



NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME SCHOOL

Missing Pupil Policy

This policy relates to Newcastle-under-Lyme School, including the EYFS. This policy is available upon request to parents and prospective parents and is published to parents and prospective parents on the School's website.

This policy should be read alongside the *Safeguarding Policy*.

1. Introduction

The welfare of all of our children at Newcastle under Lyme School is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. Every member of our staff who works with children has read Part 1 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2023).

A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

2. Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the School

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing pupil is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

If a pupil was found to be missing after being present in school earlier in the day or following a phone call to parents to question a morning absence, we would carry out the following actions during the school day. This also includes actions during after school activities.

Check with the Senior School Office / Prep School Reception / Nursery Daily Attendance Record who will check the signing out/in book and inform a senior member of staff or member of the Prep Leadership Team who will follow this procedure, appropriate for the age of the child:

- Check the School Nurse's Room, Music department or the Library
- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts
- Call the pupil's mobile telephone
- Ask all of the adults and pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil

- At the same time, arrange for one or more members of staff to search the School grounds. This should be co-ordinated by the senior member of staff usually from one of the School Offices.
- If the pupil is found on site or in the vicinity, the School staff will make a concerted effort to persuade the pupil to return to school. If the pupil refuses to do so, members of staff should remain with the pupil, and parents will be contacted.

If the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Deputy Head Pastoral, Head of Prep School, Nursery Manager or in their absence, the Deputy Head Academic, Prep School Deputy Head, Deputy Nursery Manager.
- The Headmaster will be kept informed throughout.
- The Deputy Head / Head of Prep School will contact the pupil's parent(s) and will ask them to come to the School at once
- The Deputy Head / Head of Prep School (or in their absence a member of SMT/PLT) will arrange for staff to conduct a further search of all school premises and grounds.
- If the search for the pupil is unsuccessful the Deputy Head / Head of Prep School (or in their absence a member of SMT/PLT) would notify the Police. This will ensure that the Police and other partners have a true picture of missing episodes, which are indicators of risk for some children.
- The DSL (or in their absence DDSL) would inform the local safeguarding partnership
- The School will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- The Headmaster will inform the Chair of Governors
- The Bursar will inform the School's insurers
- If the pupil is injured the Bursar will file a report under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

The above will be followed by Nursery staff during term time. However, during school holidays the following procedures should be followed:

- The Nursery Manager or Deputy Nursery Manager will contact the pupil's parent(s) and will ask them to come to the School at once.
- The Nursery Manager or Deputy Nursery Manager will arrange for staff to conduct a further search of all school premises and grounds.
- If the search for the pupil is unsuccessful the Nursery Manager or Deputy Nursery Manager would notify the Police.
- The DSL would inform the local safeguarding partnership
- The School would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- The Nursery Manager or Deputy Nursery Manager will contact the Head of the Prep School and the Headmaster, who will inform the Chair of Governors
- The Bursar will inform the School's insurers

- If the pupil is injured the Bursar will file a report under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

During the course of the investigation into the missing pupil, the School, in consultation with the local safeguarding partnership, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and following the School's *Critical Incident Procedure* how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. Following review, if appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

3. Actions to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on a school trip

If a pupil is missing from a school trip the member of staff in charge will follow these guidelines appropriate to the age of the child:

- Try to contact the pupil by calling them on their mobile phone.
- Discuss, agree, make and record a plan with all supervising staff; have specific times to meet and review, not relying completely on communication via mobile phones.
- Manage and brief the rest of the group, allocating a member of staff or more to the supervision of this group depending on its size.
- Ensure a system for communication between staff and 'base'.
- Staff will alert the management of the venue (if there is one) and ensure that exit routes are manned and that all venue staff are aware of the missing child.
- If possible, staff will ask for an intercom message to be broadcast in the venue to alert the pupil to seek appropriate help.
- All spare adults on the premises or with the trip will be alerted of the situation and a search will be organised by the most senior member of staff.
- The lead member of staff will contact the School emergency contact who in turn will inform parent when appropriate following discussion with the Headmaster or Deputy Head (If the Headmaster is unavailable) or during holiday periods the most senior member of staff on site.
- The lead member of staff will contact local emergency services and tour operator and notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad.
- The lead member of staff will manage communication by the rest of the group; explaining why students should not phone home directly. Any media enquiries will be directed to School and to the Headmaster.
- The lead member of staff should record in writing the nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom).
- No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the Headmaster.
- If necessary, the DSL (or in their absence the DDSL) would inform the local safeguarding partnership.

- The School will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- During School holiday periods when only the Nursery is in session, the most senior member of Nursery staff will contact the Headmaster by email or telephone (using the mobile number published in the Staff Handbook) to inform him of the situation.
- The Headmaster will inform the Chair of Governors
- The School's insurers would be informed by the Headmaster or the Bursar
- If the child is injured; A report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

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 following review of the incident and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

Child Missing from Education

All pupils at the School are on the Admissions Register and also recorded on the Attendance Register, both of which are maintained by the Registrar. The School holds at least two emergency contact numbers for each pupil, so that a responsible adult can be contacted for when a child is missing education or if there is a welfare / safeguarding concern.

The Registrar informs the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the Admission Register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education; (where a parent intends to home educate their child, the local authority, school, other key agencies and parents will look to meet if possible)
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of this school;
- have been certified by the School's appointed medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period;
- have been permanently excluded.

For further information see Appendix 3 (*Policy and Procedures for Child Missing from Education*) of the School's *Safeguarding Policy*

J A Simms

Policy Reviewed at SMT: September 2023

Next Review Due: September 2024

The Missing Child

To ensure the safety and well-being of all children remains paramount at all times whilst in the care of the Nursery.

