

Missing Child Policy (14b)

Scope:	EYFS Department
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Author:	EYFS Lead, WGS Prep
Reviewer:	Senior Deputy Head WGS Prep
Approval body:	Board of Directors (<i>Ratified at EdComm Meeting</i>)
Review date	October 2025

Linked documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- EYFS Pupil Supervision throughout the School Day. (14c)
- WGS Prep Supervision Policy (A12)

Availability

This Policy may be viewed on the School website and a printed copy is available on request from the School office/Pupil Services Team.

Edition Changes

Edition Release 2024	
Location of change	Clause impacted
Throughout document: This Policy has been re-written Front page date change	

Policy Statement

This Policy applies to all EYFS pupils at Wisbech Grammar School Prep during the school day and during after school provision. The safety of our pupils is of paramount importance. All staff are aware of safety issues and our staff: pupil ratios are appropriate, enabling pupils to be well supervised at all times. All EYFS pupils are handed over by parents/carers directly into the care of the relevant member of staff at the beginning of the school day. In Kindergarten the doors open from 0830 when the pupils are collected by a staff member and go directly into their classroom. If an EYFS pupil requires early morning care from 0745, they will be handed over to a member of the EYFS staff at the Entrance to the School (Tunnel). The children enter via the Tunnel Door into the Prep School with a member of staff and are taken through to the Kindergarten room. At the end of the day all pupils are handed over into the care of the parent/carer or if they require after school care they remain in the Kindergarten room with the staff member on Late Duty. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedures

If a child goes missing from school:

- The staff member responsible for the class would check the attendance register against the register of children leaving early for that day, to confirm that a child is missing,
- The register is also checked to make sure that no other child has also gone missing,
- The staff member would immediately inform the Senior Deputy Head Prep School (or in their absence, the Assistant Deputy Head Prep School) who would release staff to search every possible accessible place such as Kindergarten and Reception classrooms, toilets, cupboards, EYFS outdoor area, Forest school area and playground,
- Children will be asked if they have seen the missing child, to help establish where the child was last seen,
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out and a member of staff would search beyond the EYFS building, the main school field, Prep School and surrounding National trust fields and Car park,
- If the child has not been located within 10 minutes of going missing the parents, Headmaster and Police would be contacted by the Senior Deputy Head Prep School,
- The Senior Deputy Head WGS Prep will talk to staff to establish what happened,
- The school would cooperate with the Police in the continuing search if the child is still missing. The school would also cooperate with the Police and/or Social Care in any ensuing safeguarding investigation,
- A full incident report would be prepared.

It is important not to alarm the other children and staff must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them and ensure that they are adequately supervised at all times.

If a child goes missing from an outing:

- As soon as a child is reported to be missing, staff will ask children to stand with their designated adult in charge and a head count is carried out. One member of staff to carry out a search of the immediate area,
- The trip leader is informed, and they inform the Senior Deputy Head WGS Prep,
- If the Senior Deputy Head WGS Prep is not available, the Headmaster of Wisbech Grammar School should be contacted in the first instance,
- If the outing is to an organised attraction the trip leader contacts security to enlist their help,
- The trip leader contacts the police and remains in phone contact with the police and the Senior Deputy Head WGS Prep,
- The Senior Deputy Head WGS Prep informs parents/carers,
- If possible, the remaining children should be taken back to school or to a safe area.

When the child is found:

- Two members of staff will care for the child and talk to the child to establish what had happened; the child may be distressed and now needing to be comforted,
- All people need to be informed that the child has been found as soon as is practicable.

After the Incident:

- Senior Deputy Head Prep School and Headmaster will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident,
- Senior Deputy Head Prep School and Headmaster will carry out a full investigation, taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing,
- Senior Deputy Head Prep School writes an incident report detailing
 1. The date and time of the report,
 2. What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child,
 3. When the child was last seen in the group/outing,
 4. What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing,
 5. The time it is estimated that the child went missing,
 6. Staff statements should be signed and dated.
- 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. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address,
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements. The local authority may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution,
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press or media without taking advice.