

MISSING CHILD POLICY

DATE PALM STATEMENT of INTENT

At Date Palm our vision is for the School to ensure our pupils grow like a Date Palm tree – with **strong foundations, lofty branches and produce fresh fruit:**

- ✓ To build **Strong Foundations for Character Development** that:
Instil values; inspire each pupil; display best manners.
- ✓ To have **Lofty Branches of Educational Excellence** that will:
Provide a broad and varied range of experiences and learning opportunities; help each pupil progress and develop in all aspects; support their skills and talents.
- ✓ To produce **Fresh Fruit that provides services to their Communities** in order to:
Become responsible and confident citizens; make a positive difference; commit to charitable endeavours; become effective contributors towards Britain's future.

Reviewed by	Position	Signature
Afsana Khanam	Deputy Head / DSL	<i>A.Khanam</i>
Sabina Yasmin	Safeguarding Governor	<i>S.Yasmin</i>

Reviewed: February 2023

Next review date: February 2026
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Missing Child Policy and Procedure

Statement of Intent

The safety of pupils is paramount, and is given the highest priority at all times both on and off the school premises.

Every attempt is made to ensure that the security of pupils is maintained at all times throughout the school day through the rigorous implementation of the school's:

- registration procedures (completed at 8.20am and 12.45pm)
- pupil absence monitoring procedures (including 'first-day absence' calls)
- entrance/exit procedures at the beginning and end of the school day,
- Off-site Educational Visits Policy
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.

Responsibilities

- It is the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, to ensure relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities, what is expected and the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a timely basis.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.
- Staff are responsible for completing Attendance Registers. They must be completed accurately and promptly.
- If a member of staff takes a pupil, group or class out of school they are responsible for informing parents.
- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they provide correct and updated contact information on a timely basis and know the procedures for handover of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.
- If a parent takes a pupil out of school during the day, they must sign them out at the office. A member of the Admin team ensures this is done.
- It is the responsibility of governors to ensure they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge/support the school in its review of this policy.



Building foundations for life

Procedures aimed at reducing risk of a missing pupil

Start of the day

- The school should ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from staff to them and vice versa.
- There are clear procedures for welcoming pupils into school. From 8.10am, a member of from the senior management team is deployed at the school door to meet and greet. The school doors are locked at 8.20am.
- Pupils use main entrances and head into the building from 8:10am, staff must be in their classrooms from 8.10a.m. to welcome the children. All Teaching staff should be in the school from 7.45am.

During lesson time

- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – mornings and afternoons. The registers are reviewed by admin before 9.30am and checked for absent pupils.
- All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are locked when pupils are playing outside.
- If pupils leave the classroom to work in other parts of the school, the class teacher must ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained.
- All external class doors leading onto the playground are locked during lessons. These doors can easily be opened from the inside.

Playtime

- Pupils are to be escorted to the external doors or hall by staff.
- Teachers should remain with their class on the playground
- External gates remain locked.
- Staff patrol all areas in playground throughout the session.
- Exit/ entry doors are locked behind the last member of staff as they come off the playground.

Home time

- The doors are opened at 3.15pm to allow access for parents/carers.
- Pupils in year 1 to year 6 are collected by their parent/carer from the classes.
- Pupils and staff have sight of a parent/carer before they leave through the door.
- Early years and Year 1 children are collected by their parents/carers from the playground.
- Children who are not collected go to the designated 'late' area to wait with the office admin.

Educational Visits

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
- Permission from parents must be obtained
- Mobile phones taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.
- Staff count and name check all pupils engaged in trip / off-site visit at the beginning, periodically at suitable stages throughout the trip (e.g. lunchtime or re-grouping), before return journey and during handover to parents / carers.

Missing Child

If at any time during the school day a child is noticed as missing the following procedure will take place:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff will alert a senior member of staff.
- The senior staff and any other available staff will carry out a thorough search of the school buildings and play area.
- The registers will be checked to make sure no other child is missing.
- External doors and gates are checked to establish whether there has been a breach of security.
- CCTV will be checked by senior management
- If the child is not found, the parent/guardian is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police (101)
- The police will want to know:
 1. Where you are.
 2. The name of the child.
 3. The next of kin of the child.
 4. A detailed description of the child (going from head to toe, clothing etc.)
 5. When they were first noticed missing.
 6. When and where they were last seen.
 7. Circumstances of the disappearance (any trigger, arguments etc.).
 8. Who is looking for the child at the moment, where they are and their mobile phone number.

When the police arrive they will co-ordinate the search and staff will comply fully with their instructions; staff should continue to search unless instructed by police to stop.

Follow-up to the incident

- When the child is found their needs and those of the parent are paramount. Emotions are likely to be running high, and this should be considered when trying

to establish what happened immediately before the child left the school premises.

- It should be established whether the child is injured or has been harmed in any way, and the appropriate action taken.
- After the search there will be a need to meet with staff to re-assure them and to take the opportunity to de-brief.
- An incident report should be completed by the staff member co-ordinating the search and handed to the designated Child Protection staff member. This will be placed in the school's Safeguarding File.
- The Head teacher will inform the Chair of Governors and any other relevant body as appropriate.
- A Risk Assessment review will take place in the area from which the child went missing as soon as possible, and no longer than 3 days after the event. Any identified security improvements should be put in place as soon as possible.
- A meeting should be held with both the parent and the child to establish how the incident occurred, and what actions or support will be necessary to prevent such an incident from happening again in the future.
- OFSTED will be notified of any significant events as soon as reasonably possible, and within 14 days.
- LADO advice will be sought as soon as possible.

This may include:

- Pupil Support with the involvement of the Inclusion Leader/SENCo, other staff member or identified professional.
 - An individual risk assessment being reviewed or put in place.
 - A behaviour or learning support plan being reviewed or put in place.
 - A 'check-in' or buddy system being established.
 - Potential referral to an external agency where the pupil's safety, mental or emotional health and well-being are felt to be at risk.
 - A sanction being applied in line with the school's Management of Learning Policy, if appropriate.
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- The incident should be discussed at the next staff meeting and any recommendations for improvements in the procedure should be made to the Governing Body.

Missing Child (Off-Site School Visits)

If a child goes missing from an educational visit where parents are not attending and

responsible for their own child, the following procedure applies:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the visit ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- One staff member will search the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The staff contact the police using a mobile phone and report the child as missing
- The person in charge informs the Headteacher who will then liaise with the police, inform the local authority and contact the family.
- If appropriate, the Headteacher or senior member may make her way to the venue to aid the search and be the point of contact for the police as well as support staff.
- In an indoor venue, staff to contact the venue's security staff who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.

Investigation following the safe recovery of the child

- The Headteacher, with the support of the police is appropriate, carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.
- An Incident Log Sheet should be completed detailing:
 1. the date and time of the report
 2. staff/children were in the group
 3. when the child was last seen in the group
 4. what has taken place in the group since then
 5. the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
 6. Any other relevant details, including the recovery of the child.
 7. 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.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and to the Local Authority as appropriate.

2. Missing Child from Parental Care

At busy times of the day and during family events at school children occasionally go missing from the care of their parents.

In order to try to ensure that the child is found quickly and safely the above procedures will still apply.

Arrangements at the end of After School Clubs

Every After School Club will have a register of children attending.

Unless permissions have been obtained in writing to the contrary, all pupils will be signed over to their parents at the end of the club by a member of staff.

Children Walking Unaccompanied Recommendations

Walking to School and Walking Home Alone

To keep traffic to a minimum outside the school and the immediate area, thus helping to keep it safe for everyone in the community, and to provide the healthiest start and end to the school day for pupils, we recommend that pupils who live locally to walk to school from home as much as possible, or that parents leave the car at a reasonable distance away and walk from there.

Date Palm Primary School recommends that children are accompanied to and from school by an adult. However, legally the decision and responsibility for children walking alone remains with parents/carers and they may make the decision to allow their child to walk unaccompanied when appropriate for the individual child.

If a parent wishes their child to walk home unaccompanied then the school will need written permission from the parent/carer.

In order to help children of year 6 develop the skills they need to stay safe, both in preparation for secondary school and outside of school, we encourage local parents of children from Year 6 onwards to consider allowing them more independence, depending, of course, on the ability of the individual child to cross roads and keep safe, the journey they have to make and their experience in making that journey.

Becoming more independent, when parents are confident their child has the road safety skills, may start with your child arranging to meet up with friends and walk into school together, either from home or from a set meeting place. However, it is the parent's choice and responsibility for the school journey and the decision about when your child is ready to walk independently will remain with the parent. If you would like to discuss this with the school, please contact the Headteacher.

During the winter months, we recommend that parents ensure their child wears bright, light clothing, carries 'high visibility' items and/or carries a torch, as appropriate.



Building foundations for life