

The Croft Preparatory School

Missing Child Procedure

Whole School Policy, including the Early Years Foundation Stage

Policy Reviewed (AW)	10 September 2025
Peer Review Completed	17 October 2025
Ratified by SLT	04 November 2025
Next Review	October 2026

Introduction

The legal responsibility for ensuring that the Croft Preparatory School adheres to all relevant statutory regulations, as issued by the DfE, lies with the Proprietors. At their discretion, the Proprietors may delegate the monitoring of the efficacy with which the school discharges its statutory duties to the Board of Directors and the Governing Committee.

Notwithstanding the above delegation, the Proprietors retain ultimate responsibility for how the statutory functions are executed.

At The Croft Preparatory School, the safety of children is our utmost priority. We ensure that staff members are vigilant, keeping a close eye on the children in their care at all times.

We do not allow unfamiliar adults to approach children, unless under the supervision of a member of staff. This applies to playtimes and outdoor areas of the school, as well as during lesson time where appropriate staff supervision is put in place.

However, in the unlikely event of a child going missing, we put into practice the agreed procedures below.

Procedure

The actions below will be carried out as soon as practicable:

- An immediate head count should be carried out to ensure that all other children are accounted for.

- Ensure the safety of the remaining children, making sure they are supervised, calm and supported throughout. As far as possible, the remaining children will continue with their normal routine.
- Confirm with the relevant teaching staff that the child is actually missing and has not been collected.
- Contact the Main Office immediately where staff will arrange for the site to be closed to outgoing traffic without delay, by shutting both front and rear gates.
- Inform the Headmaster of the situation, who is the Incident Controller of the School Crisis Management Team, and who will take charge of the incident.

The Headmaster, as Incident Controller, will co-ordinate the search. In the absence of the Headmaster, the Deputy Headmaster will assume this role.

They will:

- enlist the help of available members of staff, as appropriate.
 - order an immediate and thorough search of the School buildings and grounds.
 - allocate search areas to those involved in the search.
 - ensure that there is a means of communication between the searchers and the Incident Controller.
 - prioritise areas to search according to the danger they pose to the child (e.g., the pond and the swimming pool).
- If the situation is not resolved in what the Headmaster deems a reasonable amount of time, the Headmaster will contact the police and inform the child's parents.
 - The Headmaster will meet with the police and the child's parents, and then await any further instructions from the police.
 - Other agencies will need to be informed of the incident as the Headmaster deems appropriate.
 - Any incidents must be recorded in writing as soon as practicably possible. A Post Incident Evaluation will also be required after the event is resolved, outlining any action required to avoid the situation arising again.
 - It is recognised that an incident of this nature may be traumatic for the staff members, parents and children involved, and that support or reassurance may be required

Procedure to be followed if a child goes missing on a school outing

This section should be read in conjunction with the 'Educational Visits' policy.

- An immediate head count should be carried out to ensure that all other children are accounted for.
- A member of staff should search the immediate vicinity.
- Contact the venue manager to arrange a full search and, depending on the nature of the location, secure the site.
- Depending on the location of the visit/outing, the remaining children should be localised in the immediate area or held on the coach .
- The Teacher who has organised the outing should take full control of the situation. They should also inform the Headmaster.
- The Trip Organiser should contact the Police.