



# **St Christopher's School & Nursery**

(Including EYFS, Before & After School Care & Clubs)

## **Missing Children Policy**

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Name of staff member responsible for document: Bronia Grehan, Headteacher	
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## **Introduction**

The welfare and safety of all the children at St Christopher's school is our paramount responsibility.

We recognise that we need to be alert to the possibility, however rare, of a pupil being lost or going missing.

Systems in place to minimise the risk of children going missing

We aim to:

- make the site as secure as possible
- take appropriate steps to minimise risk at vulnerable times such as the beginning and end of the school day
- ensure the children are appropriately supervised at all times
- make children aware of the boundaries set
- have systems in place to minimise the risk of children going missing
- have procedures in place that, in the unlikely event of a pupil going missing, enhance the chances of finding the pupil in the shortest possible time and ensure the safety of everyone else on site

## **How Do We Do This?**

### **Site Security**

All perimeter fencing and gates are six feet high, are regularly inspected and kept in good repair. There are five access points to the site:

- The front door has a video entry system for visitors together with a keypad code plate for staff. It has a Yale key lock together with a safety chain and a sign which strongly reminds visitors to close the door firmly behind them. This door cannot be accessed from inside the building without first passing through a locked door from the Reception Area which is controlled electronically by a green release button situated at adult height. Visitors who have accessed the front door cannot enter the door to the reception area without electronic access provided by the reception staff or knowledge of the code designed for staff on a keypad situated at adult height.
- The back gate is unlocked at specific times during the day for restricted keypad access by parents to enter by means of a 4-digit security code. The gate self-closes after entry. At all other times the gate remains locked with no restricted keypad access.
- The assembly front hall door is kept locked at all times and is never used by pupils.
- The side gates allow access from the front to the back of the school for the Premises Manager and contractors. There is one gate protecting each end of the two side passage ways. All are kept locked during term time.

### Minimising risk at the beginning and end of the School day

- Pupils accessing breakfast club and early drop-off are handed over by their parent to staff in the assembly hall and a register is kept.
- A member of staff will be on duty at the main gate to welcome parents and their children as they enter the school grounds. Parents are not allowed to drop their child at the school gate. This gate is locked for the start of school no later than 8:40.
- Children who have been in breakfast club & early drop off are escorted by members of staff to the Nursery and Reception classrooms with KS1 children going upstairs. The back door is then unlocked at 8.30am to allow children access.
- At 8.30am all other nursery children are greeted and handed over at the Nursery Green Room door by a member of staff.
- Once the back door is unlocked the Headteacher or another member of staff is on duty in the entrance hall to ensure no children go back out once they have been sent in by their parents, and remains there until 8.40am, when the back gate is locked.
- At the end of the day Years 1 and 2 exit the building via the back door. The Headteacher or another member of staff shakes hands with all the children and oversees the handover of each child to their parents or nominated adult. The Headteacher or appointed member of staff does not leave the door until all children have been united with their parent.
- Reception children exit via the Mars cloakroom door and are handed over to their parents by staff.
- Nursery children are collected from the outside classroom at 12 noon and 1.30pm and at 3pm. A member of staff will supervise the handed over to the parent, carer or pre-authorised person.
- All children are only handed over to an authorised person. If an unauthorised person arrives to collect a child the parents' permission will be sought by phone. If the parent cannot be contacted the child will be looked after until contact can be made.
- Every family is required to inform the school if there are any family members that are not authorised to pick up the child. Parents are also required to inform the School if their child is going home with another child.
- If unexpectedly a child is not picked up, they will be looked after in school in Owls whilst investigations are being made.
- All staff and parents will be alert to and challenge any unknown adults in the grounds at the beginning and end of the school day.
- The School takes responsibility of all pupils once they have entered the school either by the Nursery or the back door according to year group.

### Supervision of pupils

Pupils are well supervised during all activities in the day. All statutory adult/child ratios are adhered to.

Pupils may sometimes move around the School without direct supervision, for example delivering messages or ringing the school bell. All staff are responsible for assessing the safety of the required task with regard to the age, disposition and ability of the child and the nature of the independent task.

### Making sure that children are aware of the boundaries set

- Assemblies at the beginning of the School year are dedicated to our school rules.
- Children are reminded of safety rules during the school year.
- Parents are asked to enforce our rules, particularly about drop off and pick up times.
- The transition from being handed over to a parent in EYFS and shaking hands and then being handed over to a parent/carer is carefully managed.

### Systems in place to minimise the risk of children going missing

- Formal registration takes place at in the morning by 8:40am and in the afternoon by 1:40pm, with an additional register at 12 midday and during the lunch session in Nursery.
- All parents are required to inform the School if their child is unable to attend.
- Staff will follow up any unexplained child absence with the aim to contact parents by 9.00am.
- The School will reaffirm family contact details during each academic year. At other times the School will prompt parents to update changes in contact details but it is entirely the parents' responsibility to do so.
- Children are not allowed to leave the classroom, lesson, club, lunch hall or playground without the permission of the supervising adult.
- Outside space is always supervised while children are using it.
- Class teachers have lists of children going to after school activities and the teacher leading the club has a register of the expected children.
- All staff are responsible for knowing the whereabouts of the children in their care.
- All pupils entering or leaving school at any time, other than normal times, are signed in or out by their parent, at the Reception office.
- All visitors to the School whether known or unknown are required to sign in and out and wear a visitors' lanyard.
- The reason for any visit will be checked out and no unsupervised access to the School for any purpose will be allowed, except by prior arrangement.
- Staff will challenge any person on school premises who is not a member of staff or wearing a visitor's lanyard.

### **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 without delay:

- Remain calm
- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- Check with the reception office who will check the signing out/in log.
- Inform the Headteacher or the senior member of staff on duty
- Calmly ask adults and other children if they have seen the child or know where he/she is and if they can remember when they last saw the child
- Make sure rest of the children in your care are supervised by an appropriate adult
- At the same time, deploy one or more adults to search everywhere within the Nursery, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, toilets etc, where a small child might hide and arrange for one or more adults to search the school grounds and the rest of the School.
- Check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit.

If the child is still missing, the following steps would be taken without delay:

- Inform the Headteacher who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- The Headteacher will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the School at once
- The DSL/Headteacher would immediately notify the Police
- The Headteacher would arrange for staff to search the rest of the School premises and grounds
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff may be asked to check to see if the child has gone home. They would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with the child
- The DSL would inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) who should liaise with safeguarding partners including local children's services as appropriate. The DSL will check with the LSCB this has happened.
- The School would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- The School's insurers would be informed
- If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

During the course of the investigation into the missing child, 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 child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

**The School will always consider the wider circumstances around a child going missing from School and whether there are wider safeguarding concerns that may need to be addressed in line with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.**

**Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing on an outing**

This risk must be planned for on every trip risk assessment, taking into account the specific environment of the venue and specific children going on the trip:

Factors that will minimise the risk:

- High staff pupil ratios.
- Adults being given responsibility for a small specific group.
- Regular head counts.
- Educating the children about their responsibility to stay with their allocated adult, listen to and follow instructions.
- Teaching a procedure for children to follow should they become separated from the group, e.g. stand still until found by staff.

**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 children were present
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- Immediately inform the Headteacher who is the DSL by mobile phone
- The remaining children would be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable
- The Headteacher would ring the child's parents as soon as reasonably practicable to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue or the School (whichever is appropriate) at once
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search (where relevant)
- Immediately contact the Police
- The DSL would inform the LSCB who should liaise with safeguarding partners including local children's services as appropriate
- The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority including children's services
- Inform the Chair of Governors without delay
- The School's insurers would be informed as soon as reasonably practicable
- If the child is injured and is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days of the accident.

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 children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Headteacher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the LADO if necessary)
- The Headteacher will oversee a full investigation (if appropriate involving the LSCB)
- Media queries should be referred to the Headteacher
- 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 the child appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.
- Consider whether actions need to be taken in line with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy where there are concerns about the welfare of the child.

## **Appendix Procedure**

### **Search Areas**

All staff will thoroughly search the area they operate in, however unlikely it is the child could be there. Thereafter:

Nursery staff will search the nursery toilets, all rooms including the outside classroom and outside play area as well as out of bounds areas including the nursery office, staff toilet, kiln room and sheds noting any doors that are unsecure.

Reception class staff will search all outside play areas (except those designated for nursery), the trim trail, PE shed, Premises Manager's store shed and downstairs toilets.

Year 1 staff will check their toilets, staff toilets and staff room and the SEND room if the SEND teacher is not in.

The Bursar will check the loft area, although this is an 'out of bounds' area.

The Premises Manager will check the basement, although this too is an out of bounds area, and then check the front of the School, side passage and side Fire Escape, the PE shed and Premises Manager's store shed if YR have not already done so.

The Secretary will check the security of the front door, entrance hall and the room under the stairs and then return to the office to man the phones.

Kitchen staff will search the kitchen, assembly hall, hall storage cupboard and toilets and check the assembly hall door is locked.

When available the PE, Music, French and SEND teachers will be deployed to circle the outside of the School starting in the front, one setting off left and the other right, meeting at the back gate. Otherwise, the first available staff will be deployed to do this.

All staff must report to the Head or leading member of SMT as soon as their designated areas have been checked or the child is found.