

## **Belmont, Mill Hill Preparatory School**

### **Missing Child Policy**

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**Independent Co-educational Day School for Pupils aged 7 to 13 years**

**December 2018**

## Key Points of the Missing Child Policy

<p><b>Purpose</b></p>	<p>The safety and security of the children in our care at the Mill Hill School Foundation is paramount. Every care is taken to ensure that the children are accounted for at all times. It is the aim of this policy to inform Governors, staff, and parents of pupils of the procedures to be followed in circumstances where a pupil may be missing. Separate procedures apply in the event of a child protection issue (see The Mill Hill School Foundation Safeguarding Policy)</p>
<p><b>Missing Child Prevention Strategies</b></p>	<p>Clear safeguards are put in place to <b>prevent</b> a child going missing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigorous registration procedures</li> <li>• Clear drop off points</li> <li>• Supervision of pupils at all times</li> <li>• Children are made aware of school boundaries</li> <li>• Visitors and parents to report to the school office.</li> <li>• After school provision and supervision</li> <li>• Individual risk assessments prepared for Educational Visit/School trips, activities and spaces used on the Belmont site</li> </ul>
<p><b>Missing Child Procedures in School</b></p>	<p><b>In the event of a missing child on school site:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Check register lists</li> <li>2. Consult the school office</li> <li>3. Inform the Senior Deputy Head</li> <li>4. All available staff check school boundaries</li> <li>5. Senior Deputy Head contacts:  <div style="text-align: center;"> <b>Parents → Other Foundation Staff → Police</b> </div> </li> </ol> <p>Event is recorded and placed on pupil's confidential records</p>
<p><b>Missing Child Procedures during an Educational Visit</b></p>	<p><b>All staff should follow prevention procedures set out in the risk assessment.</b></p> <p><b>In the event of a missing child on an educational visit:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess the situation;</li> <li>2. Safeguard the other members of the group;</li> <li>3. Seek for and then attend to the pupil(s) involved;</li> <li>4. Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.</li> <li>5. A member of staff will contact the School Office.</li> <li>6. The Parent/Carer of the missing child will also be informed by the Head</li> </ol>
<p><b>Review by the Headmaster and Governors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Head will review the reasons for the event happening and make any necessary amendments to School procedures.</li> <li>• A written record of any pupil who goes missing and the action taken will be held centrally by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.</li> <li>• These records will be reviewed annually by the Head and members of the SMT</li> <li>• Post incident the Head will review the reasons for this event happening and revise measures to ensure that it does not happen again.</li> <li>• The Head will make an annual report to the Court of Governors who will review this policy annually through the Pastoral Sub - Committee.</li> </ul>

*The above Key Points are a synopsis and are not intended to replace the policy. The full policy must be read and followed in the event that it needs to be applied. If the Key Points are found to be in conflict with the wording of the full policy, the policy takes priority.*

**The Mill Hill School Foundation**  
**Belmont, Mill Hill Preparatory School**  
**Missing Child Policy**

## 1 Statement

This policy is addressed to current or prospective parent/s or legal guardian/s or education guardian/s, governors, staff and volunteers. The policy is available, upon request to the School Office, to the parents and prospective parents, governors, staff and volunteers at the School.

This policy has been approved by the Head, the Bursar and the Court of Governors of the Mill Hill School Foundation. Separate procedures apply in the event of a child protection issue (see The Mill Hill School Foundation Policy to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the School).

The safety and security of the children in our care at the Mill Hill School Foundation is paramount. Every care is taken to ensure that the children are accounted for at all times. This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Trips and Visits Policy
- Late Room Policy
- Supervision Policy

## 2 Aims

The aim of this policy is:

- 2.1 To inform Governors, staff, and parents of pupils of the procedures to be followed in circumstances where a pupil may be missing.

## 3 Procedures

### 3.1 Introduction

At Belmont the safety of the children in our care is of paramount importance and the following safeguards are put in place to prevent a child going missing:

- A senior member of staff is on duty at the drop off point at the front of the School each morning
- At morning drop off only children in Upper School (years 6-8) are permitted to be dropped off at the rear of the School.

- An absence list is published to all staff after morning registration, which also logs children who are 'off games' and leaving early.
- Children are made aware of the boundaries within Belmont
- Children are supervised at all times throughout the school day – in both Quad 1 and Quad 2 before school starts, during break time, meal times, PE or Games lessons, after school clubs and during the Late Room facility.
- When a child is collected from School during the school day, due to illness or a prearranged appointment, they must ALWAYS be collected from the School Office. A note is made in the register to record the fact that they are no longer on premises. Pupils are not allowed to leave the School premises alone during the course of the school day.
- Visitors to the School are signed in upon arrival and signed out when they leave and wear an identity badge. Parents who visit the School during the School day, or after the day has ended, are requested to report to the School office by the security porter.
- A digital CCTV system is in operation, which covers the entrances and exits to the School premises.

### 3.2 Registration

- All children are registered twice a day, at the start of the School day and at the end of the school day.
- The completed registers are returned online to the School Office so that any absences can be followed up with parents.
- Pupils are also registered at the start of subject lessons.

### 3.3 Missing Child at School:

- If the expected number of children do not arrive at a lesson, the member of staff in the lesson or taking the register will call the register to check and establish which child is missing, having checked the Absence List and lesson registers.
- The member of staff will check with the School Office immediately as to whether the child has another commitment e.g. support lesson, external appointment, club etc and inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and School Office of the situation.
- The Senior Deputy Head will inform the Head.
- All available staff will check grounds and rooms to ensure the child has not hidden or been locked in anywhere within the boundary.
- The Head / Deputy Head will contact the following people, as appropriate :
  - i. The Parents/Carer of the child
  - ii. Other sectors of the Foundation
  - iii. The police and / or any other appropriate emergency service
- A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's confidential record (Appendix 1).

### 3.4 End of Day / After School Clubs / Sibling Supervision/ Late Room

- A senior member of staff is on duty at both the top and bottom collection points.
- Year 3 and 4 pupils are escorted to the bottom and top collection point by their form tutors.
- Parents are allocated designated collection points at the top and bottom crossing to assist in the safe collection of the children.

- At the end of the School day or after activities, the children are only allowed to leave the School premises if their parent, or an adult approved by their parents, collects them or if they have written parental permission to travel home on public transport.
- A register is kept in the school office of children who travel on the various school buses.
- Pupils are registered for ~~to~~ after school clubs. The registers are kept in the school office
- A school register is kept of younger siblings who are under staff supervision until the arrival of their older sibling. All siblings depart from the top crossing.
- If no approved adult is present at normal pick up time, the child will be supervised until 4.00pm at the rear crossing and 4.15 p.m at the front crossing. If the appropriate adult has not arrived to collect their child by 4.15pm the child will be taken to the Late Room whilst enquiries are made and until they can be collected.
- The School has clear procedures in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appointed time (Appendix 2)
- Children attending ALL SCHOOL CLUBS are mainly collected from the schools top crossing point. Any after school clubs for lower school pupils or those finishing after 5:00pm, we ask parents to collect from the venue.

### 3.5 Missing child on an Educational Visit / School trip:

When on an Educational Visit outside the school environment staff will ensure they take precautions to ensure the safety of all pupils in accordance with the School's Educational Visits Policy, and refer to the individual Risk Assessment prepared for that trip. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take lifesaving action in an extreme situation.

If a pupil goes missing, the priorities are to:

- assess the situation;
- safeguard the other members of the group;
- seek for and then attend to the pupil(s) involved;
- Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.

The Group Leader will usually take charge in an emergency and would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged.

All those involved in the school trip, including supervisors, pupils and their parents, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

#### 3.5.1 Standard Procedures:

- On trips away from the School setting, children should be divided into groups in accordance with the Educational Visits policy. Each adult will have details of which children they are responsible for, including names and any special requirements (dietary/medical). For trips that occur out of school hours, consent forms and contact details for Parents/Carer will be taken on the trip so that Parents/Carer can be contacted in case of an emergency.
- The Group Leader will make sure that the children know who is responsible for them, including the adult's name and what they are wearing. The children will also be briefed to ensure that they know not to stray and that if they want to go anywhere e.g. to a shop or to the toilet they must ask.

- If appropriate, the children will be given labels with the setting's name and a contact number on them.
- The children will be told what to do if they become separated from the group:
  - a) Stay where you are - we will come back to look for you
  - b) Look around you - can you see your group or one of the other groups?
  - c) If it seems like a long time before we find you, whom can you talk to?
    - Someone in uniform or wearing a badge from the attraction you are visiting
    - A uniformed policeman or woman
- A regular headcount of the group will be taken. This will depend on the children and the activity. If, on taking a headcount a child appears to be missing, the Group Leader will be contacted immediately.
- The group should stay still and keep together. If there is another adult with the group, one of them will retrace their steps (to a pre-agreed distance, for no more than five minutes away), to look for the child.
- If the child is still missing after 5 minutes, the member of staff of the venue will be informed and asked for their help in finding the child. He/she will be asked to contact the police on 999. Staff should be prepared to give them the following information:
  - a) The adult's name and phone number and where the group is
  - b) What has happened
  - c) Name, age and address of the child
  - d) Description of the missing child
  - e) Time of incident
- A member of staff will contact the School Office. The Parent/Carer of the missing child will also be informed by the Head, or one of the Deputy Heads, giving them details of what has happened and the steps that are being taken to find their child.
- The Group Leader will ensure the Head knows what actions have been taken.
- The search will continue after calling the Police although staff should be guided by the Police as to the action taken to locate the child
- The Group Leader involved will complete an Incident Form as fully as possible on return to school (Appendix 1).
- No-one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. Media enquiries should be referred to the Head of the school.
- No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.

### 3.6 Review of Missing Child procedures

- When the situation has been resolved, the Head will review the reasons for the event happening and make any necessary amendments to School procedures.
- A written record of any pupil who goes missing from School, the action taken and the reason given by the pupil for going missing will be held centrally by the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the School who is responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. These records will be reviewed annually by the Head and members of the SMT

- 3.7 When the situation has been resolved, the Head will review the reasons for this event happening and revise measures to ensure that it does not happen again.

## 4 Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 The Head will monitor the operation of this policy and the efficiency and effectiveness of its procedures, and make an annual report to the Court of Governors.
  
- 4.2 The Court of Governors will undertake an annual review of this Policy through the Court of Governors' Pastoral Sub-Committee and the Heads.

Last review: December 2018                      Next review: Autumn 2020

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By resolution of the Pastoral Committee of the Court of Governors

Signed .....    Date .....

Chairman of the Pastoral Committee of the Court of Governors

## APPENDIX 1

### Missing Child – Incident Form

#### Reporting Person Information

Name:..... Date:.....  
Position/Role:.....  
Group Leader:.....  
Name of Missing Child:.....  
Time and Date child went Missing:..... am/pm.....

#### Please give a brief account of the incident:

(please include times you contacted the school and other agencies and the advice given)

Signature:.....

## APPENDIX 2

### **The procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appropriate time**

- Once the child has been placed in Late Room at 4.15pm, the Duty teacher should ask the Office to contact the parents/carers/emergency contact of any child in Year 3 to find out who should have collected the child at 3.15pm. For children in years 4-8 who are normally collected later, the parents/carers/emergency contact should be telephoned at 4.30pm if they have not arrived.
- If there is no response a message will be left.
- The child will remain in Late Room and supper will be provided at 5.00pm
- If after 6pm when Late Room closes there has been no response to messages, the Late Room teacher must inform the member of SMT on duty.
- If by 6.15 p.m. there has still been no response from the parents, or the emergency contact numbers, the member of SMT on duty will contact the Senior Deputy Head who will contact Social Services.