



LYDBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL (Including Robins Nursery)

MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE

Dated: 1st October 2026

Review date: Annually

Introduction

- 1.1 The safety of our pupils is our priority whilst they are in our care both at school and offsite when on visits or trips. This policy sets out our procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

2.0 Responsibilities

- 2.1 It is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, what is expected, 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.
- 2.2 Staff are responsible for completing attendance registers. They must be completed accurately and promptly according to guidelines using the SIMS attendance module. Registers must be completed by 8.40 am and again by 1.05 pm.
- 2.3 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 the school day.
- 2.4 If a parent takes a pupil out of school during the day, they must do this via the School Office using the IPAD system to sign their child in and out of school.
- 2.5 It is the responsibility of the Governors to ensure they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge and support the school in its review of the policy.

3.0 Procedures aimed at reducing the risk of a missing child.

3.1 Start of the school day:-

- 3.1.1 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.
- 3.1.2 A member of the staff will meet pupils in the playground at 8.30 am every morning
- 3.1.3 The school doors are locked at 9.00 am and all gates are locked at 8.45 am. After this time pupils should report to the School Office via the main entrance.
- 3.1.4 Teachers are in their classrooms at 8.30 am.

3.2 During lesson time:-

- 3.2.1 Using SIMS Attendance, Staff mark registers promptly and accurately – mornings and afternoons
- 3.2.2 All staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are closed when pupils are playing outside.
- 3.2.3 If pupils leave the classroom security to work in other parts of the school, the class teacher must ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and pupils are accounted for on their return to the classroom.
- 3.2.4 Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained.

3.3 During playtime:

- 3.3.1 Duty staff should be in the playground before pupils come out.
- 3.3.2 External gates remain closed. Staff patrol all areas in the playground throughout the session.

3.4 During lunchtime:

- 3.4.1 As above
- 3.4.2 A Senior member of staff is available at lunchtimes.

3.5 During home time:

- 3.5.1 The school gates are opened at 3.00 pm
- 3.5.2 Pupils leave by assigned exits.
- 3.5.3 Pupils in Robins, Owls, and Magpies are collected from their assigned exits and staff call the children when they can see their parent or carer.
- 3.5.4 Pupils who use the Joys Green bus are assembled and a register taken in the playground and are then escorted to the bus stop by the Bus Escort and a member of staff.
- 3.5.5 Pupils Hawks leave when they have identified their parent or carer or are allowed to walk home if permission has been received.
- 3.5.6 Pupils who are not collected at 3.15 pm are sent to the School Office where the parents are contacted and the pupil collected.

3.6 Educational Visits:-

- 3.6.1 Thorough risk assessments and adequate adult/pupil ratios are provided when pupils leave the school premises.
- 3.6.2 Permission from parents is obtained generically when pupils start at the School or Nursery.
- 3.6.3 Staff mobile contact details are left at school on every visit.

3.7 Wrap around care clubs and After School Clubs

3.7.1 A register of pupils should be taken and any absences reported to the school office.

3.7.2 Consent forms for these clubs should be obtained.

4.0 Procedures in the event of a child going missing.

- 4.1 If a member of staff suspects that a child is missing from a lesson or activity they contact the Headteacher or Senior Leader and the School Office immediately. The Headteacher and any available staff will carry out a thorough search of the building, including toilets and outside areas.
- 4.2 The following records held in the School Office will be checked:
 - 4.2.1 Attendance registers
 - 4.2.2 Lateness and Absence
- 4.3 If necessary, staff will promptly but calmly assemble all pupils in the school hall and designated members of staff will supervise the children. The safety and care of other pupils is paramount so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other pupils must be adequately maintained while the search continues. Staff should focus on the needs of the children and should not discuss the incident in front of them but try and answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- 4.4 Staff will count and name check all the pupils present against the registers while the group is assembled in one place.
- 4.5 A thorough check of all exits will be made to ensure all gates and doors were locked and bolted during the period that the child went missing and there are no other ways a pupil could have left the school.
- 4.6 If a child is still not found after this initial search, the office is to inform the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors.
- 4.7 If the child has not been found after ten minutes from the initial report of him/her missing then parents should be notified. The Headteacher or the next most senior member of staff on site will decide at which point the police need to be contacted. When contacting parents or carers staff will ask them to bring a recent photograph of their child with them.
- 4.8 Staff must try to remember and write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features.
- 4.9 If the child has any special medical or learning needs then these should be noted to be disclosed to Police or other agencies.
- 4.10 The Class Teacher is spoken to in order to gain further information and asked to confirm if he/she attended the previous sessions.

- 4.11 A thorough search of the school buildings continues and is carried out by senior members of staff with help of all other members of staff available.
- 4.12 **In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises:-**
 - 4.12.1 The Group leader must ensure the safety of remaining pupils. At least two adults must stay with them.
 - 4.12.2 One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
 - 4.12.3 The Visit Leader should contact school to alert them.
 - 4.12.4 If the child is not found within five minutes the Group Leader must contact the Police.
 - 4.12.5 The Group Leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and the school will make arrangements to notify parents and carers, after which the procedures described above will be followed.

5.0 Managing People

- 5.1 Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- 5.2 The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the designated care responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- 5.3 Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Setting leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- 5.4 The parents will feel angry, and distressed. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the Headteacher. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff where possible, the Headteacher and the Class teacher. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the Police will be contacted.

6 Incident Review

- 6.2 A thorough investigation will take place following any child going missing. Checks will be made that Safeguarding policies and procedures were adhered to. Based on these findings, policies and procedures may need amendment.
- 6.3 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. Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- 6.4 The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements; the Local Authority Health and Safety Office may want to decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- 6.5 In the event of disciplinary action need to be taken Ofsted will be informed.
- 6.6 In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support.
- 6.7 Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press.

Approved 1st October 2026