



Thrupp Primary School

Uncollected and Missing Child Policy

Approved by: Standards & Welfare	Date Approved: November 2025
Review: January 2023	Review due: November 2027

Thrupp Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, governors and volunteers to share this commitment.

1. Uncollected child from Thrupp Primary School

Policy statement

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a day/session, the school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Procedures

- Parents of children starting at the school are asked to provide the following specific information which is recorded on our Registration Form:
 - Home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.
 - Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable).
 - Mobile telephone number (if applicable).
 - Names, addresses, telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
 - Who has parental responsibility for the child.
 - Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.
- On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they inform us in writing of how they can be contacted.
- On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they provide us with written details of the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child. We agree with parents how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child often using a password system.
- Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number.
- If a child is not collected at the end of the day/session, we follow the following procedures:
 - The child's file is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
 - If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
 - If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form - are contacted.
 - All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
 - The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.

If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children:

- We contact our local authority children's social services care team:

01452 426994

(telephone number)

- The child stays at school in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker.
- Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative if they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- Under no circumstances do staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.

In very rare circumstances, a parent or a member of social services may ask for a member of staff to transport a child home. The member of staff will review the request and if deemed the most appropriate action they will transport the child. They will potentially be on their own in the vehicle and permission would therefore be sought from the requesting party that they are happy with this procedure to be carried out.

2. Missing child: Thrupp Primary School

Policy statement

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedures

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the staff member alerts the Head Teacher.
- The class teacher will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden while the rest of the children are kept safe and calm with other staff.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- If the child is not found, the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.
- The class teacher talks to the staff in the classroom to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.

Child going missing on an outing

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing 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 searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The Headteacher is contacted immediately and the incident is reported.
- The Headteacher contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The Headteacher contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the class teacher. The school is advised as the best place, as by the time the parent arrives, the child may have been returned to the school.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the school.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- The class teacher, or designated staff member may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The class teacher together with the Head Teacher speaks with the parent(s).
- The Governors carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- The class teacher writes an incident report detailing:
 - 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.
- 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. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements and the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken the local authority is informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer 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.
- 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.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the Setting Leader. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the class teacher and the other should be the Head Teacher or one of the Governors. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The Governors will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.