

Lost or Missing Child Policy

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Policy Statement for Lost or Missing Pupils (Including EYFS pupils)

Heathcote Preparatory School and Nursery is committed to the well-being and safety of all our pupils and ensuring that their whereabouts are known at all times. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'missing' refers to a pupil being not present at school without authorisation or explanation.

On occasions when a staff member identifies a pupil as missing from their expected location, immediate action is required as outlined in the procedures below. Communications with parents and the appropriate services (particularly the police) are an integral part of the procedure and all instances of missing pupils will be reported to the Headteacher so that appropriate investigations may be made. The Headteacher will maintain and review a log of instances of missing pupils and will raise any concerns regarding pupils missing on repeat occasions to relevant agencies.

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including those in our EYFS setting.

Heathcote Preparatory School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunity Policy document.

Heathcote Preparatory School and Nursery seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document. This document is available on the website and on request from the school office and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance, Safeguarding and Uncollected Pupil policy documents.

Procedure for Missing Pupils

A pupil may be identified as missing:

- After an absence at morning or afternoon registration is not confirmed by the office staff's call home.
- By comparing pupils in a class with the day's 'Fire List'/register
- By a report of a missing child by a fellow pupil.

Any member of staff discovering a discrepancy must immediately notify the school office who will:

- Contact the form/class teacher to assess whether the absence is expected.
- Check for any known medical emergency.
- Contact the teacher of any timetabled class at which the missing pupil should be present (or should have been present earlier in the day: staff who might previously have taught or the pupil that day)
- Check all lists of trips out of School.

If the pupil is found to be lost:

- The Headteacher will be informed, who will initiate and oversee a search of the site with SLT members.
- Open a written record of the incident, which will log all specific actions taken.

- Doors and gates will be checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a pupil could wander out and a search of the perimeter of the school and local roads will be made on foot, by available staff as appropriate.
- Classrooms will be searched methodically

If the pupil is still found to be missing:

- Staff will complete a second search of the site.
- If considered appropriate, a school fire alarm practice will be used as a useful tool in locating missing pupils.

If the site search fails:

- The parents of the missing pupil will be informed, and invited to come to the school.
- The Headteacher will arrange for the police to be called after two site searches have been completed; we anticipate this would be within 40 minutes.

If the pupil is found, or the incident is otherwise resolved:

- The Headteacher and parents of the missing pupil will be directly informed.
- The Police will be informed, if they have been involved.
- The written log kept by the school office will be signed off.
- The Headteacher will initiate a full inquiry, and provide a written report for the Board of Directors. This report and the incident log will be kept on the pupil's file.

After the Incident

- The Headteacher will discuss with the child's parents the events surrounding the disappearance of the child.
- The Headteacher will carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.
- The incident report will detail:
 1. The date and time of the report
 2. What staff/children were in the group/class
 3. When the child was last seen in the group/class
 4. What has taken place in the group/class house since then and the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened and, if appropriate, procedures (including risk assessments and training) may be updated.
- ISI is informed in the case of an incident of a missing EYFS pupil within 14 days.

This document is reviewed annually by the Headmistress and SLT or as events or legislation change requires.