The Blue Coat School

POLICY FOR LOST OR UNCOLLECTED CHILDREN

Approved by the Governors' Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee on _____

Signed: _____

(H Andrews – Chair of Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee)

This Policy for Lost or Uncollected Children was devised by the Deputy Head (Pre-Prep) and Deputy Head (Prep) in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.

Date of Next Review: Michaelmas 2027

POLICY FOR LOST OR UNCOLLECTED CHILDREN

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1
The welfare of all the children at The Blue Coat School is of paramount importance. It is possible for children to go missing and EVERY member of staff has equal responsibility for ensuring the safety of the children and knowing where they are. Staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is well supervised whilst he or she is in the care of Blue Coat School staff.

1.2
The Blue Coat School Policy for Lost or Uncollected Children is available for parents on the school website:

2. SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO MINIMISE THE CHANCE OF CHILDREN GOING MISSING

2.1
Steps are taken to ensure that the premises and surrounding site are as secure as possible. The school entrance gates are kept shut during the school day other than drop off and collection times. When the entrance gates are shut, entry is gained by contacting Main Reception via the audio speaker. A member of staff at Main Reception monitors the CCTV screen and responds to requests for entry. The school exit gates operate on a vehicle sensor system. Entrance doors to buildings have coded key pads and the doors to buildings are shut once the children have arrived in the morning. They are kept shut throughout the school day other than when staff and children are entering or leaving the buildings.

2.2
During the school day, parents and other visitors must report to Main Reception. The Pre-Prep Secretary will collect any visitors for Pre-Prep. Notices are clearly displayed on relevant entrance doors outlining the procedures to be followed. Prominent notices are displayed across the campus to ensure that gates and doors are kept closed and, where appropriate, secure.

2.3
All staff wear photo ID badges with Blue Coat School blue lanyards at all times during the school day. All visitors are required to register in the Main Reception area where they obtain a 'Visitor' badge. Visitors who have had appropriate checks such as a DBS check wear a yellow lanyard whereas visitors who have not had such a check must wear a red lanyard and must be accompanied at all times. Governors wear green lanyards and do not need to be accompanied.

2.4
Parents/carers must not remain on the campus after dropping children off at school. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that children are fully supervised before and after school and that their child is handed into the care of a member of The Blue Coat School staff when arriving.

2.5
Pre-Prep children should leave the buildings only under the supervision of a member of staff. All children are supervised by the staff when they are not in the buildings and children are reminded to remain under staff

supervision (e.g. at playtimes, when moving between the buildings or when visiting other parts of the campus). A member of staff who has been on playground duty ensures no children are left outside.

2.6

Children are only released into the care of individuals named by the parents. Parents are required to inform the staff about any such named individual. It is the responsibility of parents to give the agreed password to any other individual collecting the child so that staff can confirm the identity of the adult collecting the child. If there is any doubt about the identity of the named individual, staff will seek further clarification such as telephoning the parents or asking the named individual to provide ID or give additional details.

2.7 Arrivals

2.7.1 Breakfast Club

2.7.1.1

Breakfast Club is available for children in Reception and Years 1 – 6 in the Dining Hall. Children can be dropped off from 7.30am but parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child is signed into the Breakfast Club. The children are supervised by a member of staff and the catering staff. They are then taken to their year group drop off point at 8.00am by the supervising member of staff.

2.7.2

Children should be dropped off between 8.00am and 8.30 am (Pre-Prep) and between 8.00am and 8.20am (Prep).

Children in Pre-Prep will be greeted by a member of staff at the door of their designated building and staff will oversee them in the cloakrooms. Prep children will be greeted by a member of staff who, alongside other members of staff, will supervise the children in their year group hubs until the start of the school day.

2.7.3

Parents may drop off children in Prep from 8.00am using the 'Drop and Go' facility situated on the left-hand side of the main drive after entering the main vehicle entrance. A member of BCS staff supervises this area and ensures that the children are directed safely to their Year Group Hub.

2.7.4

Staff are responsible for ensuring that they record the children who have arrived using set procedures, prior to the formal registration. It is the responsibility of every member of staff to be aware of how many children are present and quick head counts should be taken at intervals during sessions. Pre-Prep teachers also complete a laminated card recording the names of the children who are present. This card is taken with the children when they leave the classroom to go to other rooms such as the Gym, the Annexe, the Dining Hall or the Sports Hall and in the event of a fire evacuation.

2.8 Absences and lates

2.8.1

On the first day of a child's absence, parents are expected to telephone or e-mail the Pre-Prep Office (Pre-Prep children), Main Reception (Prep children) or alternatively to notify the school via the app. If a message is not received and the absence is unexplained, parents are telephoned at home in order to determine the reason for their child's absence. If it is not possible to make contact with any of the child's named contacts, then a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed and the unexplained absence will be followed up. The DSL also monitors extended absences or persistent late arrivals and meets with parents as required.

2.8.2
Children arriving after 8.20am (Prep) or 8.30am (Pre-Prep) should be taken to Main Reception by parents where a member of staff will ensure that they are taken to their class. Registers are marked accordingly.

2.8.3
Prep children participating in afternoon sports fixtures are registered against the team lists by the sport staff. Form Tutors and Heads of Year are issued with team lists for cross-referencing.

2.9 Medical or other appointments

2.9.1
Parents needing to collect children early or drop children off late because of medical, dental, hospital or other appointments should inform the School beforehand. Children must be collected and dropped off to Main Reception or, by arrangement, from outside the Pre-Prep building. All such appointments during school hours should be kept to a minimum. Registers will be marked accordingly.

2.10 During the School Day

2.10.1
Staff are responsible for ensuring that children are aware of the boundaries of where they can and cannot go. This is particularly important at the start of a new school year for all children, for new children joining the school or when systems and routines change. Such changes might include school events or location changes. Parents are informed about the School's security procedures and they are given the opportunity to discuss any specific concerns for their child.

2.10.2
All children are supervised throughout the school day by Blue Coat School members of staff. Early Years Foundation Stage staffing ratios are maintained for Nursery and Reception children at all times, including at playtimes, in lessons and in Aftercare and activities. Nursery children play in enclosed play spaces supervised by Blue Coat School members of staff. Staff check that the gates are secure at the start of every outdoor play session. Reception children use the front playground climber under the supervision of a member of staff according to the rotas. They play under the supervision of Pre-Prep staff. Year 1 children play on the front playground under the supervision of Pre-Prep staff whilst Year 2 children play on the enclosed climber under the supervision of Pre-Prep staff. Pre-Prep children are counted at regular intervals during the day but especially when moving between buildings, at the end of playtimes and when returning to the classroom from playtimes or from another room. Prep children play in their allocated play spaces under the supervision of staff. They line up at the end of playtimes and move to lessons in groups. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that children in their class, set or group are present.

2.11 Music Lessons with Visiting Music Teachers

2.11.1
Children attending lessons with peripatetic music teachers during the school day are collected by the Visiting Music Teachers (Year 4 and below). They are returned to the class by these teachers at the end of their individual lesson. Year 5 and Year 6 children meet the VMT in Main Reception prior to their lesson and they are sent back to lessons at the end of their music lesson.

2.12 Dismissals

2.12.1
Children are dismissed into the care of a known parent or carer by members of The Blue Coat School staff who ensure that children go with a known parent/carer. All Pre-Prep children are dismissed at 3.30 pm and Prep children are dismissed from 4.05 pm.

2.12.2
Pre-Prep staff are responsible for ensuring that Pre-Prep children who are remaining at school for Aftercare are taken to Aftercare in the Atrium and that they are signed in by Aftercare staff. Teachers should not leave the children in Aftercare until the correct staffing ratios are in place.

2.12.3
Pre-Prep staff are responsible for ensuring that Pre-Prep children attending activities are collected by the Activity Provider (including any activities starting during Aftercare) or are taken to the activity venue and handed into the care of the Activity Provider. Activity Providers are responsible for ensuring that accurate records of children attending activities are maintained. They are also responsible for ensuring that children are dismissed to a known parent/carer from the allocated dismissal point at the allocated time. Some children might be attending Aftercare after the activity and it is the Activity Provider's responsibility to ensure that the children are taken to Aftercare and that staff sign the children into Aftercare.

2.12.4
Prep staff who teach the children during Period 6 are responsible for ensuring that Prep children are taken to correct Year Group Hub at the end of the day. Year Group Hub staff are responsible for ensuring that children attending activities are collected by the Activity Provider or are taken to the activity venue and handed into the care of the Activity Provider. Prep Activity Providers are responsible for ensuring that accurate records of children attending activities are maintained. If they do not return children back to the Year Group Hub after the activity, they are responsible for ensuring that children are dismissed to a known parent/carer from the allocated dismissal point at the allocated time.

3. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN IF A CHILD IS FOUND TO BE MISSING AT SCHOOL

3.1
These procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. **In the event of a child being found to be missing it is vital that the following action is taken:**

1. Check to ascertain whether the child is absent from school. Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children are present. Calmly ask all of the adults and children present if they can recall when they last remember seeing the child. **The missing child (children) should be identified and the last known whereabouts recorded.** The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is noted as soon as possible. Staff must be vigilant in ensuring that children in their key groups or those allocated to them for a particular session are present.

2. Inform a senior member of staff (Headmaster, Head of Prep, Head of Pre-Prep or another SLT/SMT member).

3. The senior member of staff present will arrange for the other children to be satisfactorily supervised.

4. A systematic search will be carried out to see if the child can be located in the surrounding area.

- All toilets, cupboards, kitchen, under tables, cushions, anywhere a child might hide
- Outside areas including climbing frames, outdoor storage areas, Forest School, outdoor classrooms etc.
- Check all exits where a child may have been able to leave the premises or site.
- Enlist the help of other staff to search the school grounds, playing field, car park including the Sports Centre car park, also check inside the school buildings.
- If the child cannot be located a member(s) of staff should search along a possible route the child might take to get home. Where able they should take a mobile phone to keep in contact. If a member of staff arrives at the house without finding the child, s/he should make contact with the searching group for further instructions.

5. The senior member of staff will then inform –

a) The parents/carers of the child – alarming them as little as possible and informing them of the steps that have been put in motion. If the child's parents do not answer the home phone, a message must be left on any answering service before attempting alternative numbers. However, if parents do not answer the home or mobile phone number **the POLICE** must be called before attempting other contact numbers for the child. If contacted at home, parents should be advised to stay there in case the child arrives at the home; be advised that the emergency services are being contacted; and that a member of staff is searching the route the child may take home. Parents should be asked for information of anywhere else the child may head for, e.g. grandparents, other relatives, local park, etc.

b) The Police and/or any other emergency services – The Police have the resources to conduct a search and speed is important.

c) The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. The school would co-operate fully with any Police Investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.

d) The appropriate OFSTED officer. The officer will need to know our systems for preventing this occurrence and what happened. It is important that staff concerned keep a record of events.

6. Informing other people. As soon as possible after the incident the following people should be notified:

- The Headmaster (if he has not already been informed during the course of the incident).

- The Chair of Governors.
- The School's insurance company.
- ISI.
- The HSE under RIDDOR if the child was injured.

7. Actions to be taken once the child is found. Once the child is found:

- Staff should talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.
- Staff should speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises or the playground.
- The Headmaster and relevant senior members of staff will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Headmaster and senior members of staff will conduct a full investigation which will, if appropriate, involve the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- A Lost Child – Incident Report (see Appendix 1) will be compiled by all those concerned. This will include details of the time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the length of time the child was missing, how he or she appeared to have gone missing and lessons for the future. The Lost Child – Incident Report will be filed in the Incident Log. If appropriate, procedures will be adjusted.

8. Dealing with reactions.

It is natural that the child's parents will be frightened, distressed and angry. Other parents will be rightly concerned for the safety of their own children. The school management and staff will also be shocked and upset at any lapse in security. All emotions and reactions must be dealt with in a caring and understanding way. However, until the situation has been fully investigated by all parties, all staff must refer any parent and media enquiries to the Headmaster.

4. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF A CHILD FOUND TO BE MISSING ON A SCHOOL TRIP, OUTING OR OFF-SITE VISIT

4.1

In the event of a child being found to be missing on a trip, outing or off-site visit, it is vital that the following action is taken:

1. The missing child (children) should be identified and the last known whereabouts recorded. A head count of all of the children must be conducted to ensure that all other children are present. The chances of finding a missing child safe are greatest if the child's absence is noted as soon as possible. All adults must be vigilant in ensuring that children in their key groups or those allocated to them for a particular session are present.

2. The member of staff leading the visit will arrange for the other children to be satisfactorily supervised. The remaining children should be gathered together for a suitable activity. Without alarming them, the children should be asked if they have seen the missing child.

3. A systematic search will be carried out to see if the child can be located in the surrounding area.

4. If appropriate, the venue manager will be contacted to arrange a search.

5. Inform a senior member of staff by mobile phone. The senior member of staff will arrange for a photo of the child to be sent to the mobile phone of the Trip Organiser or another member of staff on the visit or outing for identification purposes if possible.

6. The senior member of staff will then inform –

a) The parents/carers of the child – alarming them as little as possible. If they do not answer the home phone a message must be left on any answering service before attempting alternative numbers. However, if parents do not answer the home or mobile phone number **the POLICE** must be called before attempting other contact numbers for the child. If contacted, parents should be advised to go to the school; be advised that the emergency services are being contacted and that members of staff are searching for the child.

b) The Police and/or any other emergency services – The police have the resources to conduct a search and speed is important.

c) The appropriate OFSTED officer – they will need to know our systems for preventing this occurrence and what happened. It is important that the teacher in charge keeps a record of events.

d) The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. The school would co-operate fully with any Police Investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.

7. Informing other people. As soon as possible after the incident the following people should be notified:

- The Headmaster (if he has not already been informed during the course of the incident).
- The Chair of Governors.
- ISI.
- The school's insurance company.
- The HSE under RIDDOR if the child was injured.

8. Actions to be taken once the child is found. Once the child is found staff should:

- Staff should talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.
- Staff should speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the group on an outing.
- The Headmaster or relevant senior member of staff will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Headmaster or relevant senior member of staff will conduct a full investigation which will, if appropriate, involve the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- A Lost Child – Incident Report (See Appendix 1) will be compiled by all those concerned. This will include details of the time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the length of time the child was missing, how he or she appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future and further details about the outing such as the venue, the time of arrival and staff:pupil ratios. The Lost Child – Incident Report will be filed in the Incident Log. If appropriate, procedures will be adjusted.

9. Dealing with reactions.

It is natural that the child's parents will be frightened, distressed and angry. Other parents will be rightly concerned for the safety of their own children. The school management and staff will also be shocked and upset at any lapse in security. All emotions and reactions must be dealt with in a caring and understanding way.

However, until the situation has been fully investigated by all parties, all staff must refer any parent and media enquiries to the Headmaster.

5. UNCOLLECTED CHILDREN

5.1
Pre-Prep children who were due to be collected at 3.30 pm and who have not been collected will be taken to the Atrium. If there has been no message from the parents, then an attempt will be made to contact them. If they are unavailable, a member of staff will attempt to contact the named responsible people on the child's records. A senior member of staff or DSL on duty will be informed. If there has been no response by the time after school provision ends at 5.45 pm the senior member of staff or DSL on duty, will contact the Emergency Duty Team on 0121 675 4806 for children living in the Birmingham area or the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership for other local authority areas.

5.2
If a child attending after school care provision in Prep has not been collected by 5.45pm, staff will attempt to contact parents. If they are unavailable, staff will attempt to contact the named responsible people on the child's records. A senior member of staff or DSL on duty will be informed. If there has been no response by 6.30 pm the senior member of staff or DSL on duty will contact the Emergency Duty Team on 0121 675 4806 for children living in the Birmingham area or the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership for other local authority areas.

5.3
The incident will be recorded and the Headmaster will be informed.

6. RELATED POLICIES, POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

6.1
This Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; the Policies for Trips, Outings and Off-site Visits (Pre-Prep and Prep respectively) and the Before and After School Care Policy.

6.2
This Policy will be reviewed at least annually in the Michaelmas Term to ensure that it complies with statutory requirements and to ensure that any changes in practices are accurately reflected. The Policy will be presented to the Governors' Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee for approval in the Michaelmas Term each year. The minutes of this meeting will be presented to the Governors.

Appendix 1

LOST CHILD – INCIDENT REPORT

Child's Name: _____ **DoB:** _____

Class/Form: _____

Date, Time and Place of Incident:
Details of incident Including: ● Last known whereabouts of child ● Staff involved ● Actions taken when and by whom ● When, where and by whom child was found ● Reason for child's absence
Parents Notified (Y/N) **Police Notified (Y/N)**

Follow-up actions taken Including: ● Informing Headmaster ● Informing Chair of Governors ● Discussions with child's parents ● Informing other parents (where appropriate) ● Discussions with staff ● Discussions with Police (where applicable) ● Informing Insurance Company (where applic ● Informing HSE (where applicable) ● Informing Ofsted and/or ISI ● Liaison with the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership	

Any procedural changes identified

Member of Staff (Print name): _____

Member of Staff (Signature): _____

Position: _____ **Date:** _____