



## **Missing Child Policy**

### **Introduction**

The welfare of all of our children at King's College Alicante is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that he or she has a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. Our staffing ratios are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that he or she is in our care, whilst providing freedom and opportunity for recreation on the School site. (See our **Whole School Supervision Policy**).

### **Missing Children**

It should be noted that a missing child could potentially be at risk of abuse or neglect. We are alert to that possibility and will notify all relevant authorities if it is deemed necessary (**as outlined in our Safeguarding policy**).

King's College Alicante Early Years Foundation Stage is included in the Missing Child Policy and Procedures with the whole School.

The indoors and outdoors premises are safe and secure. The outside play areas are fenced in and the children are supervised at all times. The staff have relevant qualifications and are present in adequate numbers for safe supervision and more staff are available nearby. Duty staff have appropriate induction on supervision and also talk to the children to remind them of our playtime rules. No one unauthorised must be able to enter the school premises and steps are taken to prevent intruders entering the premises. There are security systems in place such as signing in/out procedures and name badges for visitors. Any staff, parent or child arriving and departing outside the usual times is recorded in a separate signing in/out book. All adults in the building must wear an appropriate lanyard.

The children are only released into the care of individuals named by the parents. Except where there is reasonable excuse, written permission from parents is requested where children are to be picked up by another adult. If this is not possible then parents should telephone the school office.

### **Actions to be followed by Staff if a Child Goes Missing**

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions (with a record kept of each action):



- Inform the Head of Primary and the Head of Secondary (both Level 3 trained in Safeguarding), the Headteacher, DSL and other members of SLT on site.
- Check the register in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- Check the pupil records of the missing child for any relevant details that might have a bearing on the situation (e.g. any court orders in place against either parent, the medical condition of the child etc.)
- The office staff should check the signing out book.
- Ask adults (including form/class teacher, recent teacher, Music teachers and Sports Department).
- Ask the children in the missing child's class, calmly, if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child and whether the child was happy or unhappy.
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom as normal.
- At the same time, arrange for as many staff as possible to carry out a thorough search, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, including cupboards and toilets where a child might hide. Changing rooms should be checked and staff should be sent into the grounds. The caretakers should be asked to assist.
- Ensure that searchers are equipped with mobile phones or walkie-talkies. Note the name of those involved in the search.
- A fire drill might be held to ensure that he/she is not on the site. If the child is still missing after 20 minutes, the following steps would be taken:
- The Head of Primary, Head of Secondary, Headteacher or DSL will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. The Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead will notify the Police (after 20 minutes of the child being missing) and take advice.
- The Headteacher will arrange for staff to further search the rest of the School premises and grounds.
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff would set out on foot or in a car to attempt to catch up with him/her and staff will drive along the main roads to check.
- The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- If the child remains missing, the School would inform:
- The King's Group CEO.
- A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. Witnesses would be interviewed and asked to provide written statements. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.



### **Actions to be followed by Staff if a Child goes missing on an Outing**

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity.
- One adult would retrace steps to the last place where the child was seen, the remaining children staying in one place with the other staff.
  
- If the child was not located, the remaining children would be taken back to school, or arrangements would be made with the School.
- Inform the Headteacher and the DSL by mobile phone.
- After 20 minutes of the child being missing, ask the Headteacher, DSL or Head of Primary and Head of Secondary to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Discuss with them whether they should come to the location or wait at the School.
- Contact the venue Manager and arrange a search if in a building or on a site such as a garden / castle etc.
- If the child is still missing after contacting the parents then contact the Police (up to 30 minutes of the child being missing).
- The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- If the child was not quickly found the School would inform:
  - The King's Group CEO.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

### **Actions to be followed by Staff once the Child is Found**

- The Headteacher / DSL will contact the parents and any emergency services involved.
- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child. Counselling may be necessary and it may be best for the child to remain in the sick bay or to go home.
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- Inform all staff, and police if necessary involved in the search that the child has been found.
- The Headteacher, Head of Primary or Head of Secondary will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Headteacher will promise a full investigation



- Media queries should be referred to the Headteacher.
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
  
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appears to have happened, [the purpose of the outing], the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appears to have gone missing, lessons for the future.

### **Procedures to be followed when a child is not collected**

If a child is not collected at the end of the school day/after an extracurricular activity, then the child will be taken to the library. At 6.00pm at the end of the After School Care, the children will be taken to the school office where a member of SLT will supervise. If the child has not been collected within fifteen minutes (by 6.15pm), we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers. If there is no answer, the School office or member of staff will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after. If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers the Headteacher/Deputy Head will:

- Make emergency arrangements for the child (either staying at school, if the School is open or arranging for other care, perhaps with friends)
- Telephone the Police to inform them of the situation; their guidance should then be followed.
- We will make a full written report of the incident.

### **Procedures to be followed by staff when finding a child unsupervised in school**

On discovering a child wandering around the School premises without supervision or in suspicious circumstances:

- ASK where they are going/where they are supposed to be.
- ACCOMPANY the child to the care of a responsible adult. It is not advisable to send them to another unsupervised place unless you are to join them directly. The School Office is generally the most suitable place, as checks may be made by phone on where the child should be.

Early Years Foundation Stage children should always be under supervision of a member of staff when moving around the School site. The exception is during playtime when a Reception child may be accompanied by another Reception child to the toilet. The staff on duty will be aware of any children that have visited either of these locations and will monitor the length of time that they are there. In the event that the children do not return then a member of staff will investigate and decide if further action is required.



## **Missing Children from Education (Guidance taken from 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2016)**

The School takes its duty of care to the children very seriously and acknowledges that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. In the event of non-attendance of a child, we follow the attendance policy for dealing with unauthorised absence and for children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. An appropriate Child Protection policy, procedure and response for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions is in place. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage. This is covered in our school's Child Protection policy, safeguarding training and updates for staff.

<b>Created and Reviewed by :</b>	<b>Policy Category:</b>
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