

BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL

WORSLEY, MANCHESTER

M28 2WQ

MISSING CHILD POLICY

SCOPE: This policy covers all pupils attending Bridgewater School, including those in EYFS and any using the school's Early, Late and Homework Clubs.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The safety and security of the children/students in our care at Bridgewater School are paramount. Every care is taken to ensure that the children and students are accounted for at all times when they are in our care.

Schools must comply with statutory guidance on children missing in education ensuring all children are registered and their attendance is tracked.

Procedures

Each pupil is handed over to the teacher by their parent/carer in EYFS, Preps I and II. Children from Prep III onwards are expected to come into school independently and make their way into their classroom. All Prep children are registered at 8:50 a.m. Senior children are also registered at 8.50 a.m. The register is taken again in the afternoon at 1:25 p.m. and 2.25 p.m. respectively.

Staff maintain the appropriate high level of supervision throughout the lessons and are aware of the location of the children in their care at all times. During the break times and lunch hours, the staff and welfare assistants on duty have responsibility for knowing the location of the pupils.

When on excursions off the school premises, staff implement strategies to maximise the safety and security of the children in accordance with the school's policy. Full risk assessments are carried out.

Registration and action to follow by staff if a child is dropped at school but does not register

If a child is not present during morning registration, the teacher updates the register on SIMS.

- The attendance officer looks at all pupils on the register marked as N and contacts parents to check why the pupil is absent if they have not been informed already.

- If the parents then confirm that the pupil/pupils have been dropped at school and should be in attendance, school staff will check to establish whether the child has gone straight to period one without signing in.
- If the pupil still cannot be located, all other areas of the school will be searched, both inside and outside.
- The school will then check again with parents to see if the pupil/s have returned home.
- The office must then notify the DSL and a member of the Senior Management Team to manage the incident, especially if there are concerns for the pupil/s safety.
- If the pupil/s cannot be located within a short time-frame (30-60 minutes) the police and Local Authority are notified.
- The incident, including times and action taken, is logged.
- The school will conduct a review of the incident, often updating the child's risk assessment or implementing new safety measures.

Action to follow by staff if a child goes missing from School

If it is discovered a child is missing the following actions are to be carried out.

- A roll call will be taken to ascertain that the child is missing.
- Staff will maintain the safety and well-being of other children.
- A member of the Senior Management Team and at least one other member of staff will search the immediate vicinity or school grounds, going to places where the child was last seen, tracing the routes that they may have taken and asking other children what information they have as necessary.
- At the same time, occupy the other children in their classrooms.
- Ask the relevant staff to check the relevant controlled access doors / gates and CCTV for signs of entry/exit.
- If the child is not found after approximately 20 minutes, the Head Teacher or one of the Deputies will endeavour to contact the parents of the missing child by telephone e.g. to ascertain whether the child has been collected or made their way home. They will explain what steps have been taken and ask them to come into school.
- The Head Teacher or one of the Deputies will contact the police should the child be still missing and all relevant information about the child to be given to them. The police will then take over the search.
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot in case the child has attempted to walk home.

- The DSL will inform Children's Services.
- The School will co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Children's Services.
- The Head Teacher will inform the Chair of Governors and the governor responsible for safeguarding.

A full record of all actions taken up to the stage at which the child was found will be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures will be adjusted.

Action to be followed if a child goes missing on an outing

- An immediate head count and register will be carried out in order to ensure all the other children are present.
- An adult will search the immediate vicinity and will contact the venue manager.
- Arrangements will be made to take the remaining children back to school or to some other place of safety.
- Inform the Head Teacher (who is also the DSL).
- The Head Teacher will telephone the parents/guardians and explain what has happened and what steps have been set in motion. They will be asked to come into school at once.
- Contact the police.
- The DSL will inform Children's Services.
- The School will co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Children's Services.
- Inform the Chair of Governors and the governor responsible for Safeguarding.

A full record of all actions taken up to the stage at which the child was found will be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures will be adjusted.

Action to be followed by staff once the child is found

- Talk to, take care of and if necessary comfort the child.
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- The Head Teacher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Head Teacher will instigate a full investigation (if appropriate involving Children's Services).
- Media queries should be referred to the Head Teacher.

- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, number of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the length of time the child was missing and how the child appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future.

Reviewed by the Head Teacher and Senior Management Team – May 2026