



PROCEDURE FOR A LOST OR UNACCOUNTED FOR CHILD

Person(s) responsible for this policy		Prep DSL, Head of Prep School, DFO	
Last review by	Helen Loach Alison Bullock	Review date	July 2025
Date of next review		September 2026	

This procedure forms part of our EYFS safeguarding and welfare arrangements and should be read alongside the EYFS statutory framework and the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

EYFS children are always within sight or hearing of staff, are never released to unauthorised adults, and are subject to this lost / missing child procedure on site and off site.

Supervision During the School Day

Safety is always the first priority.

Pupils are dropped off at the beginning of the day and are registered at 8.25am at the Senior School and from 8.10am at the Prep School (unless they are doing breakfast club which starts at 7.30am). They are registered a second time after lunch at 1pm at the Prep School and 2.05 pm at the Senior School.

Assessing the Risk of a Missing Pupil

A pupil missing during school hours incident would be prioritised as significant risk' where:

- The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child/young person is in danger through their own vulnerability. Vulnerability characteristics may include;

- Children on a plan (Early Help, Child in Need, Looked After or Child Protection Plan)
- A disability and/or special educational needs
- Substance misuse
- Education health care plan

- The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.

- There are indications that the child/young person has already come to harm (CSE, grooming, radicalisation etc.)

Other contributory factors should be taken into consideration when determining if the pupil is at significant risk, for example:

Have there been past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?

- Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?
- Is there any known history of domestic violence?
- Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?
- Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?

- Have there been any past concerns about the child associating with significantly older young people or adults?
- Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Has the child been a victim of bullying?
- Are there health reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. does the child need essential medication or health care?
- Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. rites of passage, female genital mutilation or forced marriage planned for the child?

Prep School

During the school day, pupils are supervised by teachers and teaching assistants. Most lessons are taught by qualified teachers and in the EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 each class is supported by a teaching assistant. In Years 3 -6, there is one teaching assistant for each year group. Teaching assistants support children with their learning. In the EYFS and Lower School (Nursery to Year 2) teaching assistants take children to specialist lessons and stay with them during these lessons (e.g. PE and Music). No EYFS pupil is allowed to walk around the school unsupervised/unaccompanied, except when using the bathroom. All Year 1 and most Year 2 pupils must travel in pairs or be supervised by an adult, depending on the age and stage of the child. Pupils in Years 3 upwards are usually able to walk around the school independently however this is regularly risk assessed. During transitions to a new classroom between lessons, children should be supervised by staff. All children are supervised by staff (on a rota) for all breaks and lunchtimes.

The younger pupils tend to have their own teacher for most of the lessons and are escorted around school. Teachers should be aware of where their pupils are. The older pupils may move around school and have different teachers. When notice has been given about a pupil leaving the school site ahead of the end of the school day, the class teacher should inform whichever teacher, who will be teaching that child at that time, of this. Any girl arriving late or leaving early should be registered in or out using the Inventory system in the school office.

In 2024 we had a security audit performed by Pharos. We received excellent feedback as we have a 2 ring security shield with external and internal fences and doors. They made some recommendations which we quickly implemented to increase the height of fencing, secure doors and review procedures. Since then we have reviewed the end of day minibus transport egress and ensured that we have eaching staff manning the exit.

Procedures for lost child during a school trip

On a school visit staff should be aware of where all members of the group are at any one time. Pupils should be closely supervised. They should be counted regularly. If a child becomes lost the remainder of the group should be gathered together as quickly as possible and the teacher in charge should ascertain where and when the child was last seen. A member of staff should check the surrounding area and the last sighting place. If the group is in a museum or such like their staff should be alerted that a child is missing. The Head of Prep / Prep PSLT should be phoned and kept informed. If the child is not found within 10 minutes the teacher in charge should phone the police.

The Head of Prep will contact the Head, DFO and Director of Marketing and Comms. An agreed call will then be made to the parents. Any further comms to be agreed in line with our crisis management plan (other parents, staff)

Uncollected child at the end of the day

The school has an obligation to stay with any uncollected child at the end of the day, until that child is collected. The school must not release the child to an unauthorised person, even if the collection is late, unless an authorised person telephones to state that a different person will be collecting the child. The authorised person should give the name and address and a physical description of the different person and the teacher in charge should check this description before permitting the child to leave. If a child is not collected by 4.00pm, without prior arrangement, the class teacher or a member of the admin team will contact the child's parents. If there is no answer, they will contact all other adults named on the emergency contact list. The child will be cared for in the After School Club (ASC) until contact has been made and a member of the PSLT will be informed.

If a child has not been collected from the ASC by 5.55pm and there has been no contact from parents, the staff at the ASC will contact the child's parents and a member of the SLT will be informed. If the school is unable to contact an authorised adult to collect the child by 6.30pm, Social Services may be contacted, and they may have to accommodate the child for the night.

Travelling alone to and from the Prep School

Only pupils whose parents have given written permission may travel to and from school without adult supervision. This only applies to pupils in Years 6 (and in certain circumstances Year 5 also). Parents wishing for their child to travel alone into or from the Prep School must notify the school in writing. Those children will be added to the Travelling Alone register: [2025-2026 Travelling Alone.docx](#) Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children travel safely to and from school. The parents of any pupil travelling independently to school, who does not arrive by 8.30am, will be immediately informed by the school office.

Parents must also give permission for any pupils booked to travel on the minibuses to get off at the senior school or to disembark at a different stop en-route. Minibuses will not leave until all booked pupils are accounted for. Drivers to check with transport team who will then call school. Parents who do not give this permission will be spoken to by the Head of Prep or Asst Head Pastoral

These arrangements do not apply to EYFS children travelling independently - the release of EYFS children always follows EYFS safeguarding expectations.

Procedures for Lost Child During the School Day

Prep School

We are a large school and it can take some time to move from one place to another however if a child is unaccounted for the teacher should:

- Ask a Teaching Assistant or another adult to check their nearest cloakroom, the medical room and possibly whether they have an individual lesson. The office staff should check that the child has not been signed out on Inventory and check whether the child has been treated in the medical room.
- If the child cannot be found, the Head of Prep (or a senior member of staff) should be told.
- Consider a perimeter lockdown immediately
- In the first instance a staff member should try to ascertain when and where the child was last seen. The TAs and any spare members of staff will be asked to start a search. They should call the child's name as they search.
- Check that all external doors and gates are closed. CCTV can be checked by Premises or IT teams
- Do a quick check of the road outside, secret garden, gazebos and POD .
- Check the outside play areas and changing rooms.

- Send a message to all class teachers to ask if the child is in their room (the Senior leader coordinating the search will allocate one colleague to each floor/space to deliver this message face-to-face).
- Check the sports hall, assembly hall and gallery.
- Starting at the ground floor check each floor level paying attention to non-class based areas such as practice rooms.
- One member of staff should take each staircase. Use support staff.
- If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes, then the Head of Prep will notify the Head, DFO and Director of Marketing and Comms then ring the police and parents. A photograph of the child will be printed for the police. Follow Crisis Management plan for notifying Trust / Governors etc

When the situation has been resolved, members of staff should review the reasons for it happening and ensure that measures are taken to ensure that it does not happen again.

Whole School

Children who go missing from education

Please refer to both the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, the School Safeguarding Procedures and the DfE statutory guidance Children Missing Education. This guidance describes the legal requirements in relation to registers. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Lambeth Local Authority has a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area, and it is the school's responsibility to support Lambeth with this.