STREATHAM & CLAPHAM PREP SCHOOL

EYFS AND PREP PROCEDURE FOR A MISSING OR UNACCOUNTED FOR PUPIL

Person(s) responsible for this policy		**Prep DSL** **Head of Prep School** **DFO** **EYFS Teacher** **Head of Pre-Prep**	
Last review by	**Alex Nicholson** **Helen Loach** **Alison Bullock** **Petra Gollob** **Sophie Dowler**	**Review date**	**September 2026**
Date of next review		**September 2027**	

This procedure forms part of our EYFS safeguarding and welfare arrangements and should be read alongside the current EYFS statutory framework and the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. It should also be read alongside the Educational Visits Policy and Prep Day Trip SOP, the Attendance Policy, the After School Arrangements document, the EYFS Collection Policy and the Crisis Management Plan. It supports the school's duties under the Independent School Standards Regulations (in particular Part 3, paragraphs 7, 11 and 14) and the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS.

EYFS pupils are usually within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing; they are never released to unauthorised adults; and this procedure for an unaccounted for or missing pupil applies to them on site and off site.

In this procedure, a pupil is 'unaccounted for' when staff do not know where they are at a time when they should. A pupil is 'missing' when they cannot be found after an initial check of their likely whereabouts, or when there is reason to believe that they have left the school site or visit group. Every pupil who is unaccounted for is searched for immediately.

Supervision During the School Day

Safety is always the first priority.

Pupils are dropped off at the beginning of the day from 8.10am at the Prep School (unless they are doing breakfast club which starts at 7.30am). If they are doing breakfast club or any club, they are registered as they arrive onsite. For all pupils arriving between 8.10-8.20am they are registered at 8.25am on either the EYFS playground or MPG. Playgrounds are supervised by form teachers, and registers are taken by form teachers. EYFS pupils are registered as they enter the EYFS classroom space. They are registered a second time after lunch at either 1pm or 1.30pm (when assembly is scheduled) at the Prep School.

If a pupil who is expected in school has not arrived and no message has been received from the parents, the school office will contact the parents promptly to establish where the pupil is. If the pupil's whereabouts cannot be established, the Head of Prep and the DSL will be informed at once and the procedure for a missing pupil below will be followed as appropriate.

Assessing the Risk of a Missing Pupil

A missing pupil incident during school hours will be treated as 'significant risk' where:

- The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the pupil is in danger through their own vulnerability. Vulnerability characteristics may include:
  - Ø Pupils with an Early Help plan, a Child in Need plan or a Child Protection Plan, or who are Looked After
  - Ø A disability and/or special educational needs
  - Ø An Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.
- There are indications that the pupil has already come to harm (for example child sexual exploitation, grooming or radicalisation)
- The pupil is in the EYFS (Nursery or Reception), or there is any reason to believe that they have left the site or been removed by an adult without authority. An EYFS pupil who cannot be found after an immediate check is always treated as being at significant risk.

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 pupil 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 pupil from harm?
- Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?
- Have there been any past concerns about the pupil associating with significantly older young people or adults?
- Was there any significant incident prior to the pupil's unexplained absence?
- Has the pupil been a victim of bullying?
- Are there health reasons to believe that the pupil is at risk? e.g. does the pupil need essential medication or health care?
- Had the pupil seemed unusually withdrawn, anxious or distressed before their unexplained absence?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the pupil is at risk? e.g. rites of passage, female genital mutilation or forced marriage planned for the pupil?

Where a pupil is assessed as being at significant risk, the Head of Prep (or a senior member of staff) will call the police on 999 straight away, without waiting for the search timescales set out below, and will inform the DSL.

<u>Prep School</u>

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 pupils with their learning. In the EYFS and Lower School (Nursery to Year 2) teaching assistants take pupils 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, and staff check promptly on any pupil who has not returned. All Year 1 and Year 2 pupils must travel in pairs or

be supervised by an adult, depending on the age and stage of the pupil. 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, pupils should be supervised by staff. All pupils 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 must know 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 the teacher who will be teaching that pupil at that time. Any pupil arriving late or leaving early must be registered in or out using the Inventry system in the school office.

In 2024 an independent security audit was carried out by Pharos. The school has a two-ring security arrangement of external and internal fences and doors. Pharos made recommendations, which were implemented, to increase the height of the fencing, secure doors and review procedures. Since then the end-of-day minibus egress has been reviewed and teaching staff supervise the exit.

Procedures for a missing pupil during a school trip

On a school visit staff must be aware of where all members of the group are at any one time. Pupils must be closely supervised and counted regularly, in line with the Prep Day Trip SOP. If a pupil cannot be found, the remainder of the group should be gathered together as quickly as possible, kept under the supervision of at least one adult at all times, and the teacher in charge should ascertain where and when the pupil was last seen and what they were wearing. A member of staff should check the surrounding area and the last sighting place. If the group is at a venue such as a museum, the venue's staff should be alerted straight away that a pupil is missing. The Head of Prep / Prep PSLT (or the base contact named on the Evolve visit record) should be phoned straight away and kept informed. If the pupil is not found within 10 minutes, the teacher in charge will call 999. The teacher in charge will call 999 straight away if the pupil is in the EYFS, or if there is any concern that the pupil has left the venue or been taken by someone else.

Once the police have been called, the Head of Prep (or a delegated member of PSLT) will make the agreed call to the parents, inform the DSL, and contact the Head, DFO and Director of Marketing and Comms. Any further communications (to other parents and staff) will be agreed in line with our Crisis Management Plan.

Uncollected pupil at the end of the day

The school has an obligation to stay with any uncollected pupil at the end of the day, until that pupil is collected. The arrangements for handing over EYFS pupils at the end of the day are set out in the separate EYFS Collection Policy. The school must not release the pupil 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 pupil. The authorised person should give the name and address and a physical description of the different person and the teacher in charge must check the collecting adult's identity against this description before the pupil is released. If a pupil is not collected by 4.00pm, without prior arrangement, the class teacher or a member of the admin team will contact the pupil's parents. If there is no answer, they will contact all other adults named on the emergency contact list. The pupil will be cared for in the After School Club (ASC) until contact has been made and a member of the PSLT will be informed.

A pupil who is waiting to be collected will be kept with familiar staff and reassured. Wherever possible, two members of staff will remain with the pupil; a pupil will not be left alone with a single adult out of sight of others, and no member of staff will take a pupil home. Every attempt to make contact will be recorded with the time and the outcome. If staff have any concern about an adult's fitness to care for a pupil at collection (for example, if they appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs), the pupil

will not be released; the Head of Prep or a member of PSLT and the DSL will be informed at once, other named emergency contacts will be tried and, if necessary, the police or children's social care will be contacted. The DSL will also be informed of any repeated late or uncollected pupils so that any welfare concern can be considered.

If a pupil 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 pupil's parents and a member of the PSLT will be informed. If the school is unable to contact an authorised adult to collect the pupil by 6pm, the Head of Prep (or a member of PSLT) will contact children's social care (using the out-of-hours service if necessary), in line with the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and will contact the police if there is any concern for the pupil's safety.

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 Year 6 (and in certain circumstances Year 5 also). Parents wishing for their pupil to travel alone into or from the Prep School must notify the school in writing. Those pupils will be added to the Travelling Alone register (see separate After School Arrangements document). Parents are responsible for ensuring that their pupils travel safely to and from school. The parents of any pupil travelling independently to school, who does not arrive by 8.30am, will be contacted immediately by the school office. If the pupil cannot be accounted for, the Head of Prep and the DSL will be informed and the procedure for an unaccounted for or missing pupil will be followed as appropriate.

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. If a booked pupil is not on the minibus, the driver will check with the transport team, who will call the school office. The school will then check Inventry and the register, contact the parents and, if the pupil cannot be found, follow the procedure for an unaccounted for or missing pupil.

These arrangements do not apply to EYFS pupils, who must never travel to or from school without an adult. EYFS pupils are released only to a parent/carer or to another adult authorised by their parent/carer, in line with the separate EYFS Collection Policy, which sets out the EYFS handover arrangements.

<u>Procedures for an Unaccounted for or Missing Pupil During the School Day</u>

EYFS (Nursery and Reception)

An EYFS pupil who cannot be accounted for is treated as being at significant risk from the outset because of their age. The steps are:

- The member of staff who notices tells the nearest other member of EYFS staff at once. That colleague takes over supervision of the rest of the class, so that the remaining pupils are never left unsupervised.
- The pupil's likely whereabouts (bathrooms, cloakroom, and indoor and outdoor play areas) are checked straight away.
- The Head of Prep (or a senior member of staff) is told immediately, decides whether a perimeter lockdown is needed, and asks Premises to check that all gates and doors are secure.
- The Head of Prep (or senior member of staff) calls the police on 999 if the pupil has not been found within five minutes, or straight away if there is any reason to believe that the pupil has left the site or been taken by someone else. The parents and the DSL are informed at the same time.
- The wider search then follows the steps set out under 'Prep School' below.

Prep School

These steps apply to all Prep pupils; for an EYFS pupil, the EYFS steps above apply first and the shorter timescales there apply. We are a large school and it can take some time to move from one place to another. However, if a pupil 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 pupil has not been signed out on Inventry and check whether the pupil has been treated in the medical room, and whether any message has been received about an early collection or appointment.
- If the pupil cannot be found after this initial check, the Head of Prep (or a senior member of staff) must be told at once. They will lead the search, appoint a colleague to keep a written log of times and actions, and inform the DSL.
- Decide immediately whether a perimeter lockdown is needed and, if so, contact Premises to action it.
- In the first instance a staff member should try to ascertain when and where the pupil was last seen. The TAs and any spare members of staff will be asked to start a search. They should call the pupil'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, storage areas and changing rooms.
- Send a message to all class teachers to ask if the pupil 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, kitchen areas, 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 pupil cannot be found within fifteen minutes, or immediately in the circumstances described under 'Assessing the Risk of a Missing Pupil', the Head of Prep will call the police on 999 and ring the parents. A recent photograph of the pupil and a description of what they were wearing will be given to the police. The Head, DFO and Director of Marketing and Comms will be informed, and the Crisis Management Plan followed for notifying the GDST and governors.
- When the pupil is found, the Head of Prep tells everyone who has been involved or notified, including the police and the parents, that the search is over. The pupil's welfare is checked, medical attention is given if needed, and the DSL is informed.
- The Head of Prep (or the colleague they appoint) records the incident on CPOMS, with a timeline of times, actions and decisions.

When the situation has been resolved, the Head of Prep will lead a review of why it happened and ensure that measures are taken to prevent it happening again, including any changes needed to risk assessments or staffing arrangements. The DSL will consider whether any safeguarding concern needs to be followed up, the parents will be told the outcome of the review, and the outcome will be reported to the Head and, where appropriate, the GDST and governors.

<u>Whole School</u>

Pupils 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: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools. Registers are kept in line with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration)

(England) Regulations 2024 and the school's Attendance Policy. All pupils, 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. Where a pupil lives in another local authority area, the school also works with that authority. If a pupil's absence is unexplained and the school cannot make contact with the family after reasonable enquiries, the DSL will be informed and the school will follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.