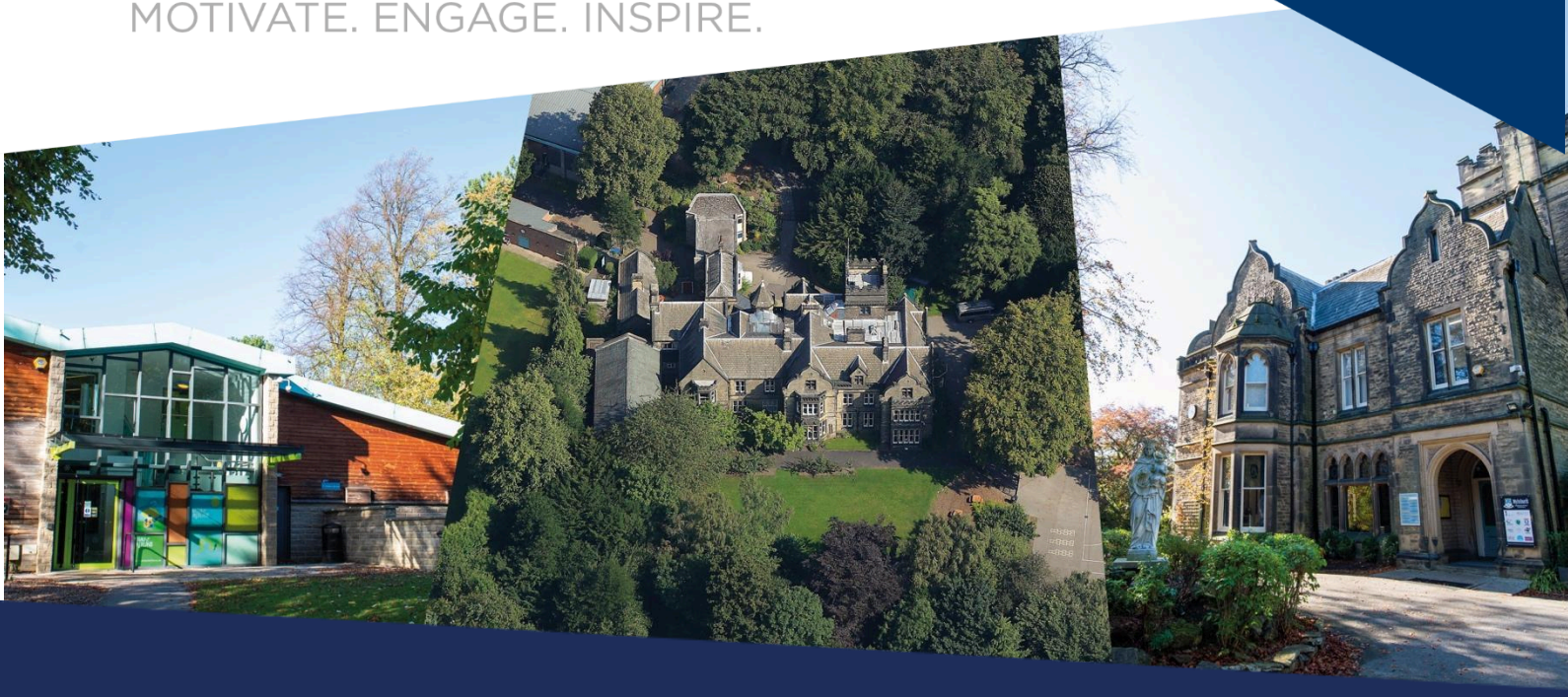
Mylnhurst
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Policy Document
Mylnhurst School & EYFS

Missing Child Policy

Publication Date: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

Missing Child Policy

Rationale

The safety of children in our care is of the utmost importance and we have strict systems in place to minimise the risk of a child going missing.

In the event that a child should go missing, staff will follow strict procedures to ensure that every effort is made to find the child as quickly as possible, and to make sure the correct people are informed.

Procedures for dealing with a missing child from school

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing:

1 The missing child (children) should be identified and last known whereabouts noted.
The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is noted as soon as possible.

2 The senior member of staff on duty will arrange for the remaining children to be supervised.
Without alarming them, the children will be asked if they have seen the missing child.

3 The remaining staff will carry out a systematic search to see if the missing child can be found in the surrounding area.
All exits will be checked for signs of exiting.
Staff will check the area thoroughly.

4 Staff will then carry out a thorough external check of the building.
A thorough search of the vicinity must be undertaken immediately, taking care to search all areas that a child can access. Do not underestimate how small or unusual this could be.

5 If the child is not found the senior member of staff will then inform:

a) The Headteacher and/or a member of the Senior Leadership Team

The Parents & Police should then be contacted immediately

b) Contact the Parents of the child.

This should be done by speaking to them directly and alarming them as little as possible. If they do not answer the phone, a message for them to contact the school only should be left on any answering service before attempting alternative numbers. Under no circumstances should any other details be left on an answering service other than to make contact with the school. The Police must be called before attempting other child contact numbers.

c) Contacting the Police (dial 999)

The police have the resources to conduct a search and speed is important.

6 Check the route home.
If the child cannot be located a member of staff should search along a possible route the child might take to get home taking a mobile phone to keep in contact.

7 Record the Events.
The following details should be recorded in order to help as much as possible in the search and investigation.

- Date, time and location of disappearance.
- Who was responsible for the care of the child at the time?
- What was the child wearing?
- Any distinguishing features?
- Circumstances surrounding disappearance.
- Time parents/other parties are informed.
- The events should be recorded in the form of an incident report as soon as possible after the event.

8 After the event, informing other parties
A written report must be made and given to the Headteacher.
Ofsted must be informed of the outcome and steps taken.
The local Social Care department should be informed.
All parents; the Headteacher will do this and any questions immediately following the event should be directed immediately to them.
The school's insurance company should also be informed.
Details of the time and who was contacted should be recorded on the incident form too.

A full written report of the incident will be made by each member of staff on duty and directly involved.

9 Dealing with reactions.
It is natural that an incident such as this will shock and upset everyone involved and it is important all reactions are dealt with in a caring and understanding manner. Until a full investigation has been carried out by all parties, all staff must adhere to the confidentiality policy and refer any questions or enquiries from any parent or third party to the Headteacher.

Procedure to be followed by Staff if a child goes missing on an outing

1 **An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children are present.**
    - An adult would search the immediate vicinity.

- Adults and venue staff would retrace steps to the last place where the child was seen, the remaining children staying in one place with a **senior member** of staff.

2 **Contact the venue manager/staff and arrange a search if in a building or on a site such as a garden/castle etc.**
   - If the child was not located, the remaining children would be taken back to school, or arrangements would be made with the School.
3 **Inform the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) by mobile phone.**
   - Ask the Head/DSL to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Discuss with them whether they should come to the location or wait at the school.
4 **Head/DSL to contact the Police.**
   - The Head/DSL would inform the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub.
5 **The School would cooperate fully with any investigation by Police and/or Social Care.**
6 **If the child was not quickly found the School would inform:**
   - The Chair of Directors
   - The School's insurers
7 **If the child is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR (http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/) to the Health and Safety Executive.**
8 **A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.**

Actions to be followed by staff once the child is found

1 **The Head/ DSL will contact the parents and any emergency services involved.**
2 **Talk to, take care of and comfort the child.**
   - Counselling may be necessary and it may be best for the child to remain in their care or to go home.
3 **Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.**
4 **Inform all staff involved in the search that the child has been found.**
5 **The Head /DSL will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.**
6 **The Head will initiate a full investigation (if appropriate involving Social Care/SSCS).**
7 **Media queries should be referred to the Head.**
8 **The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.**
9 **The report should be detailed covering:**

   - time

- place
- numbers of staff and children
- when the child was last seen
- what appears to have happened, [the purpose of the outing]
- the length of time that the child was missing
- how s/he appears to have gone missing
- lessons for the future.

Links
This policy should be read in conjunction with the Mylnhurst Safeguarding Children Policy.

Review
This policy will be reviewed annually.