



*Nourishing the fitrah of each unique child*

## Missing Child Policy

*"Indeed, to Allaah we belong and indeed to Him we shall return."*  
(Surah Baqarah, The Cow, 2:156)

Adopted: December 2021	Review date: December 2022	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Hawwa Mbombo Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Sana Khan
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Adopted: December 2021

Review: December 2022

## Missing Child Policy

Unique Academy takes the safety of children very seriously and will take every precaution necessary to ensure that the children in their care do not leave a lesson, or the school premises, unaccompanied. The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is soon discovered. 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 ensuring the safety and security of all children at all times.

If, in the event of a member of staff not being able to account for a child's whereabouts, the following action will be taken:

### Procedure If A Child Leaves The School Unaccompanied:

#### Stage One - Search systematically

- One member of staff to gather the whole class and call the register to confirm that one named child is missing. They will ensure that all other pupils are kept safe and closely supervised throughout incident should it be during the school day. Calm should be kept in the event of a child reported missing at the end of the school day.
- All other available staff to immediately check toilets, rooms, the first and second floors of the premises as well as the entire external premises grounds to ensure the child is not hiding or locked in anywhere.
- One member of staff to immediately inform school administrator and the Headteacher, or the member of staff in charge, and check whether the child has been signed out for an external appointment or has an internal appointment with a visiting professional (e.g. Speech Therapist etc)

#### Stage Two

- After stage one is completed without resolution (no more than 10 minutes), the school administrator will contact the police and parents/carers with parental responsibility. At this point, the school will support the police who will now lead the response to this incident. The Headteacher will liaise with emergency services and parents/carers.
- Staff will call registers in all classes to confirm presence of other pupils, if the event is during the school day.

#### Stage Three

- The Headteacher should communicate the incident to the appropriate Local Authority Office and the Trustees.

- 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. This record should be made using the template provided in the appendix. All staff should input any relevant information; including conversations with parents, carers, child minders, police, the Local Authority and any other person they feel has contributed to the collection of evidence on the form.
- The SLT 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 information should also be included in the form.

At Unique Academy, we will ensure that:

- We make regular checks to ensure that if an incident of this sort does happen, we have all the necessary phone numbers at hand – correct, up to date and kept together.
- If the police are called then the Hounslow Safeguarding Children's Board are also informed.
- If the Headteacher is not on the premises, she/he will be informed as soon as possible via the school administrator or SLT.
- We will provide the following information to Hounslow Safeguarding Children's Board:
  - What happened?
  - What systems are in place for preventing such occurrences?
  - What we did, at what time and in what order.
  - Who we informed and when.
  - We will cooperate fully in any investigation.
  - Recording
- We will start to build a record as soon as is possible in the incident log, this will include:
  - The last definite sighting of the child.
  - Any unusual behaviour of the missing child or other children.
  - How many children were on the premises?
  - How many adults were on the premises and who?
  - What steps have been taken and when, by whom.

### **Dealing With People's Reactions**

We accept that the child's parents/carers will be frightened, distressed and angry. The school will share all procedures with parents/carers, which will be easier for all because there will be an understanding of working within a framework of mutual trust and understanding.

We accept that in such circumstances powerful emotions are involved and people's behaviour can be unpredictable. Those who may seem quite calm about the incident at the time can later become angry, threaten legal action or approach the local press.

We will be clear about the circumstances surrounding the incident and will respond sympathetically to questions without implications or admission of responsibility.

### ***Responses could include***

- How sorry we are that the incident has happened.
- That a full investigation is in hand.
- That the Police and Hounslow Safeguarding Children's Board has been informed and will be investigating.

### **Dealing With The Media**

Distressed parents/carers may contact the local press, or reporters may hear about the incident if the police are involved. In this case, the school will appoint a legal representative to speak on behalf of the school. All adults will be asked to refer all enquiries to the agreed spokesperson.

### **When The Child Is Found**

At Unique Academy, we recognise that during the time a child is missing, however briefly, all involved, parents/carers and others suffer great fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when the child is found.

We will accept that it is important to remember:

- That the child also might have been afraid and distressed and might now be in need of comfort.
- Remain calm, reassure the child and acknowledge it is not the child's fault.
- Ensure the child is not hurt.
- That the incident provides a good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure that they understand that they must not leave the premises, and why.

After the Incident:

- We will review our current procedure.
- We will evaluate processes and make necessary adjustments to ensure future effectiveness.

### **Contacts**

Police – Telephone: 999

Hounslow Safeguarding Children's Board-Telephone: 0208 583 3068. Office hours: 0208 583 3068. After 5pm weekdays or weekends, call 020 8583 2222 and ask to speak to the duty social worker.



## Incident Log

<b>Record completed by:</b> Name: Address:  Postcode: Job title: Tel:		<b>Person involved in incident:</b> Name: Address:  Postcode: Tel:	
<b>Details of incident:</b> Date:		Time:	
<b>Where did the incident occur?</b>			
<b>Describe the events:</b>			
<b>Witnesses:</b>			
<b>Other comments:</b>			
<b>What actions were taken?</b>			
<b>Record completed by:</b> <i>(Signature)</i>		<b>Record read by:</b> <i>(Signature of parent or carer)</i>	
<b>Date:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

*This form should be filed with individual child records*