



## MISSING CHILD POLICY AND LATE COLLECTION PROCEDURES

In this policy the following members of staff are referred to:

| TITLE   | NAME                           |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead       | Claire Murdoch                 |
| Deputy Safeguarding Lead                            | Gill Sinclair                  |
| NMS CEO and Board Level Lead for Safeguarding (BLL) | Deborah Livsey                 |
| School Office Administrators                        | Marion Carolan and Mara Atunes |

### INTRODUCTION AND PRINCIPLES

The welfare of all our children at the School is our paramount responsibility. A child being absent from education, for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including abuse or neglect, child sexual and/or criminal exploitation, and county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called "honour" based violence or risk of forced marriage.

Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child being absent in the future.

The School's expectations with regard to pupil attendance, what it will do if staff have concerns about poor attendance and the circumstances under which it has a duty to

report to the Local Authority are detailed in the Attendance and Punctuality policy available on the school website.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that they are in our care.

This policy sets out the procedures for maintaining safety and dealing with the event of:

- a child going missing during the school day in spite of these procedures and:
- what we do to ensure that a child is held safe if not collected.

This policy applies to all pupils including those within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our youngest children are set out in a detailed policy document: 'Educational Visits for EYFS Children' and for older children "Educational Visits for Children". Both documents are on our website. We review these policies regularly (at least once a year) in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of very young children and read Part 1 of the DfE's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance.

## INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE – CONTENTS

### PART 1: MISSING CHILD POLICY

1. Action to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend first day of school.
2. Parents' and guardians' responsibilities
3. Procedures aimed at reducing the risk of a missing pupil
4. Procedures when a child goes missing from the School
5. Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing on an outing
6. Actions followed by staff once the child is found

### PART 2: WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

7. Procedures to be followed when a child is not collected on time

## PART 1: MISSING CHILD POLICY

### 1. ACTION TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD FAILS TO ATTEND FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

All new pupils are placed on the School's admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend the School. If a child fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Head Teacher who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. The Head Teacher/ DSL will first contact the parents/guardians to ascertain the child's whereabouts and then will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

The School's admission register, contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School along with the date of admission or re-admission to the School, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended.

Where there are changes affecting the child (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.

Registers are legal records. The School will preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 3 years from the date of entry.

### 2. PARENTS' AND GUARDIANS' RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of parents to notify the School if their child is absent for any reason, (see Attendance and punctuality policy) and to know the procedures for handover of the child at the beginning and end of sessions.

Contact information for parents and carers is maintained by the School office. Parents must ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis. Parents are also requested to reconfirm their details with the school office at the beginning of each school year.

Parents must not leave children unattended before the School doors are opened or a member of staff is on duty on the playground

If parents are unable to pick up their child from the School, they must alert the School *in advance* to the name of the adult who will do so, and ensure that such persons identify themselves unmistakably to staff.

Each family is encouraged to provide the School with a family code word so that the staff can satisfy themselves that a person unknown to the School is safely delegated by the parents to collect a child. If the staff are concerned that the person collecting

the child is not acting on instructions from the parents, they will ask for the Head Teacher to be summoned to make a final decision on releasing the child.

### 3. PROCEDURES AIMED AT REDUCING THE RISK OF A MISSING PUPIL

#### Start of the Day

- Staff ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from staff to them and vice versa
- There are clear procedures for welcoming pupils into School. The School gates will be opened at 8:15am and a member of staff will be on the gate.
- Children go straight to their classrooms or are supervised outside.
- A member of staff will be on the playground from 8:20 am until 8.35 am
- A Walking Bus operates from Roundwood Park, meeting at 8.20 am and setting off for school at 8.25 pm
- Staff mark-up registers using the Engage MIS system, promptly and accurately – morning at 8:50 am and at the beginning of afternoon school. The School will always contact the parent/guardian on the same day if a child is absent from the register without explanation.

#### Outside Time/Lunch/Playtime

- When children are using the playground they are supervised by an adult at all times.
- If pupils leave the classroom to work in other parts of the School, supervision is maintained at all times
- If pupils leave the classroom to use the toilet, it is the teacher's responsibility to follow a system whereby pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom
- The main school gates remain closed at all times during the school day and children are educated in the importance of staying on the School site at all times unless accompanied by an adult.
- The entrance to the school site is monitored by CCTV.

#### Home Time

- At the end of school, children are either dismissed from their classroom or from the main playground.
- Children going to after school activities are taken to be registered

#### Educational Visits

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil are provided when pupils leave the School premises. A list of pupils is taken on visits out of school. A mobile phone is taken by staff on every visit and all staff are aware of the emergency procedures and medical issues associated with taking pupils offsite
- Further details of our policies and procedures for educational visits can found in

our Educational Visits Policy and for EYFS children, our Educational Visits EYFS Policy, both of which can be found in the policies section of the school website.

#### 4. PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF A CHILD GOING 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:

- Any member of staff who has noticed the missing child will inform the Head Teacher who is also the DSL or in their absence, the DDSL.
- Check with the school office who will check the signing out/in book.
- Check with the pupil's friends and staff to see if they know the pupil's whereabouts and if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil.
- Staff will promptly but calmly round up all pupils to an area and a member of staff will read the group a story if age-appropriate.
- Staff will take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- At the same time all other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and notify the Head Teacher if the child is found immediately. The search, both inside and out, will include carefully checking all spaces (such as cupboards) washrooms etc. where a small child might hide.
- An immediate check will be made of the CCTV records for signs of entry/exit.
- A thorough check will be made of all exits to be made to make sure all gates/doors were locked/bolted and there are no other ways a pupil could have left the School. If something is discovered, this needs to be drawn to the attention of the Head Teacher immediately.

A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the explanation from the parent.

If the child is still missing by the time the register has been completed, the following steps would be taken without delay:

- The Head Teacher will notify the NMS CEO/ BLL.
- The Deputy DSL would immediately inform the Police.
- The Deputy DSL will arrange for all available staff to search the vicinity immediately. Arrangements will be made for calling staff to return to school in the event that the child is found and asked to return to school.
- If the child has not been found after 15 minutes from the initial report of them as missing, then parents should be notified and explain what has happened and what steps have been put in motion. When contacting parents or carers we will

ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child

- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with them
- The Head Teacher or next most senior member of staff on site will inform the School's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- The School would co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- The class teacher must try to remember and write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features.
- If the missing child has any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted, to be disclosed to police or other agencies.
- The Critical Incident Plan outlines how media should be handled.

If a child continues to be missing after one hour, the following will apply:

- The School will cooperate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- The Head Teacher will keep the NMS Chief Executive Officer informed.
- The Insurers would be informed.
- If the child is injured a report would be made, if necessary, under RIDDOR to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

During the course of the investigation into the missing child, the School, 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 will 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 Child Protection.

#### 5. ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING

- An immediate head count by the Teacher in Charge will be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- The Teacher in Charge will ensure safety of remaining pupils
- One or more adults will immediately start searching the immediate vicinity for the child
- The Teacher in Charge will contact by mobile phone the Head Teacher or in her absence the School Administrator. The Head Teacher or the School Administrator will inform the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of New Model School without delay. The Teacher in Charge will ask the Head Teacher to ring the

child's parents and as soon as reasonably practicable to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. The Head Teacher will ask them to come to the venue/ the School at once

- If relevant contact the venue management and arrange a search.
- The Teacher in Charge will contact the police immediately
- The remaining children will be brought back to school as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- The Head Teacher in the role of DSL will inform the School's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- 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.

## 6. ACTIONS FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

Staff will:

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- The Teacher in Charge will inform the Head Teacher without delay that the lost child has been found
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/ separate from a group on an outing

The Head Teacher will:

- Without delay speak to the parents of the found child to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the LADO if necessary)
- Inform or arrange for the NMS CEO/BLL to be informed.
- Conduct a full investigation (if appropriate involving LADO). The investigation would involve all concerned providing written statements
- Ensure a detailed report is prepared 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 they appeared to have gone missing, together with lessons for the future.
- Field any media queries (after discussion with the LADO if appropriate)
- Consider whether actions need to be taken in line with the School's Child Protection policy where there are concerns about the welfare of the child.

## PART 2 WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

7. If a child is not collected from the School within a quarter of an hour of the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. Where reasonably possible the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

The class teacher or other staff member will continue to call the numbers provided for the child. If this continues for an hour or more after pick-up, they will call the emergency numbers for this child.

During this time, we undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that they remain under our care, until such a time as they have been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate, alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to prioritise the child's safety

If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers after the School premises are closing, the Head Teacher will:

1. Contact Brent Family Front Door on: 020 8937 4300, who will make emergency arrangements for the child, will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police

If you are calling outside normal office hours (9am - 5pm) please call the Brent emergency duty team on: 020 8863 5250.

2. Inform the NMS Chief Executive Officer
3. Make a full written report of the incident.

The School's DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the School's child protection policy and procedures detailed in its Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Claire Murdoch  
Head Teacher  
August 2023

Review approved by Deborah Livsey CEO  
New Model School Company Limited  
August 2023

Next Review date August 2023



## APPENDIX RELATED SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

Please refer to the following policies, all available at our website, which relate to Safeguarding matters and which should be read in conjunction with each other:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Educational Visits - EYFS Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Health and Safety General Policy
- Safeguarding Induction for new staff
- Missing Child Policy and Late Collection Procedures
- Attendance and punctuality policy
- e-Safety Policy
- Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality
- Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy