



Missing Child Policy

Policy Reviewed by:	Suzy Hollett (HR Manager)
Date:	01.08.2026
Policy Verified by:	Sara Llewellyn (School Leader-CEO)
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Date for Next Review:	01.09.2027

This policy has been put in place to ensure that every action possible is taken to keep the pupils safe whilst under the school's care. The safety of pupils is paramount and is always given the highest priority both on and off the school premises. Children are not allowed to leave the school premises during school time without knowledge or prior permission from the School Leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The pupil will never be released unless there is an appropriate adult with them, or it has been requested by a parent in writing. This policy is designed to put into place quick and effective actions to locate any missing pupils and to notify and involve parents/guardians and the authorities at every appropriate point.

Every attempt is made to ensure that the security of pupils is always maintained throughout the school day through: -

- Augmented supporter with each pupil.
- Registration procedure.
- Entrance/exit procedures at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- Secure and locked gates to the entrance of school.
- Secure school perimeter.
- Manned reception at the front door.
- Maintaining an accurate visitor's log.

Missing Pupil

If at any time during the school day a pupil is noticed as missing the following procedure will take place:

- As soon as it is noticed that a pupil is missing, staff will alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in their absence the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- The DSL and any other available staff will carry out a thorough search of the school building and outside areas.
- The registers will be checked to make sure no other pupil is missing.

- External doors and gates will be checked to establish whether there has been a breach of security.
- If the pupil is not found, the parent/guardian is contacted, and the missing pupil is reported to the police (101). The police will want to know:
 - Where you are.
 - The name of the pupil.
 - The next of kin of the pupil.
 - A detailed description of the pupil (going from head to toe, clothing etc).
 - When they were first noticed missing.
 - When and where they were last seen.
 - Circumstances of the disappearance (any trigger, arguments etc.).
 - Who is looking for the pupil now, where they are and their mobile phone number.
 - Inform them of any factors that may be relevant e.g. deaf, epilepsy, nonverbal, if they need any medication.
- When the police arrive, they will co-ordinate the search and staff will comply fully with their instructions; staff should continue to search unless instructed by police to stop.

Follow-up to the incident

- When the pupil is found, their needs and those of the parent are paramount.
Emotions are likely to be running high, and this should be considered when trying to establish what happened immediately before the pupil left the school premises.
- It should be established whether the pupil is injured or has been harmed in any way, and the appropriate action taken.
- After the search there will be a need to meet with staff to re-assure them and to take the opportunity to de-brief.
- An incident report should be completed by the staff member co-ordinating the search and handed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in her absence the deputy DSL. This will be placed in the school's Safeguarding File.

- The School Leader / CEO will inform The School Governors of Maple Haven School.
- A Risk Assessment review will take place in the area from which the pupil went missing as soon as possible, and no longer than 3 days after the event. Any identified security improvements should be put in place as soon as possible.
- A meeting should be held with both the parent and the pupil to establish how the incident occurred, and what actions or support will be necessary to prevent such an incident from happening again in the future.

This may include:

- An individual risk assessment being reviewed and updated.
- A behaviour or learning support plan being reviewed and updated.
- Potential referral to an external agency where the pupil's safety, mental or emotional health and well-being are felt to be at risk.
- The incident should be discussed at the next staff meeting and any recommendations for improvements in the procedure should be made to The School Governors of Maple Haven School.

Missing Pupil (Off-Site School Visits)

If a pupil goes missing from an educational visit where parents/guardians are not attending and responsible for their own pupil, the following procedure applies:

- As soon as it is noticed that a pupil is missing, staff on the visit ask pupils to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other pupil has gone astray.
- One staff member will search the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The staff contact the police using a mobile phone and report the pupil as missing (following the instructions listed above)
- The person in charge informs the School Leader or Deputy Head Teacher, who will then liaise with the police, inform the local authority, and contact the family.

- If appropriate, the school Leader may make their way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security staff who will handle the search and contact the police if the pupil is not found.

Investigation following the safe recovery of the pupil.

- The school Leader, with the support of the police if appropriate, carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.
- An Incident Log Sheet should be completed detailing:
 1. the date and time of the report.
 2. staff/pupil were in the group.
 3. when the child was last seen in the group.
 4. what has taken place in the group since then.
 5. the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
 6. Any other relevant details, including the recovery of the child.
 7. 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.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and to the Local Authority Health and Safety Officer as appropriate.
- Investigations and reviews are to be done before any further school trips can go ahead.

Child missing due to family having left without notice

A child may also be classed as a 'missing child' if their family has left without informing the school and in this event the school would ensure that all relevant authorities are informed.

The school will make a call to the family and ask them to get in touch. The school will also send an email and a letter. If no contact made, then the next contact on the list would also be called. If there were still no response, then a visit would be made to the family home to try and make contact. If there are concerns, then the following people would be contacted as appropriate:

- LADO
- KCC
- Social Services
- Local Authority
- Police

This procedure should be read alongside the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.