



# NORTHWOOD COLLEGE

FOR GIRLS

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G D S T

## MISSING CHILD POLICY EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

### INTRODUCTION

The welfare of all of our girls at Northwood College for Girls 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 girls safe at all times. Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that she is in our care.

### PURPOSE

In the very unlikely incident that a girl is found to be missing from school, the purpose of this document is to set out how the school will, as quickly as possible, locate the missing child, return them to safe custody, inform the relevant parties of the situation and invoke a review of the incident.

### INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Our "Information for Parents of Junior School and Early Years Children" outlines the relevant school arrangements and procedures:

- The arrangements for the beginning and end of the school day
- Registration times and procedure if late
- If a parent would like to collect their daughter earlier from school, then they must sign in at Wray Lodge
- If someone other than the authorised person comes to collect a girl from school, the form teacher or school secretary will always contact the parents via phone for authorisation
- Lesson timings
- The role of our staff and the arrangements for supervising the children whilst they are in school
- The arrangements for registering the girls for morning, afternoon and after school care facility. If a girl is not collected by parents or carers by 3.40pm then she is escorted by staff to the after school; Super Clubs where they are signed in if there is space.
- Girls in Bluebelle House are walked by their parent/carer to the classroom door where they are met by Bluebelle House staff
- During the school day girls are supervised around the school site either with the teacher and/or TA

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- At the end of the school day, girls are collected from their classroom door by their parent/carer. The Teacher will record who collects each child on their end of day register. This will include whether they have gone to a club, to Siblings, or to Super Clubs
- The keypad security measures prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the Bluebelle House
- The supervision of the playground and the physical barriers that separate it from the rest of the school
- School gates are secured after morning drop-off

#### **Girls**

- Northwood College has a comprehensive Pastoral programme.
- All forms discuss class rules and these are displayed in class.
- Girls are made aware of rules for the playground and girls are counted back into the building after lunch, when afternoon registration takes place.
- Girls are supervised when moving around both Bluebelle House and the school site.

#### **ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL**

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:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- Inform the Junior Head/Head.
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child.
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s)
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the Bluebelle House, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms and spaces where a small child might hide.
- Check the doors and gates for signs of entry/exit.
- If the child is still missing, staff should follow the Missing Pupil Procedures.

#### **MISSING PUPIL PROCEDURE**

**During the school day** – upon discovering that a child is missing from their form or any other supervised activity during the school day; the following procedures should be activated:

- Head of Junior School should be informed and an incident form opened (see Appendix A) and the time recorded.
- Classmates and friends should be asked of the child's whereabouts and any relevant information noted. Also, where and when the child was last seen.
- A check made with the appropriate Form Teacher and/or register.
- A check with the school office for any further information which may have arisen as the result of a recent phone call to explain the absence.

A thorough search of the school premises will be organised and coordinated by the Head of Junior School, who will inform the relevant Form Teachers of the child's disappearance.

A base will be made in the Junior School Office from which the search will be coordinated, and will include the assistance of the grounds and maintenance staff via the two way radios. The Head of Junior School will decide on search areas for appropriate staff. This search should be concluded within half

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an hour of the initial report of absence. The designated Child Protection Officer (JFE/ HCR) will extract personal files on the child, and a recent photograph, if available, they will then contact parents, the police and the Local Children Safeguarding Board to inform them of the situation. Trust Office should also be informed. Once the police arrive, formal responsibility for the search will pass to the police, but the Head of Junior School will ensure that the school staff make themselves appropriately available to assist further with the incident. The School would cooperate fully with any investigations. The Head of Junior School will then inform Ofsted in the case of a pupil missing from the Foundation Stage.

#### **ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON A TRIP**

Staff would refer to the GDST Educational Visits Incident and Emergency Management card provided with the mobile phone (see appendix B)

#### **ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND**

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- The Head of the Junior School will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident. A full investigation will take place. 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 appeared to have happened, [the purpose of the outing], the length of time that the child was missing and how she appeared to have gone missing. Lessons for the future should be considered and procedures adjusted accordingly.

**Appendix A:**

**Incident Form**

Date:	
Name of Missing Pupil:	
Time Pupil Went Missing	
Age:	
Parents Names:	
Emergency Telephone No:	
Form Teacher:	
Person Reporting Missing:	
Place Where Pupil Was Last Seen:	
Apparent Reason for Disappearance (if known)	

**Outcome:**

Pupil Found by:	
Date and Time:	
Full Details of Location:	
Visual Assessment of Pupils Mental Health and Mental State	
Reaction of Parent/Guardian:	

**Signature of Person Finding the Pupil:**

.....

**Please Print Name:**

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Appendix B:



## **Educational Visits Incident and Emergency Management Card and Checklist**

### **Emergency Procedures**

#### **General principles**

- Ensure that all adults supervising the group are briefed in how to respond to a serious incident, accident, injury medical or missing person(s) emergency.
- Ensure that the whereabouts of pupil/participant medical details and trip insurance details are known to all adults supervising the group.
- Manage communication effectively and record and or write events and actions down.

#### **Medical Emergency/Accident Procedure 'Ten Point Plan'**

**1. Secure scene and safety of others-** take steps to prevent further injury to members of your group and others in the vicinity. Enlist others to help you and give first aid.

**2. Contact Emergency services** - advise who, where and when, then contact tour operator. Ensure you know the number for emergency services in the country you are visiting e.g. 999 UK, 112 Europe, 911 USA.

**3.** Sort out documentation that might be required, pupil medical details, insurance, consent forms, EHIC if applicable.

**4.** Arrange transport and staff supervision for both casualty(s) and rest of group.

**5.** Ensure you know where ambulance/ helicopter/ mountain rescue team are taking casualty(s) ideally member of staff to accompany but consider the needs of the remaining members of the group.

**6.** Contact school base /contact- who will inform parents. Manage communication by rest of group; explain why you do not want pupils to phone home or use face-book, twitter, Instagram or other social media.

**7.** Notify British Embassy/Consulate if abroad.

**8 If contacted by media** - Don't name the casualty or give other than brief factual information to them, after liaising with the base contact.

**9.** Record in writing- nature, date and time of incident, location of incident; names of casualty(s) and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action

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taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom). Wherever possible take photographs to record the scene and events.

**10.** No one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the school and GDST.

### **Missing Person Procedure**

- 1.** Make a plan with all supervising staff- have specific times to meet and review do not rely on mobile phones.
- 2.** Manage and brief the rest of the group.
- 3.** Inform hotel or accommodation provider, tour operator, activity centre as (relevant).
- 4.** Inform local emergency services.
- 5.** Ensure a system of communication between staff and local base.
- 6.** Contact school base /contact- who will inform parents. Manage communication by rest of group; explain why you do not want pupils to phone home or use face-book, twitter, Instagram or other social media.
- 7.** Notify British Embassy/Consulate if abroad.

**Then follow previous steps 8, 9 and 10 if applicable.**

#### **Safeguarding concerns:**

If you have a serious concern about the safety of a student on your visit, please try to contact the designated safeguarding lead. If you are unable to contact them, contact your SLT emergency contact and ask advice. You should consider making a referral directly to your Local Authorities Children's services.

**Contact with media (Dos and Don'ts)** Be clear and concise, avoid conjecture and apportioning blame, remember **ABC and D's**

Sympathy – for those involved and their families.

**A)** Praise – for those undertaking rescue/incident control.

**B)** Promise – full investigation/co-operation with other agencies.

**C)** Do not

- Do not reply to 'why' and 'how' questions.
- Do not name individuals – explain that names will not be released until next of kin have been informed.
- Don't say 'no comment' – explain i.e. above reasons why you cannot comment and if possible, state when an update will be provided and by whom.

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When informing your school base contact they will require the following information. **Remember to agree a time and means of next/further contact.**

- Time and date, also time at incident site if overseas in different time zone.
- Contact name, phone number and e-mail of liaison person in the group.
- Contact location.
- Nature of incident, date, time and location.
- Brief description of incident.
- Names of individuals involved (double check contact details)
- Current situation, survivors, fatalities, hospitalised, missing.
- Authorities/agencies involved e.g. Police, Embassy if abroad.
- Consult copy of school critical incident/disaster recovery policy held at school for further guidance.

## **Notes**

### **Golden rules of crisis communications**

- Communicate fully and frequently within the school/base team so decisions are based on full facts.
- Bear in mind the four Cs: clarity, concern, convince you're in charge, and commitment to action.
- Be open, honest and visible. Be human.
- Acknowledge the problem and take ownership.
- Take the rough with the smooth.
- You can't control what media or others write, or how people respond; you can only control what you say and do.

### **Example of a suitable comment to press (adapt to circumstances)**

- Our sympathy and concern is with everyone involved.
- You will understand that our priorities are with our girls and that we are doing everything that we can to reunite the children with their parents.
- I would like to praise the support given by the emergency services at this very difficult time.
- We are keeping all parties informed.
  - You will understand if I have no further comment to make at this time.

## **MISSING CHILD POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **If a pupil is found to be missing on a trip**

1. The missing pupil should be identified using the photographs in the trip booklets and the last known sighting recorded. Where appropriate the group leader should ring the pupil's mobile phone.
2. The pre-arranged rendezvous point must be checked.
3. The lead member of staff will arrange for the other pupils to be supervised. The pupils should be asked calmly if they have seen the missing pupil. The last head count location will be verified.
4. Representatives of the venue will be informed and asked to assist in a systematic search to see if the pupil can be located in the surrounding area.
5. The school office will be contacted, checked for messages and the Head, the Deputy Head Pupil Well-Being or Head of Junior School informed.
6. A systematic search of the wider environs will be co-ordinated by the Lead staff member utilising all resources available. The Head, Deputy Head Pupil Well-Being or Head of Junior School will decide if additional staffing resources can/should be provided to assist.
7. The Deputy Head or Head of Junior School will inform the Head who will inform:
  - a) The parents – when she is satisfied that a thorough search has been undertaken. A time of approximately 30 minutes should have elapsed before this step is taken. If the parents can be contacted they should be asked for any information of anywhere else their daughter may make her way to e.g. relatives, grandparents and friends.
  - b) With the agreement of a member of Leadership, the party leader should contact the local police.
  - c) The Chairman of Governors.

### **Record of Events**

A record of the events must be kept by the Deputy Head Pupil Well-Being or Head of Junior School. This must include:

- Date, time and location of disappearance.
- Who was responsible for the care of the pupil at the time.
- What the pupil was wearing.
- Any distinguishing features.
- Circumstances surrounding disappearance.
- An accurate record of the timescale of events and when parents and emergency services were contacted.
- Subsequently, details of what happened and any changes to procedures required as a result.

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