest of the children in a calm and safe environment
2. If the trip involves more than one class, then the other class teachers join the class teacher to make a thorough search of the venue and surroundings
3. If child is not found within 10 minutes, alert the relevant security at the location e.g. Kensington Park Police.
4. Class Teacher to contact the Deputy Head at school, who in turn will inform the Head. The parents will be contacted.
5. Contact local police.

Should this situation arise the school is committed to conduct a full review of procedures and policies and take on board all lessons learned.

### **To help prevent a child going missing on school trips:**

1. A risk assessment must be carried out for regular outings and trips and adhered to at all times.
2. Prior to the trip, parents who are coming are given a copy of the venue risk assessment and 'Guide for helping on trips'.
3. Prior to the trip, class teacher to talk to the children about the importance of staying with the adult they are allocated to.
4. Prior to leaving school, the teacher goes through the 'Guide for helping on trips' again with parents and during the outing the children must be counted regularly.
5. Children are to walk in pairs or with an adult.