

LOVE, COURAGE & RESPECT

Learning and Achieving Through Love, Courage and Respect

BRIGHSTONE C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL



Missing Child Policy

Date Agreed: June 2021

Review Date: June 2023

Signed:

Chair of the Board of Governors

Revision Record

Revision No.	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved	Comments
1	2 nd July 2013	AJ	TGB	New Policy
2	February 2015	KH	L&M	Minor revisions to reflect practices
3	March 2018	TF/DN	FGB	Minor revisions
4	June 2021	RL/MJ	FGB	Minor revisions

Aims

- To minimise the possibility of a child being lost/missing at school.
- To minimise the possibility of a child being lost/missing on an educational visit.
- To outline the procedure that should be followed in the event of a child being lost on an educational visit.
- To follow up a child having been lost at school or on an educational visit.

Minimising the possibility of a child being lost at school

The majority of children are brought to school by their parents. Very few arrive independently and this minimises the possibility of them becoming lost/going missing on the way to school.

Children enter the school through the gate on Warnes Lane (or through the front door if late). A member of staff is present at the gate and on the playground. This reduces the possibility of children arriving at school unnoticed or leaving the premises before the gates are locked.

Door alarms are fitted to all corridor external fire doors and the batteries checked by the caretaker on a monthly basis. The front door can only be opened by a release button placed at height out of the reach of children. All children are told that they must not open any of the doors or gates that create an exit to the premises. All staff are asked to be vigilant about any open doors and gates and ensure that they are closed and where necessary, padlocked immediately. If a child is waiting to be collected from the main entrance, they must wait for a member of staff to open the door, even if they see someone they know come to the door. Any child seen leaving the premises unaccompanied at any time of the day (except at home time) should be stopped.

All children are registered between 8.25am and 8.30am and registers are returned to the office immediately (electronically) after being taken via SIMS. Parents are asked to contact the school in advance if their child will be absent and they haven't already given notice about this through a leave of absence form. The registers are checked by the school administrator and any unexplained absences are followed up with a text and/or phone a call home by 9am, to ensure that the school and parent knows the whereabouts of the child.

In cases where the parents cannot be reached, the second and/or third contact in SIMS will be called. If no one is able to verify the whereabouts of the child, the Headteacher and/or DSL will decide on the need to call the police.

Registers are formally taken again at the beginning of the afternoon session. Class teachers should immediately check with the school office if a child is unexpectedly not present for the afternoon session. Any child who goes in and out of school during the course of the day for appointments must be signed in and out by the parent or identified adult. If the child can not be accounted for, follow the procedure outlined below.

Staff should check whether all children are present at the beginning of each lesson (this need not be done with a formal register) and if not, send an LSA/HLTA or a red help card via a responsible pair of children to the school office to check.

Class teachers should all be present on the classroom fire exit door, to see their class out at the end of the school day. Any uncollected children should be taken to the school office and NOT permitted to leave unaccompanied or with another parent, unless prior notice has been provided by the parent to the school office.

All after school clubs and after school care should check that the expected pupils are present at the beginning of the activity. The office must be informed promptly that all the children are present or whether anyone is missing. Office staff must check the whereabouts of the child as outlined below but checking first with the class teacher as to whether they saw the child being collected after school that day and by whom. It is usually the case that the child has been collected instead of attending a club, but this must not be assumed. At the end of the club, the club leader is responsible for ensuring that the child is collected by their parent or identified adult by prior arrangement. If a child is not collected after an after school club, they should be taken to the school office, and the office staff will telephone their parents.

Children in Years 5 and 6

If parents wish children to cycle/walk to or from school unaccompanied, they must fill out and return the appropriate form. Class teachers will receive a copy of the form acknowledging this arrangement. A list will be kept in the office and in the pupil's file.

Procedure if a child is lost at school

- Establish whether the child has been in school that day or whether they have gone on a legitimate visit and have been signed out. Check with the office if they know where the child is (e.g. music lesson, intervention group or if they have been collected by a parent).
- Without causing undue alarm, establish where the child was last seen; try to verify this with an adult rather than just a child's word.
- Ensure that the rest of the children are safe whilst a thorough search is conducted of the premises, inside and out, by all non-teaching staff. Walkie Talkies will be distributed, and areas designated by the school office. Check everywhere, including unlikely areas, in cloakrooms, under coats, toilets, etc. and anywhere else that a child could hide.
- Check all available exits and alarms.

- If all possibilities have been explored and the child cannot be accounted for, the Headteacher must be informed (or another member of SLT in their absence) and the parents must be phoned. If the parents cannot account for the whereabouts of the child, the police will be called. This will be no longer than 20 minutes after the child is first noticed to be missing. Details will need to be provided as to where the child was last seen.

Minimising the possibility of a child being lost on an educational visit

The teacher in charge of the visit will have an accurate list of all children on the visit. All children need to be counted frequently throughout the visit, especially when they are re-grouping after a visit to the toilets or a shop etc. Depending on the nature of the visit, group leaders will also take responsibility for ensuring that their group is accounted for. Children should be encouraged to take responsibility for each other and notice if someone is missing. Please refer to the individual trip risk assessments for further details.

All the children and adults are given an important briefing before an educational visit. All children should be reminded about remaining with their group leader or within designated area.

Procedure if a child is lost on an educational visit

- Establish where the child was last seen and with whom.
- Inform group leader.
- If in groups, check with all the other groups to see if the child has joined a different group.
- Ensure that the rest of the children are safe whilst a thorough search is conducted of the area.
- Retrace previous steps/areas visited.
- Depending on the location of the visit, the group leader should inform any relevant authorities for their assistance in locating the missing child. E.g. An information point, Centre Staff etc.
- The group leader should inform local police or other authority e.g. coast guard.
- The group leader should contact the Headteacher (or other nominated point of contact) at the school to inform of the situation and the action taken.
- The group leader should liaise with the Headteacher about contacting parents and should inform the Headteacher as soon as the child is found.

To follow up a child having been lost at school or on an educational visit:

If the child was lost at school, it is necessary to establish how the child was lost to minimise the likelihood of the event recurring. An incident form must be completed. The Headteacher will then conduct an investigation into how this occurred and will address any matters arising from this.

If the child was lost on an educational visit, the Group Leader will need to prepare a report for the Headteacher on the circumstances regarding the incident. The Headteacher will conduct an investigation and will address any issues arising from this and will liaise with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator regarding any amendments that may need to be made to the Educational Visits Policy.