

Egerton Rothesay School

MISSING CHILD POLICY AND UNCOLLECTED CHILD PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

At Egerton Rothesay School, the safety and welfare of each and every child is our highest priority. We take a variety of precautions to ensure that our children are accounted for at all times when in our care, including registration, close supervision and ongoing risk assessment. All staff and parents on site are responsible for keeping children safe.

PRECAUTIONS TAKEN

- The Poplar school gates are always kept closed and locked unless manned.
- The school pupil-entrance gate is manned by staff at drop-off and collection times.
- A camera video recording system allows our office staff to view the gated main entrance, so that they can permit or decline entry, and can monitor the side gate and back PE entrance.
- A register is taken at all external clubs, trips and activities
- Each child is registered first thing in the morning and during the afternoon period 7 by a member of staff, usually the Form Tutor.
- Staff maintain the appropriate high level of supervision throughout lessons and are aware of the location of the pupils in their care at all times.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are appropriately supervised with duty logs completed.
- On external trips the staff to child ratio is met and regular roll calls are taken.
- Younger children are handed over to their parents at the end of the day. Children leaving by bus are supervised.
- Parents are required to inform their teacher in advance if their child is being collected by another parent with an authorisation form kept in reception or direct contact with reception on the day.
- Parents are required to introduce teachers and office staff to any family member not known by the school who they would like to collect their child and submit the authorised collection form. Parents are advised that identification may need to be seen.
- Parents are asked to provide the following specific information:
 - ✓ Home address and telephone number (if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative) plus a second contact number is required in case the parent is unavailable.
 - ✓ Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable).
 - ✓ Mobile telephone number (if applicable).
 - ✓ Alternative contact details if for any reason the usual contact numbers are not applicable.
 - ✓ Full names, addresses, telephone numbers and photographic ID of adults who are authorised by the parent to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
 - ✓ Name of parent responsible for the child.
 - ✓ Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.

PROCESSES FOR A MISSING CHILD IN SCHOOL

In the unlikely event that a child cannot be accounted for in school:

Immediate action

- The member of staff will report immediately to a senior member of staff; Allan Cairns (Head) or a member of the senior management team (Stephen Potts, Lesley Clifton, Jo Buckland, Sarah Vest (DSL), Ingrid Holt (DDSL), Jane Wyton, Gregers Forssling, Rosie Abbot, Nana Osei or Emma Allum)

- Stephen Potts (Business Manager) has responsibility for immediately checking that the front door and gate are secured.

Within ten minutes

- The senior staff member and child's teacher will begin an immediate and thorough search of the building and grounds for a maximum of 15 minutes.
- If the child cannot be located, the senior member of staff will initiate an evacuation (fire) drill, after which each teacher will take a register of their own class.
- If the missing child has not been found, a senior member of staff will dial 999 and ask for the police, before contacting the parents to notify them of the situation. Staff will continue to search the site and will extend their search to the area outside school.
- On the police's arrival, the formal responsibility of the search will pass to the police but the school staff will make themselves appropriately available to assist with the incident.

EXTERNAL TRIPS

In the unlikely event that a child cannot be accounted for whilst on a school trip please follow these procedures (also refer to the Educational Visits section in our Health and Safety Policy):

Immediate action

- If inside a building, such as a museum, the teacher in charge will gather the children together and take a register, before establishing the child's last known location.
- The teacher in charge will alert staff working at the place of interest, before going to the child's last known location. He/she will request that all entrances and exits of the venue are closed.

Within ten minutes

- The teacher in charge will search at the vicinity for a maximum of ten minutes.
- If the child has not been found, the teacher in charge will dial 999 to alert police and then inform the school of the situation.
- The headmaster or member of the senior leadership team will contact the child's parent who should make his/her way to the school or the venue at once.

Within the following hour:

- Staff will take the remaining children back to school if child ratios can be maintained. If not a member of staff at school should have made her/his way to the venue.
- The teacher in charge of the group will stay to fully cooperate with the police investigation on site.
- The headmaster will inform the Chair of Governors.

Should a child go missing on an outing in an outside area, police and parents will be notified immediately. The same procedure as for an indoor venue will be followed.

PROCESSES FOR UNCOLLECTED CHILD

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day we put into practice a set of procedures. We ensure that the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible.

- We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.
- We inform parents that we apply our child protection procedures in the event that their children are not collected from the setting by an authorised adult one hour (6pm) after the setting has closed and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises.

If a child is not collected by fifteen minutes after the end of the session, we follow the following procedures:

- The notice board in the staffroom, emails, and bus transportation book are checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines. The receptionist is called if she has left the school.
- If no information is available, parents are contacted at home or at work.
- If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from school, and whose telephone numbers are recorded, are contacted.
- All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
- The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on our contact form or in their file.
- If no-one collects the child after one hour after the school has closed (5pm) and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
- We contact the appropriate local authority, Family Services Team. The DSL is informed.
- The child stays at ERS in the care of two fully vetted staff-members until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a Social Care Worker.
- Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- Under no circumstances will staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.

RECORDING

After an incident involving a missing child the headmaster or member of the senior leadership team in charge will complete a Missing Child Form (Appendix 1) to write a report about the incident. This report will aim to look for improvements which can be made to the school policy and procedures to avoid any further occurrences of the incident. The headmaster and Chair of Governors will review the incident at the earliest opportunity.

After an incident involving an uncollected child a full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file including a written record of all attempts to contact the parents and a log of all other calls and responses.

TRAINING

It is recommended that new staff are made familiar with this policy and that it is discussed with staff annually.

Policy approved by: Alison Walker
(on behalf of Governing Body)
Date: September 2025

Next Review (latest): October 2026

APPENDIX 1

Missing Child Procedures Incident Form

Date:

Name of missing child

Age Class Teacher

Date of Birth

Parents' contacts:

Names

Address

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Telephone number/s.....

Emergency telephone number

Details of Incident:

Person reporting missing child

Time child was first missed

Place where child was last seen

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Apparent reason for disappearance, if known:

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Outcome:

Child found by

Date and time

Full details of location

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Any further action required and by whom:

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Headmaster

Date