

BISHOP RIDLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

PROCEDURE FOR WHEN A CHILD GOES MISSING

Bishop Ridley CE Primary School takes the safety of children very seriously. We will take every precaution necessary to ensure that our children are safe and do not go missing from school. In the event that a child is reported to be missing from the school premises during the school day then the following procedure will be followed:

Stage One

- All available staff will immediately carry out a systematic and thorough search of the premises, checking toilets, classrooms, shared areas and playgrounds to ensure that the child is not hiding or locked in anywhere.
- One member of staff will inform the school office and the Headteacher immediately and check whether the child has been signed out for an external appointment or has an internal appointment with a visiting professional.
- One member of staff will gather the class and call the register to confirm that the child is missing.
- The other staff will ensure that the rest of the pupils are safe and supervised throughout the incident.

Stage Two

- After **no more than 10 minutes** after a child is reported missing the school office will contact the Police and then the child's parents/carers. From this point the school will support the police, who now lead the response to the incident. The Headteacher will liaise with the emergency services and parents/carers.
- Staff will call registers in all classes to confirm that no one else is missing.

Stage Three

- The Headteacher will communicate the incident to the Chair of Governors and the appropriate Local Authority officer (usually the Bexley Safeguarding Children Service).
- A written record of the incident and any action taken will be made as soon as practicable and an incident log kept.
- The Senior Leadership Team will conduct an investigation to establish how the incident arose, how effective was the response and whether further action is needed to reduce the risk of it happening again.

The school will provide relevant bodies with a full and comprehensive report of what happened, what systems were in place to prevent such occurrences, what action was taken and when, and what has happened subsequently. A record of the incident will be also put into the child's personal file.

If the Headteacher is not on the premises then the Deputy Headteacher will act in his absence and will inform him of the incident as soon as possible.

Office staff will make regular checks to ensure that contact numbers are up to date and stored centrally and are easily accessible. Parents/carers have a duty to inform the office of any change in contact details.

The school recognises that powerful emotions are aroused when a child goes missing. Parents may be frightened, distressed and angry. We will endeavour to deal with the matter in a calm, factual, sympathetic and reassuring manner. Parents need to be assured that the school is treating the incident with the utmost seriousness and that a full investigation will take place. When dealing with the media or other external agencies the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will act as a spokesperson on behalf of the school.

We also recognise that the child, once found, may be afraid or distressed and may need reassurance. The incident will provide an opportunity staff to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand why they should not leave the premises.

After an incident we will review our current procedures for dealing with missing children, evaluate what happened and make any necessary adjustments to ensure greater effectiveness in the future.

