

GREAT SANKEY PRIMARY SCHOOL



Together We Learn and Grow

MISSING CHILDREN POLICY

Version	Date	Action
1	Jan 2015	New policy written to replace previous policy
2	Sep 2017	Reviewed and adopted by Governors Next review Sept 2019
3	Sep 2019	Reviewed and adopted by Governors Next review Sept 2021
4	Sep 2022	Reviewed. Updated to reflect the use of digital registers.
5	Sep 2024	Reviewed. Updated to reflect procedures for Wraparound care – Link Club
6	Sep 2026	Reviewed and no changes made.

GREAT SANKEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

MISSING CHILD POLICY

The safety of our pupils is our priority whilst they are in our care at school. The purpose of this policy is to give all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, a clear understanding of how to respond and who to inform should they discover a child is missing. The aims of this policy statement are to:

- Provide a clear procedure which is understood and effectively implemented by all staff.
- Enable the missing child to be located as quickly as possible and given the appropriate level of safety and security commensurate with the pupil's age and emotional / behavioural maturity.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our main Safeguarding Child Protection policy and is reviewed bi-annually.

Responsibilities

It is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, to ensure relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities, what is expected and the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis. It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

Staff are responsible for completing attendance registers. They must be completed accurately and promptly according to guidelines. Completed registers must be submitted digitally by 9.05 and then 1.15 (EYFS and KS1) and 1.40 (KS2).

If a member of staff takes a pupil, group or class out of school they are responsible for informing parents prior to the visit and then staff at the school office.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.

If a parent takes a pupil out of school during the day, they must sign them out at the office on the Inventory system.

It is the responsibility of governors to ensure they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge/support the school in its review of this policy.

Occasions when a child may go missing

Staff need to be mindful that a child can go missing at any time of the day. These times and examples of the occasions providing opportunities for a child to go missing are:

a) From an indoor lesson

This could occur when a child is allowed to leave the classroom unaccompanied by an adult and fails to return;

- to go to the toilet
- to collect something from another classroom / being sent to another room - taking errands such as the register to the office.

b) From an outdoor lesson

This could occur when the class are outside of the building when the children spread out and/or engaged in a variety of activities that make it easier for a child to wander away unnoticed.

e.g. – during games lessons on the playground or field

- during other outdoor lessons
- at the beginning or end of outdoor lessons when children are getting changed or using the toilet etc.

c) Travelling around the school

This could occur when the children are spread out and beyond the teacher's direct total supervision.

- going to and from the hall or outdoors before and after a PE lesson - going to and from the hall before and after assembly
- going to and from the classroom at the beginning / end of lunch / break times

d) Other times

- At the start of the school day when children are moving more freely around the school grounds and building to get to their cloakroom and classroom - At break and lunch times
- At the end of the school day when children and parents are freely moving about or when children are moving to enrichment activities or to Link Club.

Procedures aimed at reducing risk of a missing pupil

Start of the day:

- The school should 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. School hours are 8.45-3.15. The responsibility of care may be extended if the child attends enrichment club or Link Club or if on a school visit or residential.
- There are clear procedures for welcoming pupils into school. A teacher or teaching assistant is always available on the playground from 8.45am and teaching staff from KS1 greet at the gates just outside classroom doors. A member of SLT and the Pastoral lead or also out on the playground most days. The school gate is locked at 8.55am.
- Pupils use main entrances after 8.55am and proceed directly to class.
- Teachers must be in their classrooms at 8.45am to welcome children.

During lesson time:

- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – mornings and afternoons and submit them digitally to the office.
- All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are locked when pupils are playing outside.
- If pupils leave the classroom security to work in other parts of the school, the class teacher must ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.
- External class doors leading onto the playground are closed over during lessons, unless children are in free play outdoors. In this case, an adult will be supervising the children.

Playtime:

- Pupils are to be escorted to the external doors / onto the playground by staff.
- Duty staff be on the playground before pupils come out.
- Staff patrol all areas in the playground throughout the session.
- Exit/ entry doors are locked behind the last member of staff as they come off the playground.
- The main gate off the playground remains locked during the day.

Lunch time:

- As above.
- SLT members are available at lunch time and on duty daily.

Home time:

- The gates are opened 15 minutes before home time to allow access for parents/carers.
- Pupils leave by assigned exits and are escorted to the playground by staff.
- Pupils in the Foundation Stage and KS 1 are collected by their parent/carer from outside the class external area. Teacher / member of staff and pupil have sight of a parent/carer before they leave through the door / gated areas.
- In KS 2 children are escorted to the playground and ensure that all pupils leave the building in an orderly manner. Teachers remain on the playground until all children from their class have been collected.
- Children who are not collected go to main entrance to wait with a member of staff.
- Those pupils in UKS2 who are allowed to leave the school grounds without an adult, must have written parental permission to do so. Teachers will ensure they are aware of who these children are.

Wrap Around care – Treetops Link Club

- Link club staff are provided with daily registers so they know who should be attending each session. These are ticked off as pupils arrive.
- Pupils in Reception and KS1 are escorted to their classes at 8.45 and collected from classes at 3.15 each day.
- Pupils in KS2 are led from link club to the stairwell each morning to go to class and at 3.15 they make their way down to Link Club.

- If a child does not turn up for link club at 3.15 and has been in school and we have not been informed of a reason for them not attending, this is followed up immediately by Link Club staff to ascertain the child's whereabouts.
- When accessing outdoors, playground and field gates are locked, and children are escorted to and from the bathrooms by a staff member. Staff are spread out to ensure appropriate supervision.

Educational Visits:

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
- Permission from parents/carers must be obtained.
- Mobile phones taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.
- Pupils wear hi-vis vests so they are distinguishable and visible.
- Pupil headcounts frequently take place throughout the visit.

After School Clubs:

- Thorough risk assessments in place.
- A register of pupils is taken.
- If a pupil does not turn up to a club, this should immediately be followed up via a phone call to the office to check if the child has attended school that day.
- Consent forms should be obtained from parents/carers with contact numbers and details of how the pupils are to go home and who with.

Procedures in the event of a child going missing:

It is important that the person discovering a child is missing knows what to do. In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while at school:

1. If a teacher suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity, they contact the nearest member of the SLT and school office immediately. The SLT member and nominated staff will carry out a thorough search of the following areas:

- Classrooms, including library, DT room, nurture room
- Offices, hall cupboards, stock cupboards and hall cupboards
- Community Cabin outdoors
- Toilets and playgrounds / field
- Gather information concerning off-site sports fixtures/activities/school trips

2. The following lists held in the school office will be checked:

- Attendance Registers
- Inventory (for offsite information)
- Music lesson lists
- Lists of those attending other schools (i.e. Penketh High School, TCAT Parliament etc.)

3. If necessary, staff will promptly but calmly round up all pupils to a pre-arranged area, and a designated member of staff will supervise the children. The safety and care of other pupils is paramount so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other pupils in the school must be adequately maintained while the search continues.

4. Staff will count and name check all the pupils present against the register while the group are assembled in one place.

5. A thorough check of all exits will 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 staff immediately.

6. At the same time the CCTV will be reviewed.

7. If the child is still not found after this initial search, the secretary informs the Headteacher and/or Deputy Headteacher.

8. The Headteacher / Secretary then 'mans' the telephone. If the child has not been found after 10 minutes from the initial report of them as missing, then parents should be notified. The Headteacher or next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted. When contacting parents or carers staff will ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child. The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher may also direct key members of staff to search the vicinity or known areas the child may have gone to outside school, whilst keeping in contact with school throughout on mobiles.

Parents will be informed followed by the police (999) within 10 minutes of the first alert.

9. Staff must try to remember and write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features.

10. 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.

11. The class teacher is spoken to gain further information and asked to confirm if he/she attended the previous sessions.

12. A thorough search of the school buildings continues and is carried out by senior members of staff with the help of other members of staff available, including maintenance department staff.

Particular attention is paid to:

- Rarely used rooms / areas
- Toilets
- Learning Support Rooms
- All classrooms
- Main school hall
- The school grounds

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises:

1. The Visit Leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. At least two adults must stay with them.
2. One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
3. The Visit Leader should contact school to alert them.
4. If the child is not found within 5 minutes, the Visit Leader must contact police by telephoning 999.

The Visit Leader should alert school that the police have been contacted, and school will make arrangements to notify parents, after which the procedures described above will be followed.