



SMARDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

'Ambition, Respect, Kindness'

Lost or Missing Children Policy

November 2023

Policy edition: 2

Adopted by the LGB: 6th November 2023

This policy will be reviewed in November 2025

Introduction

The purpose of this policy statement is to give all staff a clear understanding of how to respond and who to inform should they discover a child is missing.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide a clear procedure which is understood and effectively implemented by 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/ behaviour maturity. Staff need to be mindful that a child can go missing at any time of the day.

The times and examples of the occasions providing opportunities for a child to go missing are:

- a. From an indoor lesson for example when a child is allowed to leave the classroom to go to the toilet
- b. From an outdoor lesson for example during PE lessons
- c. Travelling around the school for example assemblies or playtime.
- d. On a school trip
- e. Other times such as at the start or end of the school day. Our Educational Visits Policy outlines the risk assessments that are made as part of taking our children off-site. We also have on-site checks on a daily basis to ensure the safety of our children for example taking the registers in the morning and afternoon.

However, in the unlikely event that a child should go missing the following procedures will apply.

This applies to all situations where:

- a. Having arrived at the School, a child goes missing.
- b. A child goes missing whilst on a trip organised by the School. The most senior member of staff to co-ordinate this procedure, either directly, or by phone if the children are on a trip. If the incident happens whilst on a trip, the trip leader will inform the most senior member of staff at the School; this should include the Headteacher at Smarden Primary School when possible.

What to do next

- Gather all children on the trip / at school into one place and check the register against the children you have.
- Identify which child / children are missing and inform the most senior member of staff at the School.
- Check all exterior doors and gates are secure if in the School.
- If on a trip, check the immediate area.
- At least one member of staff to stay with the children in each classroom while another is dispatched to search all areas the child may have gone.
- If out on a trip, keep the appropriate ratio with the children and dispatch any others to search the vicinity.
- Police will be contacted immediately or within 2 minutes of searching the area.
- Staff will continue to search and regroup to reassess after 10 minutes.
- Staff dispatched to search must remain in contact with the room base or the trip leader.
- If on a trip, most adults and all children to return to the School after the ten minute search. However, two members of staff should await the arrival of the police to the location of the incident. You may need to ask a member of staff from the School to join you to help to get the children home.
- Senior member of staff meanwhile to gather the relevant information on the child, D.O.B, where last seen and a basic description.

The most senior person in the School will;

1. Inform Police on 999 and hand over all relevant details of the child/children.
2. Call the parents to inform them and let them know what is being done.
3. Contact Social Services (where necessary)
4. Inform the Chair of Governors

After the event, the team will reflect on the incident and the procedure to see if anything can be learned from the process and if any measures can be taken to improve.