DURLSTON

Policy 2.10

Durlston School Missing, Lost or Uncollected Child Policy

(Including EYFS pupils)

Updated:	23.09.26
Reviewed By:	BRS
Next Review date:	01.09.27

Durlston School 2.10 Missing, Lost or Uncollected Child Policy

1. Aims of Durlston School with regard to lost or uncollected children:

1.1 At Durlston every effort is made to ensure the safety of each child during their entire time at the school. In the unlikely event of a child getting lost whilst in the care of Durlston, the following procedures will be put into practice to ensure a systematic approach and that a high level of care is maintained for other children.

2. Lost child in school

2.1

- All visitors are signed in and out of the school through the main office, or in some cases through the Pre-Prep office. All staff *must* ensure *all* visitors have signed in and out at one of these offices.
- All staff ensure that the doors and gates to any outside area are closed.
- Any changes to the day to day arrangements are to be noted by the main office and posted in the staff room.
- Staff complete registers on the school MIS in the mornings and afternoons.
- Children are not permitted to be collected by someone other than their carer/parent unless it is in writing or has been verbally acknowledged by the carer/parent. A password system operates for unfamiliar adults collecting children in Pre-Prep. Changes to any child's normal pick up routine should be sent to the main office and discussed with the Form/class teacher. Should the situation arise whereby a child will be collected by a person unknown to the school, their identity will be confirmed by contacting the relevant parent.

3. Procedures

3.1

- Once alerted or a concern is raised staff will assess the best course of action for the remaining children - this may be to gather them together, or continue with their normal activities, depending upon the situation. The teacher in charge will then take a register. If it is discovered that the child is unaccounted for, the teacher, teaching assistants and/or Early Years staff will begin a full search of the immediate building (checking cupboards, toilets etc). The search will then spread outdoors and to the immediate vicinity. Checks of Learning Support, Peri lessons etc. will be carried out.
- While the initial search is being made, a member of staff will contact the Head or Head of Section and the office and inform them of the situation. The teacher in charge will try to ascertain the last sighting and what the child was wearing and also the mental state of the child (happy, sad etc).
- The Entrance and Exit gate to the school grounds will be manned by a staff member and vehicles will not be allowed to leave the premises until the child is located.
- If the child is not located in the immediate vicinity, the Fire Alarm will be sounded and all pupils will follow the evacuation procedures, for pupils to be counted and reported back.
- If the child is still not found after 15 minutes and we are sure they were onsite, the teacher in charge will then telephone the police and follow their advice.
- The parent/carer will also be contacted.

4. Lost child on outings

4.1

- If going on a coach, the children will be counted on and off by their allocated adult and by the member of staff in charge of the trip. The minibus driver will also do a count when all the children are seated before both departures. The office is provided with a list of the children going on the trip and their allocated teacher/helper. The Group Leader takes a list of all children's contact

numbers on the trip. When adults are assisting on trips, they are given very clear instructions to keep their children with them at all times. Parents are notified of departure and return times.

- If a child is lost, the adults and children will be asked to return to an agreed meeting point.
- A register will be taken. The teacher/helper in charge of the child will confirm the last sighting and what the child was wearing. Selected staff will be sent off to search and keep in contact using mobile phones.
- The Trip Leader will alert officials at the venue and take their advice.
- If after 15 minutes the child is not found the police will be contacted and their advice sought.
- A member of staff will notify the Durlston Office and Head.

4.2 When the situation of a lost child is resolved the members of staff will review the reasons for it happening and ensure that measures are taken to prevent it from happening again.

5. Nature Walks/Outdoor Learning

5.1

- Depending on the age of the children, at least two members of staff will go on a nature walk.
- The staff will always notify the office
- The staff will always carry a means of communication (phone or radio).
- Staff take a First Aid Kit, including any specific medication/medical supplies for the children attending.
- If a child goes missing, the above protocol will apply, depending upon the location of the nature walk/outdoor learning (on/off site)

6. Uncollected Child Procedure

6.1 The school will ensure that all children are collected by a parent, carer or designated adult. If for some reason a child is not collected at the end of a session, the following procedures will be activated:

- If a parent, carer or designated adult is more than 15 minutes late in collecting their child a member of staff will call the parent, carer or designated adult, and use any other emergency contact details available in order to try to ascertain the cause for the delay and how long it is likely to last. Messages will always be left on any answerphone requesting a prompt reply.
- While waiting to be collected, the child will be supervised by a member of staff who will offer them as much support and reassurance as is necessary.
- Early Years – If a child is not collected at the end of the morning session, they will stay with the rest of the group and join in the afternoon Kindergarten session, for which they may be charged. Staff will continue to try to contact the parents/carers or other designated adults on the emergency contacts sheet.

6.2 If a person arrives to collect a child who is not the parent, carer or designated adult, or who is unable to quote the collection password in Pre-Prep, then staff take that person's name and telephone the parents, carer or emergency contact of the child to establish whether or not they have authorised collection. **Under no circumstances are children allowed to leave with a person other than the parent, carer or designated person without permission from a parent.**

6.3 At 15:30 (Pre-Prep) and 16:30 (Middle and Seniors) after school clubs begin and all remaining children will be registered for these by the relevant member of staff. After School Care Club (Pre-Prep) or Prep Club (Middle and Seniors) are available for children staying late, but not participating in an organised club. Last collection is 17:20 (Middle and Seniors) and 17:30 (Pre-Prep).

6.4 If at all possible parents are requested to contact the school office to inform the school if their child will be requiring an unexpected late stay or to discuss arrangements for their child to be collected.

6.5 If a child remains uncollected, the school will telephone the parents on their contact numbers and if we are unsuccessful we will attempt to get in touch with the next person on the emergency contact list.

6.6 The staff will not release a child to a person without the permission of a parent or carer.

6.7 We will do all we can to keep the child happy and content and to minimise anxiety.

6.8 If we have had no communication from the parent/carer by 18:00, or if despite our best efforts we have not managed to contact the parents/carers we will inform Social Services that we have an uncollected child.

6.9 Where there may be Court orders for contact in place, the teacher in charge will seek advice from children's social care before contacting the parent who is not designated to collect the child on that day.

7. Extended Day

7.1 Durlston operates an afterschool clubs programme, this is supervised by Durlston staff. Any Pre-Prep children not collected by 15:30 will be taken to After School Care Club, where they will be supervised until collection and parents will incur the standard half hourly charge. The Pre-Prep Secretary will attempt to contact the parents if the child does not usually attend. If a child is not collected at the end of the club (17:30), a member of the Senior Leadership Team will contact the parents and will take over the care of the child. In Middle and Senior school, children sign out at the end of their club (17:20) and await collection with the duty member of staff at the 'bus stop' in the Durlston car park. Any child not collected by 17:30 is escorted by the duty staff back to the main school office where reception will contact the parents and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will take over the care of the child.

7.2 Continual incidents of late collection will be recorded in the After School Care Club / Signing Out registers and discussed with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Parents may be charged for additional care if they do not collect their children promptly at the end of the school day.

8. Children missing education

8.1 Please refer to the Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE in addition to the information below:
All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

8.2 Durlston School will follow the statutory guidance set out in Children Missing Education (updated 2025) when responding to children missing education:

8.2.1 Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the Keeping children safe in education statutory guidance

8.2.2 Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily attendance register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals at which they will make a return to the local authority (an

‘attendance return’) with the details of any pupil of compulsory school age who has failed to attend regularly (excluding where they were out of school and attending an approved educational activity covered by codes D, K, V or B), or has been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence had been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O and/or U). . Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils’ poor attendance is referred to the local authority.

8.2.3 All schools must make a return to the local authority (an ‘attendance return’) with the full name and address of any pupil of compulsory school age who is not a boarder and has failed to attend regularly (excluding codes D, K, V or B) or has missed ten consecutive school days or more with their absence being recorded in the attendance register in ways statistically recorded as unauthorised absence. All schools must also make a return to the local authority (a ‘sickness return’) where a pupil of compulsory school age has been recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (illness) and the school have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will be, or will have been unable to attend school because of illness for at least 15 school days during the school year, whether consecutive or not.