



Our Lady's Preparatory School and Nursery

Missing Child Policy and Procedure 4.13

Background to the Policy / Procedure

The safety and well-being of the children at Our Lady's is the key priority whilst they are in our care at school or in the nursery.

This procedure document sets out the process for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing.

- In the unlikely event that a child attending Our Lady's cannot be located and appears to be missing, it is important for staff to stay calm and not to panic.
- An immediate "roll call" should be taken of the school class or nursery group to confirm that the child is missing and to also confirm that no other children are also missing.
- Staff should re-confirm with all other staff and by checking the attendance register that the child has not been collected by their parents (or other authorised person using the established collection procedures), perhaps at short notice.
- Staff must inform Our Lady's Management immediately, confirming which child is missing, where they were last seen and provide details of exactly what they are wearing.
- While ensuring all other children are kept safe, staff should initially search the immediate vicinity, then the entire school grounds as appropriate. Staff should thoroughly check places at which the child was last seen, tracing the routes that they may have taken and asking other children what information they have as necessary.
- The Headmaster or Head of Nursery will inform the police immediately if deemed appropriate and no later than 20 minutes from the time the child was first reported missing.
- As soon as the Head of Nursery (or most senior member of staff) ascertains that the child is missing, that person will contact the missing child's parents, providing them with regular updates until they arrive at Our Lady's. This initial contact with parents will be no later than 30 minutes after the child was first reported missing.

- Once police arrive at the scene, the following relevant information should be provided to them:
 - Child's full name.
 - Full details of exactly what they were wearing.
 - Precise details of where and when they went missing.
 - Any distinguishing features and any medical or learning needs
 - If at all possible, a recent photograph of the child should be provided to police.

The police will then take over the search and staff should assist as directed by the authorities.

- If a child goes missing away from the school / nursery site, such as during Outdoor Learning for example, the above procedures should still be followed. If the applicable senior member of staff deems it suitable, the parents can be directed to the external site. The senior member of staff should check any specific local procedures should a child go missing on a school visit (e.g. at a museum or other public building).
- If a child does go missing off-site, the senior member of staff will remain with the police to help comfort the child when located and maintain regular contact with the school during this period. The remaining staff will return to the school / nursery site with the rest of the children as soon as is practical.
- When the situation has been resolved, the Headmaster and Senior Management Team at Our Lady's will review the reasons for this event happening and revise measures as part of the monitoring and review process (see below).
- In all cases, all details and circumstances of any missing child incident must be recorded and the "note of record" signed by all staff involved and retained within the school / nursery office.
- Please refer to our Attendance Policy for additional information.

Monitoring & review

The School will review this Policy every two years and any guidance or advice published by the DfE or other relevant bodies will be monitored on an ongoing basis, in the event that ad-hoc amendments or revisions are appropriate outside of this timeframe.

Reviewed: 1 September 2026

Signed:



Acting Head

To be reviewed: 24 months from "Reviewed on" date