

# Missing Child and Late Collection



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<b>Staff member responsible for this policy:</b>	Miss Claire Holloway
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## Missing child

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# Missing Child and Late Collection Policy

## Linked policies:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Supervision of Pupils Policy; Attendance Policy; Restorative Behaviour Policy; Educational Visits Policy; EYFS Policy

## 1. Purpose and Ethos

The safety and wellbeing of all pupils at St Olave's Prep School is our highest priority.

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils are accounted for at all times and that any situation in which a child is missing, unaccounted for or not collected is treated as a matter of safeguarding.

This policy forms part of the school's wider safeguarding framework and must be read in conjunction with the Supervision of Pupils Policy and Attendance Policy. Together, these ensure that pupils are continuously supervised, expected and tracked, and that any concern is identified and acted upon immediately.

The school operates a culture of vigilance in which all staff understand their responsibility to act promptly and decisively to ensure pupil safety.

## 2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (Part 3: Welfare, Health and Safety)
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Local safeguarding partnership procedures

The school recognises that a missing child may be at risk of significant harm and that immediate action is required in all cases.

## 3. Safeguarding Principles

A child going missing is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and must always be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Staff understand that:

- a child may go missing due to accident, miscommunication, distress or deliberate action
- some pupils may be more vulnerable due to age, SEND, emotional needs or

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- safeguarding history
- timely and coordinated action is critical

All incidents are taken seriously, recorded fully and reviewed to ensure that learning informs future practice.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for managing any incident in which a child goes missing.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for overseeing the safeguarding response, including liaison with external agencies where required.

All staff are responsible for maintaining vigilance, ensuring pupils are accounted for and acting immediately if a concern arises.

## 5. Procedure: Child Missing from School Site

If a child is identified as missing, staff will act immediately.

A register will be checked to confirm the absence and establish when the child was last seen. The School Office will be consulted to check signing in or out records, and the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be informed without delay.

Staff will calmly ask both adults and pupils for any relevant information while ensuring that other pupils remain safely supervised.

A coordinated search of the school site will take place, including classrooms, outdoor areas, toilets and any other spaces where a child may be. Entrances, exits and CCTV (where available) will be checked.

If the child is not located quickly, the situation will be escalated immediately.

Parents will be contacted and asked to come to the school. The police will be informed, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether to notify children's social care in line with local safeguarding procedures.

The school will cooperate fully with any investigation and will inform the Chair of Trustees and relevant insurers where appropriate.

Throughout, the safety and supervision of all other pupils will be maintained.

## 6. Procedure: Child Missing on an Educational Visit

If a child goes missing while off site, staff will act immediately.

A headcount will be conducted and the immediate area searched. Staff will ensure that the

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remaining pupils are kept safe and supervised.

The Visit Leader will inform the Headteacher, and the venue staff will be alerted where appropriate. Parents will be informed and asked to attend if necessary.

If the child is not found quickly, the police will be contacted without delay and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider further safeguarding referrals.

The school will cooperate fully with all external agencies.

## 7. When a Child is Found

When a child is located, the immediate priority is their safety and wellbeing.

The child will be reassured and supported. Staff will seek to understand what has happened in a calm and age-appropriate way.

Parents will be informed and a full account of the incident will be provided. A thorough review will take place, including written statements where appropriate.

The school will consider any learning from the incident and take steps to strengthen systems where necessary.

## 8. Late Collection of Pupils

The school operates clear procedures to ensure that pupils are collected safely at the end of the day.

If a child is not collected at the agreed time, they will remain under the supervision of staff. After a short period, the school will attempt to contact parents or carers using all available contact numbers.

If contact cannot be made and the child remains uncollected, the Headteacher will consider next steps, which may include contacting local authority children's services or the police, in line with safeguarding procedures.

The child will be cared for safely at all times until suitable arrangements are made.

Repeated late collection or failure to collect a child will be recorded and may be treated as a safeguarding concern.

## 9. EYFS Considerations

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are supervised in line with statutory requirements at all times.

Additional care is taken to ensure that children are handed over safely to authorised adults. If a child is not collected, the school will follow EYFS safeguarding requirements and local

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authority procedures, ensuring that the child's welfare remains paramount.

### **10. Recording, Monitoring and Review**

A full written record will be kept of any incident in which a child is missing or not collected.

This will include details of the incident, actions taken, timescales and outcomes. Records will be reviewed by senior leaders to identify any patterns or areas for improvement.

The school will reflect on each incident and, where necessary, update procedures to strengthen safeguarding practice.

### **11. Review**

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation or school practice.