



LOWER SCHOOL MISSING CHILDREN POLICY

Aims

This policy sets out our procedures for maintaining the children's safety and dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing. The procedures to be followed if a pupil is missing are designed to:

- Protect the health and safety of all pupils in the School
- Ensure that all school staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing

***NB.** It is important to distinguish between a pupil's absence from school for an unknown reason and a pupil's disappearance from a lesson or activity after arrival at school. If a pupil is absent from school without any note of explanation, office staff will follow this up by contacting parents to establish the reasons.*

This policy applies to staff (including volunteers), pupils and parents at OLA. The Head of Lower School and the Principal should use their discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy.

Prevention

Every effort is made to ensure the safety of the children whilst they are in school. The areas used by the children are secure and arrangements have been put into place to ensure that access is restricted at key times during the day when the pupils are present. All visitors must report to the Main Reception and be signed in. Entry for visitors is via the Main Reception which is operated by a key pad from the Reception. All play areas are adequately fenced off with locked gates to ensure that access by unknown persons is limited. Supervision of pupils at break times and lunch times is in place to further ensure the children's safety.

Procedures

Should a child become lost the following action should be taken:

1. Alert the member of staff in charge, or any member of the LT, and the School Office will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where.
2. Remember the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security. Ensure that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure.
3. Seek assistance from other staff members who should search the buildings, gardens, play areas, classrooms and immediate vicinity.
4. If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the child's parents and the police should be informed.

Junior School Lost Children Policy: Reviewed Michaelmas 2019. Next Review Michaelmas 2021

OLA is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

5. Continue to search, opening up the area, and keeping in touch by mobile phone.
6. When the situation has been resolved members of staff should review the reasons for it happening and ensure measures are taken to ensure that it does not happen again.

School Trips

Before school trips teachers should complete a risk assessment detailing how they will maintain the safety of the children and prevent them from getting lost.

Strategies could include:

- Frequent head counts
- Keeping children in groups or partners
- Ensuring there is the appropriate adult/child ratio
- Reminding children frequently that they should stay with the group
- Ensuring that children with specific needs have adequate adult support

When appropriate, children on trips should carry a card detailing the school's address and telephone number and should be given a meeting point to be used if they are separated from the group. If a child goes missing on a school trip, staff should follow the school procedures as well as informing the school as soon as possible.

Appendix:

Information to be provided to the police

When the School contacts the police during the day or night, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name;
- the pupil's age/date of birth;
- an up to date photograph if possible;
- the pupil's height and any other physical description that is not shown by the photograph;
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing;
- any physical disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have;
- the pupil's home address and telephone number and details of his/her parents/guardians;
- any relevant comments made by the pupil.

Questions that could be asked when interviewing during a missing pupil investigation

- When was the pupil last seen?
- Who was the pupil with?
- What emotional state did the pupil appear to be in?
- Has anything upset the pupil recently?
- Did the pupil speak to anyone about leaving?
- Who are the pupil's main friends at School?

Record keeping

The School will keep a full written record of any incident of a missing pupil. This written record will be kept on file. The written record will include:

- the pupil's name;
- relevant dates and times (e.g. when it was first noticed that the pupil was missing);
- the action taken to find the pupil;
- whether the Police or Social Services were involved;
- outcome or resolution of the incident;
- any reasons given by the pupil for being missing;
- any concerns or complaints about the handling of the incident;
- a record of the staff involved.

Reviewed: Michaelmas 2020

Next Review: Michaelmas 2021