

Featherstone Primary School

Dismissal from School and Missing Child Policy



Aspire, Believe, Succeed

Governing Board approval date: 28th March 2023

Monitoring, evaluation and review: Every three years

Procedures

The welfare of pupils is paramount. The school endeavours to ensure that no child goes missing and has measures in place to minimise the likelihood of this happening and take the necessary action, should the situation arise.

- Formal registration is taken in the morning and in the afternoon. The staff maintain the appropriate high level of supervision throughout the day and are aware of the location of the children in their care at all times.
- When on excursions outside the school premises, staff implement strategies to maximise the safety and security of the children in accordance with the school's Health & Safety Policy and Educational Visits Policy.
- Staff undertake regular roll calls and head counts.

The above measures ensure that situations where a child could be lost are very limited. These are:

- Where a child wanders off on an off-site visit
- Where a child goes out of a door or gate left open on the school site
- Where a child is taken from the school site by an unapproved adult

The school has rigorous procedures for pursuing unexplained absences, including the aim to contact parents by 9.30am if a child has not arrived in school and the reason for absence is not known. This should ensure that staff become aware at the earliest opportunity of any child who may have gone missing on the way to school. In these circumstances, this policy will be followed.

School policies relating to health and safety and welfare, if strictly adhered to, should prevent any of the above occurring. However, should a child become lost, the following action will be taken:

Procedures followed when dismissing pupils from school

Dismissal Designated Year Group Points

At home time, children are dismissed from designated year group points. Teachers, when dismissing children, complete a dismissal register and ensures that every child has gone home with the allocated adult. Teachers know exactly who to dismiss the children to because they have an 'authorised list to collect' folder.

New adult collecting a child on parent behalf

If a family sends someone different to collect their child, and this adult is not on the authorised list, the school operates a password system with the parent. The parent is to notify the school beforehand who is coming to collect. This new person is directed to the school office, where they have to provide the password (which is checked by Office Staff only).

In the event that a new adult comes to collect a child, and the school office has not been notified by the parent, the teacher will direct the adult to the office. The office will then contact the parent by telephone to confirm who this person is. The parent has to phone the new adult, provide them with the password, then the new adult has to provide this password to office staff. Only then, when the office staff are satisfied with the identity of the person, and the consent of the parent, will they then dismiss/release the child.

Supervision during dismissal

School finishes at 3.25pm. All class teachers ensure that children are ready for dismissal at their allocated points by 3.23pm. Parents are then allowed on school playground at 3.24pm. The school has a timed automated gate system in place at several points. All teachers and support staff are ready with their dismissal register and 'authorised list to collect' folders.

Staff presence on school site

All senior leaders incl. non-class-based staff are at designated points outside of the building, to supervise parents coming to collect children on-site and leaving school. All entry points to school are covered and supervised by members of staff. Any new adult or young person is identified immediately and approached/assisted. All of these staff (senior leaders, office, site) have walkie talkies to communicate with one another.

Procedures followed when older pupils travel from school alone

Any staff member releasing pupils will have a copy of a list of children who are permitted to walk home alone. Before allowing any pupil to leave the school premises alone, this register will be checked.

If, at any time, a staff member is concerned about the welfare of a pupil by allowing them to travel home alone, the staff member will not permit them to leave.

If a staff member refuses to allow a pupil to travel alone, the parents will be contacted and the reason why explained. The parent will then need to arrange for their child to be collected from the school office by a person responsible for picking up their child (unless the parent has given consent over the phone).

Pupils are expected to stick to the route outlined to them by their parents. Once a pupil has been released by a staff member, or when they are travelling to the school, the responsibility for their welfare lies with the parents.

Where a pupil does not arrive home from school, parents will contact the school to speak with the staff member who dismissed the pupil from the premises to establish the time they left school.

Where pupils will be travelling home from school after an after-school club, the above procedures will be followed.

Granting permission for pupils travelling from school alone

Older pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, will be allowed to travel home on their own as long as the Headteacher has been informed in writing of this arrangement by the pupil's parents/carers.

Parents will ensure they have read this policy before requesting permission for their child to travel from school alone.

Permission will only be granted where consent has been received from a parent in writing and where all emergency contacts have been outlined.

Each request will be assessed on a case-by-case basis – requesting permission for a pupil does not automatically result in the pupil being permitted to travel alone from school.

Permission will only be granted where the parents and Headteacher are satisfied that the pupil:

- Can be trusted to walk straight home from school.
- Will adhere to the route that their parent has identified.
- Can be trusted to behave sensibly.
- Is aware of road safety.
- Is aware of the protocols to follow if a stranger approaches them or asks them to do something they do not want to.
- Would know how and where to ask for help.
- Distance from school to home will also be taken into account.

Where pupils live further than a 15-minute walk away from the school, or the Headteacher has concerns about a pupil's ability to travel safely, or there are concerns regarding a pupil's vulnerability or welfare, the Headteacher may not grant permission. If the Headteacher feels the safety and welfare of a pupil is at risk at any point after granting permission, they have the right to withdraw their permission for the pupil to travel alone from school.

Parents will be informed in writing of the Headteacher's decision within one week of receiving the initial request. Where a request has been denied, the Headteacher will outline the reasons for this.

If a parent wishes to appeal the Headteacher's decision, they are required to follow the procedures outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

Parents may withdraw their consent at any point during the academic year. To do so, parents are required to inform the Headteacher in writing.

A register of all pupils granted permission to travel alone from school will be maintained. This will be updated whenever permission is granted and will be held in the school office. Only pupils named on the register will be permitted to travel from school alone. The register will be circulated to all members of staff as necessary.

Lost at school

In EYFS, alert the EYFS Leader immediately, and also the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where, to eliminate any misunderstanding. A member of school office staff will check the signing out book to establish whether the child has been legitimately collected from school.

In KS1 and KS2 - alert the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher immediately. A school mobile phone or walkie-talkie should be collected from the office.

Staff must be vigilant in respect of the safety of the other children with regard to supervision and security.

Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, a member of staff should be sent to search each of the following zones, keeping a calm manner and maintaining contact via mobile phone:

Zone: EYFS and Y1 (including external EYFS)

Zone: Y2, hall and office area

Zone Y3 – Y4

Zone Y5 – Y6

Zone outside: playground, hut and Dreamy hollow

Zone outside: field, gym and store build (if unlocked)

Local residential area – walk or drive to check the journey the child would walk home.

If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes then the police and parents must be informed. If the search moves to this level, the Critical Incident Policy procedure should be invoked. Meanwhile the office will make available a photograph of the child (from database) and their description. Continue to search, opening up the area, keeping in touch via mobile phone. The child must be comforted and reassured when found.

Lost whilst off-site (including on sports fixtures and trips)

If a child is lost on an outing, the member of staff noticing the child missing should alert other members of the party and carry out a roll call/head count.

1. A member of staff (or the whole group if appropriate) should retrace their movements to the last place that the child was seen.
2. Another member of staff should alert the management/security services of the organisation being visited and the School office to let them know the situation.
3. Children on the visit should be asked for any relevant information if appropriate.
4. If the child is not found after fifteen minutes the police will be called and the School will alert the parents.
5. Staff will co-operate with the police and take any action as directed by them.

Pupil removed from school premises by unapproved adult

No child is allowed to leave the school site with an adult other than a parent without permission being received from a parent either by telephone or email. This rule must be rigorously enforced. In cases where a parent is legally denied access to their child, all staff must be informed in writing of the circumstances together with a photo of the child and, if possible, the parent. If a child is seen (or

believed) to be taken from the school site by an unapproved adult, the police and parents will be immediately informed.

Measures in place to ensure a child does not go missing include:

- Information to staff about challenging unknown persons on the premises
- Requirement for all visitors to register on arrival with the office, present evidence of identity on their first visit and obtain a visitor's badge
- Boundary security regularly checked by health and safety and maintenance teams.
- Supervision of children at all times
- Sufficient staff to maintain ratios appropriate to the venue and the nature of the activity being undertaken
- Collection procedure for children
- Rigorous risk assessments for trips

Following up an incident

When the situation has been resolved the Headteacher and SLT will review the reasons for it happening. This will include:

- Reviewing the incident with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Assessing the effectiveness of risk assessment procedures.
- Taking written statements from and interviewing staff involved.
- Collecting information from any other relevant adult witnesses, including officials from the venue where a child has gone missing off-site.
- Discussion, as appropriate with pupils.
- Informing Head Teacher to discuss the review and agree any further action.
- If the incident requires reporting to Ofsted, in respect of RIDDOR or any other official body, such action will be taken.
- The incident and effectiveness of subsequent action taken will be reviewed at the next Health and Safety Committee meeting.
- Reporting to the Safeguarding Governor.

SLT will issue advice to staff and pupils and implement any necessary measures to ensure that it does not happen again.