



Children Missing from Education

Missing child and uncollected child policy

2024-2025

Approved by: Headteacher

Date: September 2024

Last reviewed on: September 2024

Next review due by: September 2025

Children Missing from Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The headteacher will inform Trafford of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

Hale Prep will inform Trafford of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admissions register where they:

- leave (or join) at a non-standard transition point i.e. any child who leaves before the end of year 6 (or joins after reception).*
- Have been taken out of school to be home-educated.*
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school*
- Have been certified by a medical professional to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory age, and Hale Prep is not aware of an intention to continue to attend school.*
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the headmaster does not reasonably believe they will be returning to school at the end of that period.*
- Have been permanently excluded.*

Missing Child and Uncollected Child Policy

Hale Prep aims at all times to keep children safe and secure whether on school premises or in our charge off-site and take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of the children.

If a child goes missing when on a school outing, the following procedures will be adhered to.

Outings/ school trips are recorded in Evolve stating:

- the date and time of the outing

- the venue and mode of transport
- names of staff assigned to named children
- time of return

Staff take a mobile phone as well as a mini first aid pack.

- Records are kept of the vehicles used to transport children, with named drivers and appropriate insurance cover.

Missing child:

If a child goes missing from an outing where parents are not in attendance and are responsible for their own child, this procedure is followed:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- One member of staff searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The person in charge is informed: if s/he is not on the outing and makes his/her way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
- Staff take the remaining children back to school.
- The Headteacher contacts the child's parent who makes his/her way to the school or outing venue as agreed with the Head.
- The staff contacts the police using the mobile phone and reports the child as missing.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contacts the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.

The investigation

- The Headteacher carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all staff present at the time, or who were on an outing.

- The key person/ staff member from the trip writes an incident report detailing the event:
 - the date and time of the report;
 - what staff/ children were in the group or outing;
 - when the child was last seen in the group/ outing;
 - what has taken place in the group/outing since then; and
 - the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully.
- In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Social Services may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR agreements and is recorded in the incident book; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.

Action to be followed if a child goes 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:

- Take a register to ensure that all the other children are present.
- Inform the headteacher and SLT
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child.
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s).
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the school (starting at the top of the school in the computer room working down to the basement) the school site, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a child might hide.
- Check the doors and gates for signs of entry/exit.

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

- Update the headteacher/Safeguarding lead.*
- The headteacher will ring the child's parents to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once.*
- The headteacher would notify the police.*
- The headteacher would arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds again.*
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her.*
- The headteacher would inform the LADO.*
- The school would cooperate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Trafford.*
- A report would be made under RIDDOR and would be recorded in the accident book.*

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

This policy is reviewed annually.