

# Lady Margaret Primary School



*Where children come FIRST*

## Missing Child Procedure

<b>Approved by:</b>	Interim Head of School	<b>Date:</b> 13th September 2022
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	September 2022	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	September 2023	
<b>Signed by:</b>		

## **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 Interim Head of School and in her absence the Interim Deputy Head of School 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School** 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy

Head of School will inform the Chair of the Governing Body and the Local Authority of the child's disappearance.

1.4.5. Thereafter the Interim Head of School 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School.

1.6. **Office Staff** will immediately inform the Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School unless directed otherwise by the Interim Head of School. If the parents cannot be contacted the office staff will, if directed to do so by the Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School, 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School, 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 during school day**

**All staff are required to be extra vigilant between 8:30 – 9 and 3:10 –3:40. This is due to a number of external gates being open for start and end of day procedures.**

2.1. If a child is seen leaving the premises, the member of staff witnessing this must immediately inform the Interim Head of School or 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School 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 Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School.

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. Procedure for a child believed to have left the premises at the beginning end of school day**

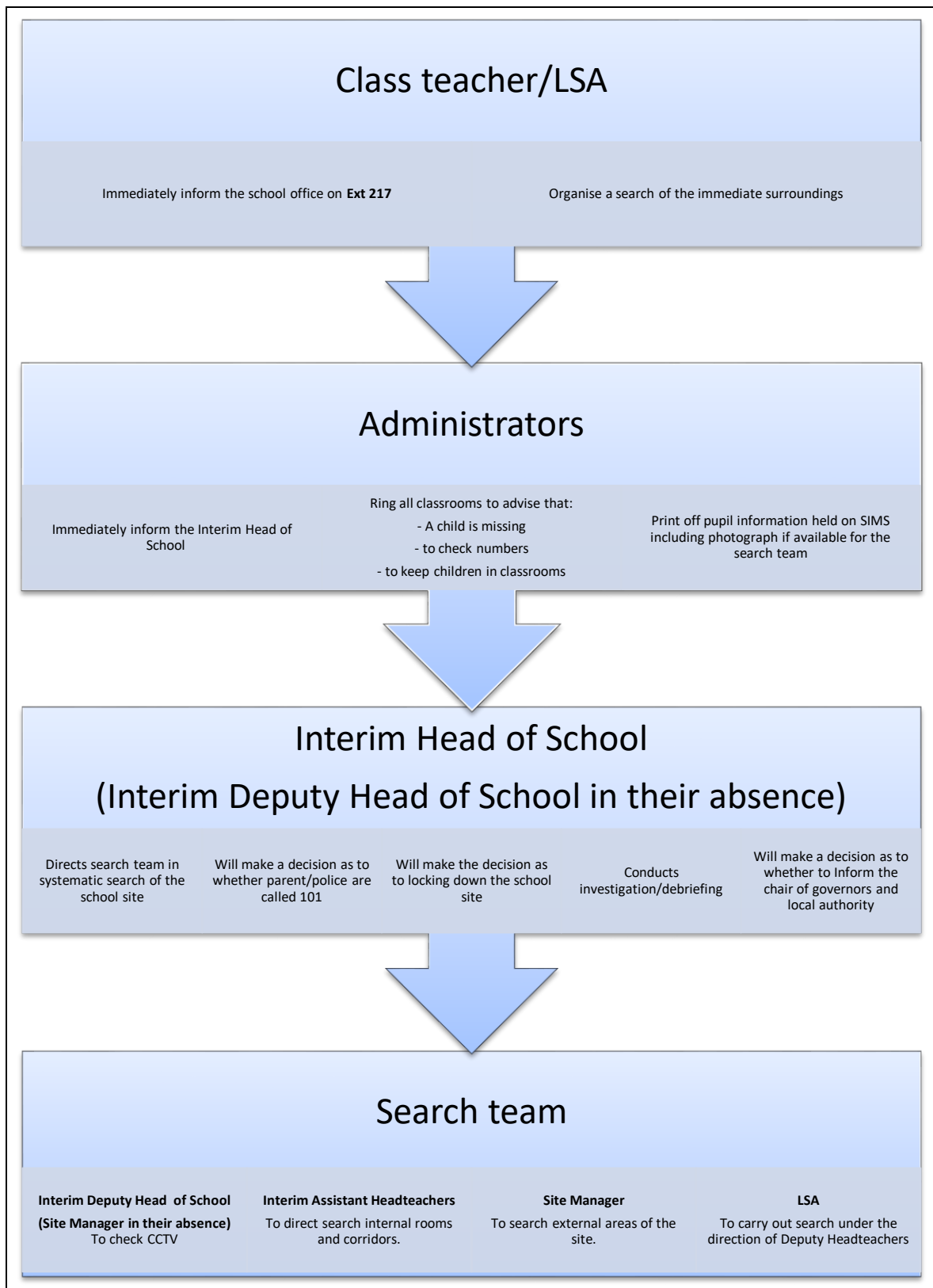
- 3.1. If a child is reported as missing by a parent/carer at the beginning or end of the school day, the member of staff involved must immediately inform the Interim Head of School or the most senior member of staff available and call/send a message to the office providing the child's name, age, class, where the child was seen last, what the child was wearing and how long it has been since the child was last seen.
- 3.2. The teacher/LSA should quickly arrange for another adult (e.g., support staff or neighbouring teacher) to supervise their class while they escort the parent/carer to the training room, they must stay with the parent until relieved by a senior member of staff.
- 3.3. **Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School** will collect radio and go immediately to the pedestrian gate on Lady Margaret Road and direct staff to cover exits to Windermere Road and Cornwall Ave.
- 3.4. Confirm with the office that the child was seen leaving the playground.
- 3.5. If it is unclear that the child has left the school site direct all available staff to systematically check the building starting with the late room, afterschool clubs and any boosters. If the child is found notify the search team via the 2-way radio and escort the child to the training room.
- 3.6. Following confirmation that the child has left the school site a call will be made to establish whether the child has made their way home.
- 3.7. If the child is not at home the Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School will contact the police and in consultation with the parents/police, coordinate a search outside of the school premises.
- 3.8. If the child is not found within 30 minutes the Interim Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School will inform the Chair of the Governing Body and the Local Authority of the child's disappearance.
- 3.9. Thereafter the Interim Head of School will follow the instructions of the police regarding the continuation of the search for the child.
- 3.10. **Site manager** will remain in their safeguarding position at the main pedestrian gate if the child is found, keep them with them and notify search team via 2-way radio.
- 3.11. **Interim Assistant Headteachers** will go immediately to the pedestrian gates, 1 to Windermere Road and 1 to Cornwall Avenue to try and prevent the child leaving the school site. If duty SLT are not available 2 admin to cover the gates until relieved by senior staff. If the child is found notify the search team via 2-way radio and escort them to the training room.

- 3.12. **Receptionist/Interim Deputy Head of School** will review CCTV camera 08 and confirm, if possible, with the Interim Head of School that the child has left the playground. When instructed by the Head of School/Interim Deputy Head of School they will call the child's home number to enquire if the child has made their way there.
- 3.13. Where a child is found beyond the school boundary the member of staff must notify the search team via 2-way radio and escort them back into school to the training room.
- 3.14. All staff involved in the search must behave in a manner that is non-threatening to the child. They must not run after the child as this may result in the child running off into a more dangerous situation.

#### 4. **Investigation**

When a missing child has been located and safely returned to school, the child's family or the police, the Interim Head of School 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 during the hours of 9am-3pm



**Action to take if a child is missing during the times 8:30 – 9 and 3-3:30 when the external gates are open**

**Notify a member of the office team immediately by calling 217**

**Sharon Lambrias to remain in the office and notify a member of SLT immediately.**

**Bhavna Wadhera and Rikki Mangat to immediately make their way to the main gates.**

**Senior staff to notify staff on duty on gate A/D to be notified to be vigilant over using the radios.**

**All senior staff to make their way to the gates.**

**The priority during these times is to make sure the external exits are vigilantly manned.**

Act swiftly – Every minute matters!

Stay calm – Do not panic as it will unsettle others.

Confidentiality - Do not discuss details, as it 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.

**All staff on gate duty must have a working radio.**

**All senior staff must have a working radio**