



HAMER COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Missing Child Policy

Safeguarding Children

Overview

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through various school policies and procedures, to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times:

- Children are only handed to an adult on the child's contact form when being collected.
- Only children in Year 6, with written parental permission, are allowed to walk home alone.
- The school site is kept secure during school hours, with external gates locked and passes required to exit external doors to the building.
- Children leaving for appointments during the school day are handed to an adult on their contact form.
- High supervision ratios at lunchtimes and playtimes, with staff strategically placed around the playground.
- Risk assessments completed prior to external visits – these include headcounts and supervision ratios and procedures.

In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing procedure is followed. This procedure is put in place to ensure that every action possible is taken to ensure the quick and safe return of any missing child to school.

Procedure

Child goes missing on the school premises

1. If a child cannot be found by their teacher, the headteacher (or other SLT) must be notified **immediately and told when and where the child was last seen**. Time is of the essence and prompt actions must be taken by all.
2. The remaining children will be left safe in the care of suitable staff. All other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the child's classroom, play areas, storage areas, toilets, the school building and the school grounds. Doors and gates will be checked to see if there has been a breach of external security.
3. If the child is not found within a short period of time, the police must be called by the headteacher or another senior staff member. Parents will then also be called.
4. Members of staff, who are not supervising children, will be sent to search the area in the immediate vicinity of the school.
5. Other staff will drive the route home.
6. Registers will be checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
7. The Headteacher notifies the Chair of Governors and the LA.
8. The Chair and SLT carry out a thorough investigation and review any necessary policies/procedures.

Child goes missing whilst on a visit

1. If a child goes missing during an outing or school visit, the teacher in charge must ensure that the remaining children are safely cared for by the other staff and adults. A headcount must be carried out to ensure no other child has gone astray.
2. A member of staff should be deployed to monitor the exit (if inside a building) and the alarm raised with the visit venue who can assist in the search.
3. A staff member must make an urgent but thorough search of the immediate vicinity and if the child is not found quickly the police must be called and the headteacher notified. Staff will act upon the advice of the police with regards to how long to remain at the venue for.
4. As soon as possible, the parents will be notified by the headteacher that their child is missing.
5. The Chair of Governors and the LA will be notified by the headteacher that a child is missing.
6. If a member of staff finds the child, the headteacher must be told at once. Parents, police and other authorities will be notified.
7. The headteacher will investigate how the incident occurred and will take appropriate action to ensure that similar events do not happen again.

The investigation

1. Headteacher to speak to the parents.
2. Chair of Governors and Headteacher, carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all staff in the area or on the visit.
3. Children to be spoken to also where relevant, including the missing child, once found.
4. The key staff member writes an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the report
 - What staff/children were in the group and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child
 - When the child was last seen and where
 - Estimated time the child went missing
 - What happened subsequently

A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach happened.

If the case warrants police investigation, all staff are to co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff and pupils.

Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely there is a child protection issue to address.

The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements; the LA may want to investigate and will decide upon next steps.

Disciplinary action may be needed.

OFSTED and the insurance provider may need to be informed.

No missing child incidents should be discussed with the press. Any enquiries should be referred to the LA press team.

Outcomes

The safety of all children will be given our highest priority. A missing child should be an extremely rare happening. This policy is designed to put into place swift and effective actions to locate any missing child and to notify and involve parents and the authorities at every appropriate point.

Monitoring and Review of this Policy

Reviewed by: Headteacher

Review date: September 2026

This policy will be monitored on an annual basis, and will be reviewed in September 2027.