**Edward Jenner School**

**Lost Child Policy**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date** | **Signed** |
| **Date reviewed** | **October 2024** | **R Dalton** |
| **Ratified by** | **October 2024** | **A Brookes** |
| **Date of next review** | **October 2025 or following an incident** | |

Edward Jenner School takes the safety of children very seriously and will take every precaution necessary to ensure that the children in their care do not leave a session unaccompanied. The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child’s absence is soon discovered. In the unlikely event that a child is noted to be missing from school premises, the school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the most effective resolution of this potentially distressing situation. Many of our school routines and procedures are in place to contribute to the prevention of a child going missing and to ensuring the safety and security of all children at all times.

If, in the event of a member of staff not being able to account for a child’s whereabouts, the following action will be taken:

PROCEDURE FOR IF A CHILD LEAVES THE SETTING UNACCOMPANIED:

**Stage One - Search systematically**

* All available staff to immediately check toilets, shared areas, rooms and playground to ensure child is not hiding or locked in anywhere.
* One member of staff to immediately inform Reception and Headteacher and check whether the child has been signed out for an external appointment or has an internal appointment with a visiting professional (School Nurse/Speech Therapist etc) and then collect register.
* One member of staff to gather class and call the register to confirm that one named child is missing.
* Staff will ensure that all other pupils are kept safe and closely supervised throughout incident.
* The external doors and gates will be checked to ensure there is not a breech which would endanger other children

**Stage Two**

* After stage one is completed without resolution (no more than 15 minutes), school office staff/ TA will contact the police and parents/carers with parental responsibility. At this point school will support the police who will now lead the response to this incident. The Headteacher will liaise with emergency services and parents/carers.
* Staff will call registers in all classes to confirm presence of other pupils. Lockdown procedure will be considered.

**Stage Three**

* The Headteacher should communicate the incident to the Gloucestershire Local Authority Office
* 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. The following information must be recorded:
  + The date and time of the report.
  + What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
  + When the child was last seen in the group/outing.
  + What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
  + The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
* The Senior Leadership Team(SLT) should conduct an internal investigation to establish how the situation occurred, how effective was the response and whether action could be taken to ensure it does not happen again. The procedure will be reviewed.

**If a child goes missing on a school outing/trip**,

* All children need to be called to their designated adult and a register check carried out
* the teacher in charge must ensure that the remaining children are cared for by suitable numbers of adults. The remaining staff must conduct an urgent but thorough search of the immediate vicinity and if the child is not found quickly
* the event organisers or staff at the venue must be contacted, a description of the child and what they are wearing should be given, exits must be sealed if practicable
* if the child is not found within 10 minutes the police will be contacted and the Head Teacher notified.
* Parents will be notified as soon as possible.
* If a member of staff finds the child; the police, Headteacher and parents will be notified as soon as possible.

At EJS We will ensure that:

• We make regular checks to ensure that if an incident of this sort does happen, we have all the necessary phone numbers at hand – correct, up to date and kept together.

• If the police are called then the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (GSCP) and ISI are also informed.

• If the Headteacher is not on the premises, she/he will be informed as soon as possible. A member of the school leadership team (SLT)must be informed.

• We will record the following information to supply to the Local Authority and ISI

* + What happened?
  + What systems are in place for preventing such occurrences?
  + What we did, at what time and in what order.
  + Who we informed and when.
  + We will cooperate fully in any investigation.

Recording

We will start to build a record as soon as is possible in the incident log, this will include:

* + The last definite sighting of the child.
  + Any unusual behaviour of the missing child or other children.
  + How many children were on the premises?
  + How many adults were on the premises and who?
  + What steps have been taken and when, by whom.

Dealing with people’s reactions

We accept that the child’s parents will be frightened, distressed and angry. We accept that in such circumstances powerful emotions are involved and people’s behaviour can be unpredictable. Those who may seem quite calm about the incident at the time can later become angry, threaten legal action or approach the local press.

We will be clear about the circumstances surrounding the incident and will respond sympathetically to questions without implications or admission of responsibility. Responses could include:

* How sorry you are that the incident has happened.
* That a full investigation is in hand.
* That the GSCP/ISI has been informed and will be investigating.

**Dealing with the media**

Distressed parents may contact the local press, or reporters may hear about the incident if the police are involved. The Headteacher will have the responsibility for representing Edward Jenner School. All adults will be asked to refer all enquiries to the Headteacher. The ISA will be contacted for advice.

**When the child is found**

We recognise that during the time a child is missing, however briefly, all involved, parents and others suffer great fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when the child is found. We will accept that it is important to remember:

* That the child also might have been afraid and distressed and will now be in need of comfort.
* Remain calm, reassure the child and acknowledge it is not the child’s fault.
* Ensure the child is not hurt.
* That the incident provides a good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises, and why.

**After the Incident**

* We will review our current procedure.
* We will evaluate processes and make necessary adjustments to ensure future effectiveness.

Contacts

Gloucestershire Police 999

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership MASH 01452 426565

ISA 01799 523619

ISI 02076000100

**Appendix i**

**LOST CHILD REPORTING FORM**

**Include time, recorder and location for every entry**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date and time of this report** |  |
| **Name of staff in attendance** |  |
| **Name(s) of children in attendance** |  |
| **Name of child(ren) missing** |  |
| **Last seen:**  **Wearing:**  **Location:**  **Time:**  **Activity:** |  |
| **Actions taken**  **Lock down initiated Y/N reasons** |  |
| **Police informed? (and time)** |  |
| **Parents informed? (and time)** |  |