



Gatten and Lake Primary School
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Missing Child Policy

January 2026

Signed:

Headteacher: Mrs Rebecca Day

Date: 29/01/26

Signed:

Chair of Governors: Mr Dave Smithers

Date: 29/01/26

Review Date: January 2027

Statement of intent

In the unlikely event that a child is noted to be missing from school premises, the school puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the most effective resolution of this potentially distressing situation. Many of our school routines and procedures are in place to contribute to the prevention of a child going missing and to ensure the safety and security of all children at all times.

Aim

This policy will inform all stakeholders of the school's procedures in the unlikely event that a child is missing so that they will be reassured that in a missing child emergency, appropriate actions have been considered and are familiar to all staff and adults working with children. We will make an immediate search for the child; families and Authorities are notified at the appropriate stage and a high level of care is maintained to other children at the school while procedures are followed. Updated contact information for families is sought and maintained regularly.

Procedures aimed at reducing the risk of a child going missing:

Start of the day

All classrooms are staffed by the teacher / cover teacher/ HLTA as the main pupil entrance gates are opened at the allocated times.

Families take children around the perimeter of the school to classrooms and children leave parents and enter cloakrooms / classrooms and begin their school day.

The staff mark registers promptly and accurately; following the Attendance Policy both in the morning and in the afternoon.

The main pupil entrance gate is locked at the time specified in the Attendance Policy.

Any pupil arriving after the gate has been locked enters through the main school entrance and is marked in by office staff, then directed to the classroom (KS2) or taken to classroom EYFS or KS1.

When registers are submitted to the office (electronically), attendance is monitored. Children who are absent without a reason are listed and a phone call is made to the parent/carer. The parent/carer of any child who is listed as travelling to school independently are phoned first as a matter of priority.

During Lesson Time

Staff ensure that internal access gates are shut when children are playing outside (EYFS).

Adult supervision takes place at all times in classrooms or when working outside or when working in more fluid spaces or the learning street around the school sites.

Playtime

Children are escorted out to play by staff ensuring any adults are on duty in the appropriate playground.

Staff are on the playground before the children come onto the playground.

All external gates are locked – ensuring safe boundaries are in place.

There is an adequate number of staff on duty.

Children exit the playground and go through external doors back to their classrooms. Teachers / Teaching Assistants are in the class ready for the children's return to ensure safety at all times. There is no moment for possible supervision not being staffed.

Lunchtime

Children are escorted to the dining hall, lunch club or out to play in EYFS / KS1 by staff ensuring adults are on duty in the appropriate playground, with some level of independence in KS2.

Staff are on the playground before the children come onto the playground. Staff swap duties at varying times – staff coming on duty, replace those leaving duty. Ratio needs to be maintained throughout the lunchbreak.

All external gates are locked – ensuring safe boundaries are in place.

There is an adequate number of staff on duty.

Children leave the dining hall independently, return to the cloakroom to put lunchbox away, collect coat and access the school/playground.

A whistle is blown for children to line up – the class teacher collects the children from the playground and walks them safely to the classroom.

KS2 children exit playground and go through cloakroom doors to the classroom. Teachers / Teaching Assistants in class ready for the children's return to ensure safety at all times.

Home Time

The external gate is opened daily 5 minutes before home time to allow access for families to walk around the perimeter of the school.

Children leave school from their cloakroom / classroom doors.

Children in EYFS and KS1 are collected by their families from the external classroom door. A member of staff is on duty and children are only dismissed when a safe adult is seen for the children. Please see the Collecting Children from school Policy.

At Gatten & Lake:

Children in Y3 are permitted to walk to the front gate if permission is given, via an online form.

Children in Y4, Y5, Y6 are permitted to walk independently, if requests have been received by parents and then agreed by school. Requests are submitted via online form and safeguarding checks are undertaken.

At Greenmount:

Children in Y5 & Y6 are permitted to walk independently, if requests have been received by parents and then agreed by school.

Children travelling by taxi are escorted by a member of staff to the taxi.

Class teachers inform children if they are attending the paid afterschool club or an after school club organised by the school. Children attending a club in EYFS and Key Stage 1 are taken by a member of staff and children in KS2 are allowed to make their own way to a club.

After 10 minutes, any children who are left in the school's care but this is not planned, are taken to the main entrance to wait with a member of staff or they may be taken to the paid after school club, for supervision until a parent or guardian arrives. This is charged to the parents / carers. Safeguarding processes and phone calls are made by the office team or safeguarding team to ascertain the collection arrangements and next steps for the child.

Educational Visits

Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff / child ratios are provided when children leave the school premises. A copy of all risk assessments are stored on Evolve.

Regular head counts will take place during the visit.

Adequate communication contact and a list of children / groups to be taken on visits out of school. This is included as part of the Evolve Risk Assessment procedure.

Mobile phones are taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school, with the exception of residential visits, where all contact details are with the visit leader as well as the Headteacher.

After school clubs

A register of children is completed each week for each club. Clubs lists are updated each morning, alongside the attendance marks, noting if a child is absent from school, so each club list is up to date.

Following the register completion at the start of the club the register is taken to the Admin Assistant at the office, who double checks the registers. If a child cannot be located at a club, the Admin Assistant will begin the Missing Child procedures (see below).

Families are to collect their children from the location notified to parents / carers at the start of the club, usually from the closest location to where the club is being held. This may sometimes be the man office area.

Procedures in the event of a child going missing

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while at school:

All available staff to immediately check toilets, school corridors / learning street (as appropriate), classrooms, other classrooms spaces, medical room and playgrounds to ensure child is not hiding or locked in anywhere.

One member of staff to immediately inform school office and Headteacher and check whether the child has been signed out for an external appointment or has an internal appointment with a visiting professional (School Nurse/Speech Therapist etc) and then collect register.

Staff will promptly but calmly gather all children. Children will be counted and name-checked against the register. This is to confirm that one named child is missing.

AT THE SAME TIME all other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and notify the Headteacher or SLT if the child is found immediately.

If this is completed without resolution (no more than 10 minutes), school office staff will contact the police and parents/carers with parental responsibility. At this point school will support the police who will now lead the response to this incident. The Headteacher will liaise with emergency services and parents/carers.

The safety and care of other children is paramount so the security of the school and the number of staff remaining to supervise the other children in the school must be adequately maintained while the search continues.

Nominated staff members may be allocated to search the proximity outside of the school grounds and to the child's address, as appropriate.

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off school premises:

Visit leader must ensure safety of remaining children.

One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.

Visit leader should immediately make contact with the school to alert them.

If the child is not found within the immediate vicinity and in the initial search the visit leader **must** contact police by phoning 999.

The visit leader should alert school that the police have been contacted and school will make arrangements to notify families.

An individual plan will be made based on the location and visit the children are engaging with.

Investigation

If a child goes missing, an investigation must be subsequently carried out.

The Headteacher should communicate the incident to the Safeguarding Governor and as appropriate the Local Authority.

A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon after the incident as practicable and placed in the pupil's confidential record.

The Senior Leadership Team should conduct an internal investigation to establish how the situation occurred, how effective was the response and whether action could be taken to ensure it does not happen again.

This policy to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Missing in Education Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Collecting Children from school Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Single Equalities Policy
- Education Off-site Policy and risk assessment procedures
- Walking to school Policy