Missing Child and Late Collection Policy

September 2025

ST CHRISTOPHER'S
HAMPSTEAD

Missing Child and Late Collection Policy

Policy to be reviewed annually			
Action	**Owner**	**Date**	**Completed**
Reviewed	DSL (Lizi Courtney-Magee)	September 2025	✓
Approved	Risk & Compliance Committee	October 2025	

Date of next review: September 2026

To be published on	
School network	✓
School website	✓

Accessibility notice
To enable easier reading, this Policy is available in a larger font upon request.

This policy applies equally to the Early Years Foundation Stage setting, KS1 and KS2 as taught at St Christopher's School.
This policy applies to all staff (including volunteers), parents and pupils in the Early Years setting, KS1 and KS2. It should be read in conjunction with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, Pupil Supervision policy, and the DfE statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from care.

1. Introduction

1.1. The welfare of all the children at St Christopher's school is the School's paramount responsibility.

1.2. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times.

1.3. Staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that she is in our care.

2. Registering pupils

2.1. Pupils are registered twice a day: in the morning at 8.30am and 1:00pm (YR, 1 and 2) / 1:30pm (Y3, 4, 5, 6) by form teachers. Pupils who are late to school must sign in at the front office. If a pupil is authorised to leave during the school day, they are required to sign out at reception.

3. Actions to be followed by staff if a child is missing

3.1. The School's procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, the School would carry out the following actions:

3.2. As soon as a teacher notices a child is missing, they must immediately inform via the school office the Safeguarding team and the Head (or in their absence a member of SLT), of the situation.

3.3. School's Secretary's role:

- Start the incident clock
- Check the list of reported absences for that day and the sign in/out sheets
- Check the pupil's timetable for that day including the music lessons timetable, or ring the music department
- Ring the Library to check if the pupil is there
- Use the Tanoy system to ask all staff to look out for the missing child
- Immediately to begin to review the CCTV imaging to see if the child has left the building via the monitored exists

3.4. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or a DDSL will

- Obtain cover for the supervision of their class
- Search the school premises and grounds, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a small child might hide
- If the child is found but is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.
- A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

4. Actions to be followed when a child goes missing from after-school activities

- The member of staff in charge of the activities should alert the front office.
- The front office staff will contact the SLT / DSL and follow the procedure set out above. The DSL/SLT will call the parents (or emergency contact).

5. Actions to be followed by staff if the child is not found

5.1. The Head's role:

- When the incident clock has reached 7 minutes, or immediately if the CCTV footage shows that a child has managed to leave the building in an unauthorised capacity, the Head will inform the police by dialling 999. Immediately telephone parents and inform them of the circumstances.
- If the parents cannot be contacted, and the pupil is identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern, the Head should phone the pupil's emergency contact numbers.
- Inform the Bursar and ask them to inform the School's insurers
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- Inform ISI
- A member of staff may be sent to Belsize Village to search for the missing pupil

5.2. The DSL will

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead would inform the Local Children Safeguarding Partnerships
- The school would cooperate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by social care

6. Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing on an outing

6.1. The trip leader will take the following actions:

- An immediate registration will be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present
- An adult will search the immediate vicinity and/ or group's recent locations
- Inform the Head by mobile phone, or the DSL in their absence
- The remaining children would be taken back to school
- If applicable, contact the venue Manager and arrange a search
- Contact the Police
- Ask the Head/DSL to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue or the school at once.

6.2. The Head will

- Inform the Local Children Safeguarding Partnership
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- Inform ISI
- Arrange for the Bursar to contact the school's insurers

6.3. The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.

6.4. If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE.

6.5. The member of staff should make a record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

6.6. In all instances, a full record of the incident must be produced by the DSL or the SLT who took responsibility for the incident and record it on CPOMS.

7. Information to be provided to the police

7.1. When the School contacts the Police, the following information should be provided:

- The pupil's name
- The pupil's age
- An up-to-date photograph if possible
- The pupil's approximate height, physical description and physical peculiarities
- Any disability, learning difficulties or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- Details of any pastoral or safeguarding concerns
- The pupil's home address and telephone number
- A description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing, including a school wristband

8. Actions to be followed by staff once the child is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing
- The Head will speak to the parents of the child to discuss events and give an account of the incident
- The Head will arrange for a full investigation to be carried out (if appropriate involving Social Services/ Local Children Safeguarding Partnerships)
- Media queries should be referred to the Head
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing, the length of time that the child was missing and how she appeared to have gone missing, and lessons for the future.

9. Late collection procedure

9.1. This procedure applies equally to children in the Reception class as to older children.

9.2. The times for collection are clearly stated in published material and any changes are detailed in the Friday reminder.

9.3. In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session, St Christopher's School puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure that the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child.

9.4. After a 10-minute waiting period, the child is booked into the school's Teatime after-care programme which runs until 6:00pm Mondays to Thursdays and until 4:45pm on Fridays. Any accumulated charges are billed by the school at the end of term.

9.5. If a child is collected late when Teatime has finished for the day, two staff will remain onsite to look after the child. This will include the SLT duty period and either a member of the front office or Teatime team. Accumulated late pick-up charges are billed by the school at the end of term.

If a child is collected late from an offsite sports fixture, two accompanying staff members will wait with them and remaining in contact with the school office. If the delay will be more than 30-minutes, the staff may return to school with the child where the SLT duty staff member and an additional member of staff will wait with them until collection. Accumulated late pick-up charges accumulate after a 10-mionute waiting period and billed at the end of term.

9.6. The School will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. Parents/carers are informed of the School's procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be cared for properly.

9.7. Children's feelings must be paramount and they must not be allowed to feel singled out or that they are causing any disruption. They should be reassured and not left alone. All children must wait with a member of staff who is known to them.

9.8. After approximately 15 minutes a phone call should be made to the person who is on the child's daily collection arrangement sheet or named as the collector on any other communication from the parent for that day.

9.9. After approximately 30 minutes if there is no response from earlier call, or no one has yet arrived, the original number should be tried again and the parent /other parent should be called.

9.10. After approximately 45 minutes if there is still no information the emergency contact/s should be informed and asked to come. The child may not be taken home by anyone not authorised by the parent.

9.11. If no one arrives to collect the child, the member of staff on duty must stay with the child in school, reassuring her and chatting to her until someone comes, however long that may take.

9.12. If this goes beyond 6.30pm, the Head (07557761526) or DSL (07719108113) should be informed. The member of staff on duty may then need to call the Local Authority duty social worker, telephone 020 7 974 3317 (before 5pm) or 020 7974 4444 (after 5pm) and ask for advice.

9.13. **Staff should not take a child to their own home.**