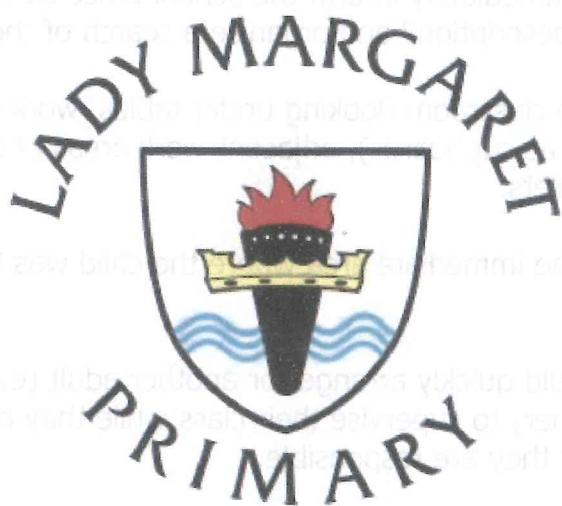

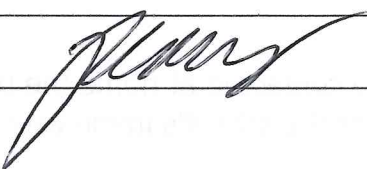


# Lady Margaret Primary School



*Where children come FIRST*

## Missing Child Procedure

Governing Body/Committee	Published	Reviewed	Next Review	Author
Learning & Teaching Committee	Nov -16	Sep-17	Sep-18	A Hancock
Author's signature				
Head teacher's signature				
Chair of Governor's signature				

## **Procedure when a child is discovered to be missing**

- 1.1. It is important that the person discovering a child is missing knows what to do. What action is taken depends on who discovers the child is missing. Therefore, the following action should be taken by the following personnel. A quick flow chart for quick reference is attached as an appendix to this policy.
- 1.2. **Classroom support staff or volunteers** must immediately notify the class teacher. They should state the name of the child and what he/she was last seen doing and where, and how long since they last saw the child. If the teacher is not available for whatever reason they must inform the school office by calling ext: 217.
- 1.3. **Class Teachers** will immediately inform the school office by calling ext 217 giving child's name, class and brief description? and organise a search of the immediate surroundings;
  - 1.3.1. **Indoors** - in the classroom (looking under tables, work surfaces and other possible hiding places such as cupboards), adjacent work areas and classrooms, nearby cloakrooms and toilets.
  - 1.3.2. **Outdoors** - in the immediate area where the child was last seen including looking under bushes etc.
  - 1.3.3. The teacher should quickly arrange for another adult (e.g. support staff or neighbouring teacher) to supervise their class while they conduct any search away from the class for which they are responsible.
  - 1.3.4. If this initial search does not find the child the teacher **must** notify the Headteacher and in her absence the Deputy Headteachers by calling the school office (ext. 217) and giving details of the missing child and the circumstances surrounding the child's disappearance.
- 1.4. **The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher** will co-ordinate a wider search of the school buildings and grounds including searching public areas in other parts of the school e.g. library areas, toilet and cloakroom areas, corridors, hall etc.
  - 1.4.1. When the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher is satisfied that the child is not on the premises they will instruct the office staff to contact the child's parents and inform them of the situation and to enquire if the child has returned home. If the child is at home the parents will be informed by telephone of the known facts surrounding the child going missing.
  - 1.4.2. If the child is not at home the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will contact the police and in consultation with the parents/police, organise a search outside of the school premises.
  - 1.4.3. If the parents cannot be contacted at home the police will be informed and a search will be organised outside of the school's immediate premises.
  - 1.4.4. If the child is not found within 30 minutes the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will inform the Chair of the Governing Body and the Local Authority of the child's disappearance.

1.4.5. Thereafter the Headteacher will follow the instructions of the police regarding the continuation of the search for the child.

- 1.5. **Lunchtime Supervisors** will immediately notify the member of the senior leadership team on lunch duty. The SMSA should state the name of the child (if known) or a description of the child (if the child's name is not known to them), what the child was last seen doing and where, and how long since they last saw the child. Thereafter they should assist with any organised search for the child or supervision of the rest of the children as directed by the Senior Midday Supervisor or the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.
- 1.6. **Office Staff** will immediately inform the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher of the missing child and then await further instructions. They will not take part in the search but will instead contact the child's parents when instructed by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher to do so and inform them of the situation and enquire if the child has returned home. They will then hand communication with the parents over to the Headteacher/deputy Headteacher unless directed otherwise by the Headteacher. If the parents cannot be contacted the office staff will, if directed to do so by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher, telephone the police, social services and Chair Governing Body to inform them of the missing child and giving them such information as they may request. The school staff, including the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher, will then continue the search as directed by the police and the office staff will continue to try to contact the child's parents.

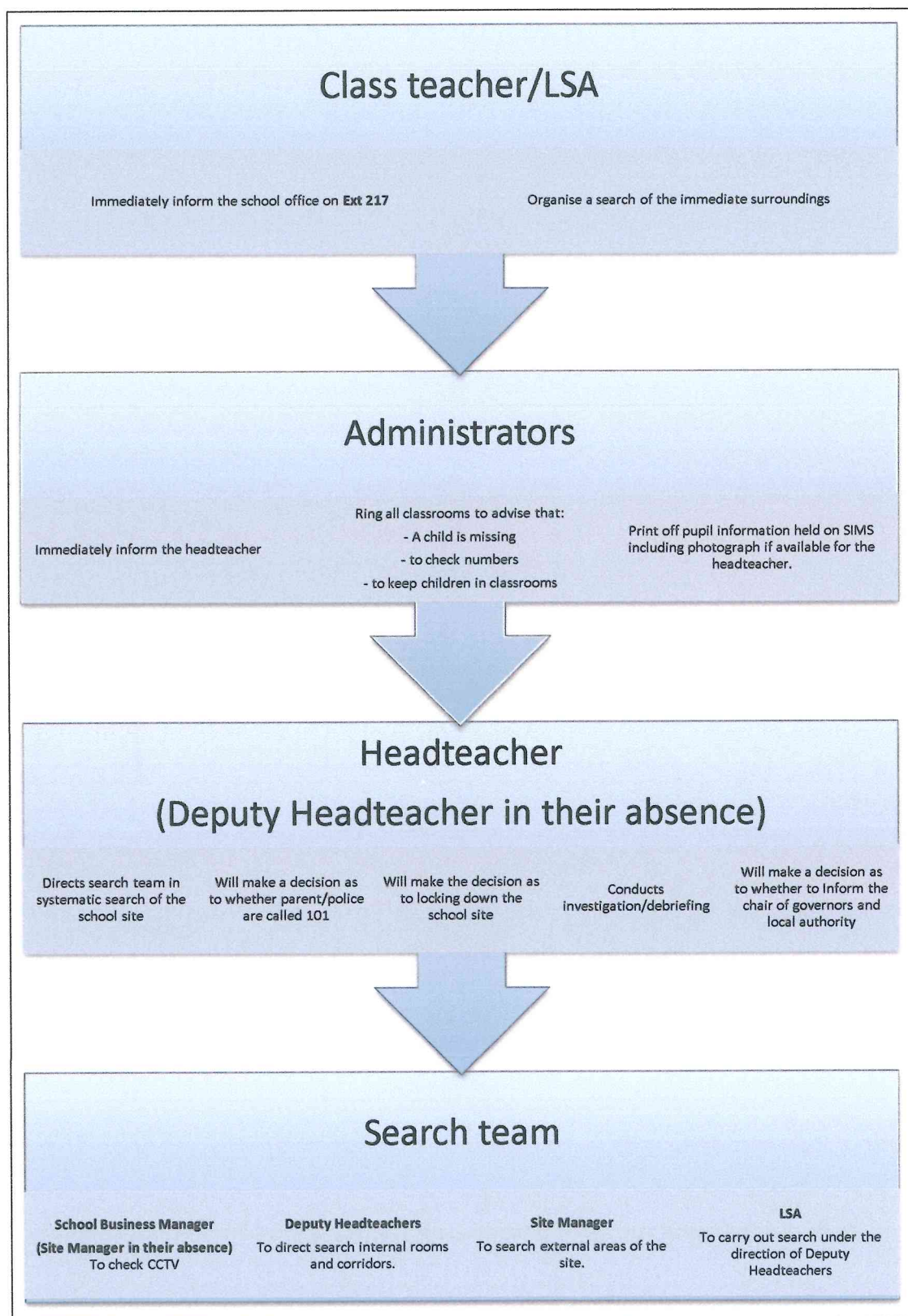
## **2. Procedure for a child seen leaving the premises**

- 2.1. If a child is seen leaving the premises, the member of staff witnessing this must immediately inform the most senior member of staff available or, if none is available, send a message to the office via a reliable messenger without losing sight of the child if possible.
- 2.2. As a general rule staff should not pursue a child beyond the school boundary. Instead they should report to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher where they last saw the child and the direction the child was heading so that this information can be communicated to the parents or police as appropriate. The member of staff should then return to their normal duties unless directed otherwise by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.
- 2.3. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for the member of staff to go beyond the school boundary, e.g. to retrieve a child who has accidentally wandered out of an open gate, or to follow/retrieve a child with special needs who has deliberately left the premises but in doing so does not understand the gravity of their action. Staff are expected to use their professional discretion in deciding whether or not it is appropriate to go beyond the school boundary in pursuance of such children.
- 2.4. Where a child is followed beyond the school boundary the member of staff must behave in a manner that is not threatening to the child. They must not run after the child as this may result in the child running off into a dangerous situation, e.g. the child might run into a road without looking out for traffic.
- 2.5. In exceptional circumstances where a child is known to be liable to run off the premises, the school may prepare and enact contingency search plans involving named staff. When enacting these plans staff should be mindful not to put themselves or the child at risk.

### **3. Investigation**

3.1. When a missing child has been located and safely returned to school, the child's family or the police, the Headteacher will conduct an investigation into the circumstances of the child going missing. This is in order to identify any factors that need to be addressed by the school or communicated to the parents to prevent a recurrence of the child going missing.

# Action to take if a child is missing



- Act swiftly – Every minute matters!
- Stay calm – Do not panic as will unsettle others.
- Confidentiality - Do not discuss details, as could compromise any investigation.
- Data Protection – CCTV footage must only be viewed by staff authorised to do so.
- Extra vigilance at vulnerable times of the day (morning registration and end of day dismissal).
- Consider the age of the child.

