



**The Park Federation Trust
Hannah Ball Academy**

**Missing Child Policy & Procedures
2024 -2025**

Missing Child Policy and Procedures

Purpose: This policy applies to all pupils at Hannah Ball Academy during the school day and during after-school activities. The safety of our pupils is of paramount importance.

Safety Measures:

- All staff receive comprehensive training on safety issues, including first aid and emergency procedures.
- Our staff-to-pupil ratios are appropriate, ensuring that pupils of all age groups are well supervised at all times.

Supervision:

- Annually, a risk assessment is completed to evaluate the safety and security of children on the school premises.
- Our school site is maintained to a high standard, with regular checks conducted by the Site Management Team.

Access Control:

- Our front gates are shut after the register closes and remain locked until the end of the school day. Parental access during school hours is through the call point access system located at the gate.
- Our gates on the playground are locked by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Site Management Team at the close of the register.

Outdoor Supervision:

- All staff are trained to be aware of safety issues and our staff: pupil ratios are appropriate, enabling pupils of all age groups to be well supervised at all times.
- Foundation Stage staff are adept at supervising children outdoors, and the area is subject to an annual risk assessment.

Related Policies:

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- **Safeguarding Policy:** Protects pupils from harm.
- **Attendance Policy:** Addresses safety concerns related to attendance.
- **Fire Policy:** Outlines fire safety procedures.
- **Educational Visits Policy:** Ensures safety during off-site activities.

Aims of the policy

- To ensure that robust procedures, including regular risk assessments and staff training, are in place to minimise the risk of a pupil going missing from school or during school activities.
- To establish clear safeguards and procedures that enable the rapid identification of a pupil's absence from school or school activities, ensuring timely intervention.
- To outline a comprehensive procedure for staff to follow in the event of a pupil being reported missing, including immediate actions, communication with parents, and notification of relevant outside agencies.

Police Terminology: 'Absent' and 'Missing'

- **Absent:**
An absent child is defined as one who is not present at a location where they are expected or required to be. This can include situations such as being late to school or not attending a scheduled activity without prior notification.
- **Missing:**
A missing child is defined as someone whose whereabouts cannot be determined, particularly when:
 - Their absence is out of character (e.g., they have not returned home when expected).
 - The context raises concerns that they may be at risk of harm to themselves or others, or may be the subject of a crime.

It is relatively common for a child to be classified as absent and to be located shortly thereafter. In contrast, cases of a child being classified as missing are less frequent and typically involve more serious concerns.

Safeguarding

A **missing child** is defined as a child at risk. This includes pupils who are absent without explanation, as well as those who may have gone missing due to various circumstances."

In the event of a pupil being absent or missing, the **Principal** (Lorraine Machingauta) & **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**, (Ravinder Mawdia), must always be informed immediately to initiate appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Pupils may go missing for various reasons, including accidental loss in crowded areas (e.g. museums) or deliberate actions (e.g., running away), often linked to issues such as bullying or abuse.

Pupils from Reception to Year 5 must be handed over directly by parents/carers to the relevant member of staff at the beginning and end of the school day. In contrast, Year 6 pupils may arrive and leave school unaccompanied with parental consent.

Prevention Measures that are in place:

- Leaders and staff ensure adequate supervision of pupils during school hours, breaks, and off-site activities.
- Regular attendance checks are conducted to account for all pupils-the statutory register is completed twice a day
- Telephone messages regarding absent children are noted
- The appropriate form is completed for any child leaving school early
- Pupils are informed about the importance of staying within designated areas and are encouraged to report to staff if they feel lost or unsafe

Missing Child Procedure

In the unlikely event that a child cannot be accounted for during the school day, the school's **Missing Child Procedure** will be followed promptly to ensure the child's safety.

This procedure is designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

In the event of a child going missing from school during the school day the following procedures will be followed:

- The teacher responsible for the class will check the attendance register against the register of children leaving early for that day to confirm that a child is missing.
- The teacher responsible should immediately inform the Principal (Lorraine Machingauta) and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Ravinder Mawdia). In their absence, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) must be notified.
- Staff should conduct a thorough search of the school premises, including:
 - Classrooms
 - Toilets
 - Playgrounds
 - Cloakrooms
 - Welfare room
 - Cupboards
 - Store rooms
 - Outdoor sheds
 - Bank
- Doors and gates should be checked to ensure there has been no breach of security that would allow a child to leave the site unobserved.
- Members of staff should search beyond the building, including the roads at the front and back of the school.
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to attempt to catch up with the child.
- The Principal will talk to staff to ascertain when and where the child was last seen and will record this information.
- Other children should be asked if they have seen the particular child.
- If the child has not been located within 30 minutes of going missing and there is good reason to believe that the child has left the site, the police will be informed by dialling 999. The Principal, Deputy, or DSL will then contact the parents or carers.
- The DSL will inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the school's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

- The school will cooperate with the police in the continuing search if the child is still missing.
- The school will also cooperate with the police and/or social care in any ensuing safeguarding investigation.
- The Park Federation Trust CEO, the Chair of the Academy Council and the Governor responsible for safeguarding will be informed of the situation.
- A full incident report will be prepared, and if necessary, procedures will be adjusted based on the findings of the report.
- A communication plan for informing staff, parents, and the community, as appropriate, while maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity to the situation.
- After the incident, conduct a review to assess the effectiveness of the response and identify any areas for improvement.
- Provide support for staff and pupils affected by the incident, including counselling services if necessary.

In the event of a child going missing from school at the beginning or end of the school day at drop off or collection times we would follow these procedures:

- A member of staff would contact home to see if they have returned home alone and explain the situation.
- If at home time, ask the parents or person at home if anyone else could have come to collect them.
- Notify the Principal (**Lorraine Machingauta**) and Designated Safeguarding Leader (**Ravinder Mawdia**), in their absence a member of the SLT.
- Notify the Premises team so they can ensure that the site is secure and then join the search for the child.

Any available member of staff should search every possible accessible place, including:

- Toilets
 - Cloakroom
 - Welfare room
 - Cupboards
 - Store rooms
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- The Chair of the Academy Council and the Governor responsible for safeguarding would be informed (**Jo Norman**).
 - If at home time, ask any children remaining with the class teacher if they saw the child leave with anyone.
 - Check any before-school or after-school options that the child could be attending.
 - Locate any siblings that the child may have and ask if they know where the child might be.
 - Staff to carry out a search of the whole school site and surrounding roads adjacent to the school.
 - Once all options have been exhausted, reviewed and ruled out, the police will be contacted.
 - A full incident report will be prepared, and if necessary, procedures will be adjusted based on the findings.

If the missing is classed as vulnerable whether that be subject to child protection or not, inform a member of the safeguarding team immediately so that they can inform Children's Services of the situation and possible contact the police sooner.

In the event of a child going missing during an off- site visit we would follow these procedures:

The school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that whilst students are on off-site visits, they are appropriately supervised by members of staff, parents, volunteers and others. All off site visits must be approved initially by the (Educational Visits Coordinator) EVC and the Principal before they can take place

- If a student is lost at a venue, all other students will be required to remain with their visit leader and assemble at a pre-determined meeting point until the student is located.
- An immediate head count and register would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children are present.
- Supervising adults will be asked when the student was last seen and what clothes he/she was wearing.
- The Visit Leader will appoint a responsible adult from the group to conduct a search of the immediate area and to alert anyone else who may be able to assist, keeping in contact with the Visit Leader via mobile phone.
- A member of staff or other responsible adult will remain at the meeting point in the event that the missing student turns up there.
- The Visit Leader will alert officials at the venue (if applicable) that there is a missing student and take their advice.
- The Visit Leader will alert the school assigned emergency contact – Principal (Lorraine Machingauta) on 01494522476 or 07394805274 who will contact the parents via the emergency contact details.
- If the student goes missing out of normal school hours, the Visit Leader will contact the parents directly, as well as referring to the assigned emergency contact for support and advice.
- If the student remains unaccounted for more than 20 minutes maximum, the local police will be informed and their advice will be taken
- If by the end of the visit, if the student is still missing, arrangements will be made for a member of staff or other responsible adult to remain at the venue or vicinity until the student is located. This will be in conjunction with the local Police, the school setting and the parents;
- The school will at this point notify Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Hub on Tel: 01296383962
- A log of the incident, including the timeline of events, actions taken, and communications made, will be maintained for review and future reference.
- After the incident, leaders will conduct a review to assess the effectiveness of the response and identify any areas for improvement.
- Support will be provided for staff and pupils affected by the incident, including counselling services if necessary.

Actions to be followed by staff once the child is found

In the event that a child is found after being reported missing, the following actions will be taken:

1. Immediate Care for the Child

- Staff should talk to the child, take care of their emotional needs, and, if necessary, provide comfort to help them feel safe and secure.

2. Address Other Children

- Speak to the other children present to ensure they understand the importance of staying with the group and not leaving the premises or separating from the group during outings.

3. Communication with Parents

- The Principal (Lorraine Machingauta) will communicate with the parents to discuss the events that transpired and provide a full account of the incident.

4. Initiate an Investigation

- The Principal, in collaboration with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Ravinder Mawdia), will instigate a full investigation. If appropriate, this may involve contacting Social Care.

5. Media Queries

- Any media inquiries should be referred to the Principal to ensure consistent messaging and protect the privacy of the child and family.

Appendix 1: Incident Report - Missing Child



Incident Details	
Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Weather conditions:	
Child's Information	
Name of Child:	
Age:	
Class/Year Group:	
Description (e.g., clothing, physical characteristics):	
Staff Involved	
Name of staff member reporting:	
Position:	
Other staff involved in search:	
Timeline of Events	
Time child was last seen:	
Details of last known location:	
Actions taken immediately after discovery of absence:	

Search Actions

Time search initiated:	
Description of search efforts:	
Time child was found:	
Location where child was found:	

Communication

Parents/Guardians notified:	
Date and time of notification:	
Details of communication with parents:	

Child's Condition Upon Return

Emotional state:	
Physical condition:	
Any immediate support provided:	
Report prepared By	
Position:	
Signature:	
Principal:	
Principal's signature:	
Date:	