



# Alexander Hosea Primary School

*'Roots to grow, wings to fly'*

## **PROCEDURE FOR 'MISSING' CHILD / CHILD 'RUNNING AWAY' FROM SCHOOL SITE**

### **Introduction**

At Alexander Hosea School, we take very seriously the safeguarding and welfare of our children. We will work together with agencies and professionals when a child is missing.

### **Rationale**

In order to ensure the safety and security of children whilst at school, the following procedure must be followed in the case of either a child discovered 'missing' or a child 'running away' from school.

### **1 – A child goes missing from school during the school day**

In the event a child is noted to be missing:-

a) The school office should be contacted to ensure that the child has not been collected by parents or is sick, having first aid administered etc.

b) If confirmed that the child should still be in school, appropriate members of staff will be directed to make a check of other classrooms, toilets and additional spaces within school and of the external school grounds.

(a and b are interchangeable in practice)

c) Investigations will be made with friends to see if the child was upset or if they had seen him/her leave the school site.

d) If it is noted that the child is missing during lunch time or play time, the bell will be rung so children line up. They can then be accounted for by a member of staff and any missing child identified.

d) In the event that the child still remains unaccounted for, the parents, police and any other relevant agencies will be notified. It is for the police to advise the media regarding a missing child and will do so in the best interests of the child. In the case of Looked after Children, Social Care should be consulted.

e) If the police are involved they will need:

- Details of the clothing the child is wearing
- Details of the child's appearance – hair colour, hair length etc., including photograph if available
- Age of the child
- Name of the child
- The child's home address
- Last known location of the child

- Where the child appeared to be heading

e) Depending on circumstances and the knowledge of the child, if he/she is one considered likely to run away, staff may be asked to leave the site to search, or the police may recommend a wider search and should co-ordinate this.

Child protection procedures will be initiated whenever there are concerns that a child who is missing may be at risk of significant harm, including sexual exploitation. If this is the case a referral should be made to Access and Response Team (ART).

At the conclusion of any incident the events need to be recorded on the school's 'safeguarding log' proforma and be clearly referenced to the evidence and the information upon which decisions were made. This record must include details of any third parties and all the evidence/information they have supplied. Following this, the procedures will be reviewed.

Every missing child who returns will be interviewed, if possible, by a trusted adult, to discuss with the child the reasons for this incident and reinforce safety and any other related issues.

## **2 – A child runs away from school**

In the event a child is noticed running away:-

a) Staff should stop the child if possible, preferably by putting themselves in their path and trying to talk with them.

b) If a child runs, however, staff are not to run after the child, **(this will make them run faster and pay less attention to where they are going)**

c) Staff will, if possible, follow the child trying to keep him/her in sight

NB if the child has run away to the edge of the field and it is safe to leave them there, i.e. there is nowhere else for them to go, give them an opportunity to calm down on their own and return

d) If an additional adult is present, inform the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher immediately by sending an 'Emergency Red Card'.

e) The office will be notified of the circumstances and will call parents etc. and possibly the police, dependent on circumstances. It is for the police to advise the media regarding a missing child.

f) If a child is known to have run home either a member of staff or relative should go there.

At the conclusion of any incident the events need to be recorded on the school's 'safeguarding log' proforma and be clearly referenced to the evidence and the information upon which decisions were made. This record must include details of any third parties and all the evidence/information they have supplied. Following this, the procedures will be reviewed.

Every missing child who returns will be interviewed, if possible, by a trusted adult, to discuss with the child the reasons for this incident and reinforce safety and any other related issues.

### 3 – A child is separated from the class during a school trip

In the event a child is noted to be missing:-

- a) Appropriate members of staff will make a check of the area, building, grounds, toilets and additional spaces being visited
- b) alert the staff at the place being visited

(a and b are interchangeable in practice)

c) Investigations will be made with friends to see if the child was upset or if they had seen him/her leave.

d) In the event that the child still remains unaccounted for, the parents, police and any other relevant agencies will be notified.

It is for the police to advise the media regarding a missing child and will do so in the best interests of the child. In the case of Looked after Children, Social Care should be consulted.

e) If the police are involved they will need:

- Details of the clothing the child is wearing
- Details of the child's appearance – hair colour, hair length etc.
- Age of the child
- Name of the child
- The child's home address
- Last known location of the child
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At the conclusion of any incident the events need to be recorded on the school's 'safeguarding log' proforma and be clearly referenced to the evidence and the information upon which decisions were made. This record must include details of any third parties and all the evidence/information they have supplied. Following this, the procedures will be reviewed.

Every missing child who returns will be interviewed, if possible, by a trusted adult, to discuss with the child the reasons for this incident and reinforce safety and any other related issues.

### 4 – Children not arriving for registration

Follow the procedures in the school's 'Attendance Policy' and 'Walking to and from school alone' policy to ensure that children who do not arrive at school are safe.

#### Conclusion

These procedures must be read in conjunction with the school's Risk Assessment for South Gloucestershire's Children Missing Education protocol – June 2016 and the school's 'Attendance' and 'Walking to and from school' policies.

#### Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

This policy has been screened to ensure that we give 'due consideration' to equality of opportunity and has been agreed and formally approved by the appropriate reviewing and ratification Committee.

<b>Author</b>	Val Quest	<b>Date Reviewed</b>	Jan 17
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