



AVONDALE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Missing Child Policy for EYFS, Pre-Prep & Prep

The welfare of all children at Avondale Preparatory School is our highest priority. Every member of staff understands their vital role in safeguarding children and ensuring their safety at all times. Generous staffing ratios ensure robust supervision, minimising the likelihood of incidents where a child could go missing.

This policy adheres to the statutory guidance outlined by **Wiltshire Council** and national frameworks.

Legal and Policy Framework

In compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and safeguarding regulations, Avondale Preparatory School has established the following procedures:

- A policy for responding to a child going missing during the school day.
- A procedure for managing situations where a parent fails to collect a child at the appointed time.

Additionally, we have identified the need for procedures for:

- Managing prolonged, unexplained absences.
- Responding to a child going missing on a school trip or outing.

This policy aligns with:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)*.
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*.
- Wiltshire Council's safeguarding guidance and Children Missing Education (CME) procedures.
- Prevent duty responsibilities and child protection policies, including concerns related to exploitation, grooming, or radicalisation.

Our practices also consider COVID-19 risk assessments and any other current health and safety protocols.

Preventative Measures to Ensure Safety

1. Supervision and Ratios

- Staff carefully supervise children at all times, maintaining appropriate staff-to-child ratios in line with EYFS and school regulations.
- Visitors are always accompanied, ensuring no unauthorised interactions with children.

2. Monitoring Movement

- Children's entry and exit from school premises are strictly monitored when open and locked when unsupervised.
- For trips and outings, a signing-in/out system is used, alongside attendance records, emergency contacts, and a fully charged mobile phone.

3. Risk Assessments

- Daily risk assessments are conducted in all areas where children play or learn.
- Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out before outings.

4. Trip Planning

- Careful planning ensures children are supervised at all times during outings, with no child left out of sight of an adult.

Procedures for a Missing Child

1. Missing Child During the School Day

If a child is identified as missing:

1. Immediate Action

- Conduct an immediate headcount and register to confirm that all other children are present.
- Check with the class teacher, support staff, and any other relevant adults about the child's location.
- Confirm with the office whether the child has been signed out or collected.

2. Search the Premises

- Organise a thorough search of the area last seen, including classrooms, playgrounds, changing rooms, storage areas, and outdoor spaces.
- Notify the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.
- Alert all staff to be vigilant.

3. Escalation if the Child is Not Found

- The Headteacher will contact the child's parents/carers and request their immediate presence at school.
- If the child is not found within **15 minutes**, the DSL will inform the police and Wiltshire Children's Services.
- Staff will cooperate fully with the authorities and document all actions taken.

4. Follow-Up

- Inform the school's proprietors and insurers.
- If the child is injured, report to the HSE under RIDDOR regulations.
- Complete a detailed incident report.

2. Missing Child on an Outing

If a child goes missing during an excursion:

1. Immediate Action

- Gather all children in a secure area and conduct a headcount to ensure all others are present.
- Alert venue staff (if applicable) and request assistance with the search.

2. Search and Escalation

- Organise a search of recently visited areas using designated adults while ensuring supervision ratios are maintained.
 - Notify the Headteacher and DSL.
 - If the child is not located promptly, contact the police and Wiltshire Children's Services.
3. **Follow-Up**
- Inform Ofsted if the missing child is part of EYFS.
 - Complete an incident report detailing actions taken.
 - Adjust procedures if necessary to prevent recurrence.
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3. Prolonged Unexplained Absence

If a child is absent for more than **three days** without explanation:

1. **Initial Actions**
 - Contact parents/carers immediately after an unexplained absence.
 - If parents/carers are unreachable, escalate to emergency contacts.
 2. **Involvement of Safeguarding Authorities**
 - After **three days of no contact**, the DSL will notify Wiltshire's Children Missing Education (CME) Officer.
 - For children with existing safeguarding concerns, the DSL will contact the child's allocated social worker or case manager.
 3. **Removal from Roll**
 - The school will not remove a child from the roll without first notifying Wiltshire Council.
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4. Procedure for a Child Not Collected on Time

If a child is not collected at the agreed time:

1. **Initial Actions**
 - Call the parent/carer's contact numbers. If unsuccessful, try emergency contacts.
 - Inform the Headteacher and DSL if no response is received.
 2. **Escalation**
 - If the child remains uncollected by **6:00 p.m.**, contact the police (non-emergency line) to request assistance.
 - Provide all relevant information to the police to assist in locating the parents/carers.
 3. **Follow-Up**
 - Cooperate with the police and Wiltshire Children's Services to ensure the child's safety.
 - Document all actions and communications.
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Children Missing Education (CME)

In accordance with Wiltshire Council guidance, Avondale Preparatory School ensures robust attendance monitoring. For absences of **10 days or more** without school permission:

1. **Notify Wiltshire Council CME Officer.**
2. **Provide all available details** to assist in locating the child and safeguarding their welfare.

Contact Wiltshire CME Officer:

Email: CME@wiltshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01225 718225

Additional Safeguarding Considerations

The following children are particularly vulnerable:

- Those with child protection plans or special educational needs.
- Those at risk of exploitation, grooming, or radicalisation.
- Children with emotional health concerns or family issues.

Staff must assess risks and act promptly to safeguard such children, following professional judgment and relevant policies.

Reviewed – October 2024- G Barrington-Tolan

Signed as read:

Signature: _____



Name: Georgina Barrington-Tolan Date: 08.10.24