

# Missing Pupil Policy

**Policy Date – January 2022**

**To be Reviewed January 2023**

## **1. Introduction**

This policy sets out the approach to be taken by NAS Church Lawton School in the event of a pupil going missing. Our policy in this matter is twofold: firstly, not to lose any pupil at any time and secondly to locate safely and quickly any pupil who we nevertheless find to be missing on-site or off-site.

## **2. Purpose**

As quickly as possible, to locate a missing child, return them to safe custody, inform the relevant parties of the situation and invoke a review of the incident.

## **3. Background**

A risk assessment will be completed annually of the safety and security of children on school premises, and risk assessments are inherent to the planning and approval of school trips and visits (see Visits Policy). Central to the measures in place is the provision of staff supervision of exits at the beginning and end of each school day, doors in relevant locations which do not allow children independent access, and regular reminders to the parents of the critical role they play. In addition to the ongoing vigilance of the school staff, there are specific times when attendance is checked:

- Morning and afternoon registration on each of the 380 half day sessions
- Headcount check at beginning of lessons
- Group headcount check at the start and end of sessions and all transits off site

In the unlikely event of a child found to be missing the following procedure is to be followed.

## **4. Procedure**

1. The teacher in charge delegates a member of staff to search indoor and outdoor areas within the school secure area in case a child is hiding (in the case of a child missing in school) and the immediate environs (off-site).
2. In the event the child is found the parent should be advised of the incident and a review invoked if this becomes a repeated behaviour.
3. In the event of (1) above not resulting in the safe location of the child, the Principal/SLT member should be informed immediately if on the premises, and if they are off premises, at the first opportunity.

4. The Principal/SLT member will request assistance on-site, and off-site the school must ensure staff pupil ratios are maintained during searches starting at the location of the last recorded presence of the missing pupil based on the last headcount/roll call and any information received from other pupils or witnesses.
5. The Principal/SLT member will delegate at least one member of staff to search the school grounds starting with the exit routes. In the event the pupil is found the parent should be advised of the incident and a review invoked if this becomes a repeated behaviour.
6. If the pupil has still not been located, the parents, if not already on site, will be contacted, by the Principal/SLT member.
7. If the child is not located after the completion of (6), the Principal/SLT member will inform the police (by dialling 999) and then the Chair of Governors.
8. Once the police arrive, formal responsibility for the search will pass to the police, but the Principal/SLT member will ensure that the school staff will make themselves appropriately available to assist further with the incident, a recent photo of the student will be shared with the police and a full description of clothing and any known landmarks that the student frequents will be shared with the police.
9. In any event, and before leaving the location, the Principal/SLT member will ensure appropriate reassurance and comfort is provided to children, parents, and staff, and where necessary shall seek assistance in this from the Chair of Governors.
10. The Principal/SLT member will alert the LA's safeguarding team, the Principal/SLT member will also contact the LADO in the event a child is missing due to staff negligence.
11. As soon as practicable after the incident, the teacher in charge and the Principal/SLT member will write a report which will be used by the Senior Leadership Team which includes the designated safeguarding lead and Governing Body as part of the incident review which will aim to look for improvements to this procedure and avoid any further occurrences of the incident.

#### **5. If a child goes missing on a school trip**

1. The trip leader must ensure the safety of the remaining pupils.
2. Regular head counting of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving a venue.
3. The trip leader/organiser, in discussion with other staff will be responsible for making decisions relating to the trip and the course of actions once a child is agreed as missing.
4. One or more adults should start searching for the missing child.

5. The school point of contact must be informed as soon as possible if a child is missing and cannot be found within 15 minutes, the police must be called by dialling 999 and then parents/carers should be informed. However, this time would be reduced significantly if a child is missing near somewhere such as a river or the seaside, an immediate call should be made if a child is out of sight in these circumstances in a dangerous location.
6. If hospitalisation is required ONE staff where possible should go in the ambulance.
7. Points 9 to 12 to be followed in section above **4. Procedure**

**After any incident of a missing child, an incident/accident form must be completed giving full details of how and when the incident occurred**

## **6. Review**

This procedure will be reviewed annually by SLT.

## **Links to other policies**

It is important that this policy and the procedures therein is considered alongside NAS and Government policies and guidance including (but not limited to):

- NAS Education and children's residential services VISITS & TRIPS POLICY
- Safeguarding, including Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE Trips and Visits Guidance, venues' safeguarding and safety procedures
- Health and Safety
- Risk Assessment
- Positive Behaviour Support