



Missing Child Policy

Person Responsible:	Headteacher
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Quorn Hall School is part of Newcome Education, which is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its pupils and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values:

- **'Levelling up'** – We want our children to be able to meet appropriate milestones and age related expectations, socially, emotionally and academically.
- **Thrive not survive** – We want our children to thrive in school and society, not just survive their adverse childhood experiences.
- **Confidence** – Develop confidence in their abilities and self image/esteem as learners and members of society.
- **Creativity** – Foster individuality and celebrate differences and create a compassionate and accepting environment. Provide tools that give pupils options, voice, and choice in order to enable them to be creative.
- **Competence** – In their ability to self-regulate and interact with different types of people and overcome the challenges and traumas from the past.
- **Character** – Develop resilience so they see failures or negative situations as a learning opportunity by implementing a growth mindset approach.
- **Compassion** – For pupils and the challenging circumstances they have encountered in both their personal and educational lives.
- **Care** – To overtly demonstrate to pupils that adults do care about them and their futures – every day is a fresh start.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Quorn Hall School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility updated August 2023](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person – this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative

- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school contracts the services of third-party organisations to ensure regulatory compliance and implement best practices for:

- HR and Employment Law
- Health & Safety Guidance
- DBS Check processing
- Mandatory Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and other relevant training
- Educare / National College (online CPD)
- Data protection and GDPR guidance
- Specialist insurance cover
- Neotas (Online searches / Social Media checks)
- VWV (legal)

Where this policy refers to ‘employees’, the term refers to any individual that is classified as an employee or a worker, working with and on behalf of the school (including volunteers and contractors).

Quorn Hall School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Quorn Hall School.

The policy documents of Quorn Hall School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

Aims

We will ensure the entitlement of each pupil to access a variety of opportunities to promote academic, social, emotional and physical development.

We will use strategies in line with the Quorn Hall School Positive Relationships Policy to support pupils' social and emotional well-being and as well as neuro-diverse presentations to promote pupil learning and personal development. In particular we must be aware of our children with attachment disorders and developmental disorders.

We will provide choices and challenges in order to maximise potential and build up strengths and interests.

All the members of the School community are valued equally and work in partnership with parents, carers and the wider community.

We will work within a supportive School framework to promote and celebrate individual success, integration into the wider community and prepare pupils for life after School.

Quorn Hall School recognises that children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

This Policy is written to guide Staff in the event of a pupil going missing on the premises, going missing outside of the School, or having run away. Quorn Hall School has safety measures in place where reasonably practical to prevent pupils from leaving the site without permission, getting lost whilst on outings or abducted. A lot of emphasis is placed on the pupils making positive choices and choosing not to leave the school site without permission. Quorn Hall School does recognise that some pupils will still choose to leave the school site on occasions. As part of the assessment process for each pupil, consideration must be given to the risk of the pupil becoming 'Absent (missing)'. If there is a risk of the pupil becoming 'Absent (missing)', further consideration must be given to the risk posed to the pupil or others as a result.

Details regarding risk and actions to be taken are to be included in the Individual Pupil Risk Assessment and their IEP. This may include when the police should be called dependent on the level of risk to each individual pupil.

Guidance documents

- A: Handbook for the inspection of association independent schools, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings, September 2024

- B: ISI Inspection Framework, September 2023 (updated November 2024)
- C: The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, November 2024
- D: Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE guidance
- E: Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE guidance December 2023 (updated February 2024)
- F: Spotting the Signs of Child Abuse, NSPCC fact sheet: www.nspcc.org.uk/signsofabuse
- G: Children Missing Education, DfE guidance, August 2024
- H: Working together to improve school attendance, DfE guidance, August 2024

Part One: Missing Child Policy

Introduction

The welfare of all of our children at Quorn Hall School is our paramount responsibility. A child being absent from education, particularly for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including abuse or neglect, child sexual and/or criminal exploitation and county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure our children are safe and receiving suitable education. 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 the future. Where staff have concerns that a child is absent from school for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, or missing from school, this policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff who works with children has read at least Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Our staffing ratios are generous and are deliberately designed to ensure that every child is supervised the whole time that they are in our care.

Information for Parents

Our School Attendance Policy describes:

- The arrangements for children arriving at school and leaving the premises at the end of the day

- The arrangements for registering the children in both morning and afternoon. Parents are responsible for notifying the School if their child is absent for any reason. The School will always contact the parent if the child fails to arrive at school without an explanation
- The physical security measures and supervision which prevent unsupervised access outside of the school grounds and building.

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for outings involving our pupils are set out in a detailed Educational Visits policy. This document is on our website and can be provided to parents on request.

We review all our policies regularly in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of pupils and read at least Part 1 of KCSIE.

Action to be followed by staff if a child fails to attend first day of school

Duty to report

Prolonged and persistent absence

See the Quorn Hall School Attendance Policy for full details.

Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing from the school

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child was found to be missing, we would carry out the following actions without delay:

- Check with the pupil's friends to see if they know their whereabouts
- Inform a member of school leadership
- Ask all of the adults and pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the pupil
- Occupy all of the other pupils in their classroom(s)
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search the school grounds
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit.

A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is absent from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

If the pupil is still missing, the following steps would be taken:

- Inform the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Ask the most appropriate staff member to ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the School at once.
- School may also determine it necessary to contact the police.
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff may be asked to check if the pupil has gone home and would set out on foot to attempt to catch up with them
- The DSL would inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) who should liaise with safeguarding partners including local children's services as appropriate. The DSL will check with the LSCB this has happened
- The School would co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- The School's insurers would be informed
- If the pupil is injured, a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

During the course of the investigation into the missing pupil, the School will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

The School will always consider the wider circumstances around a child going missing from School and whether there are wider safeguarding concerns that may need to be addressed in line with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Actions to be followed by staff if a child goes missing on an outing:

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other pupils were present
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- Inform the Headteacher and the DSL by mobile phone
- The remaining pupils may need to be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable
- Ask the most appropriate person to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to school or external venue at once
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search (where relevant)
- Contact the Police immediately
- The DSL would inform the LSCB who should liaise with safeguarding partners including local children's services as appropriate. The DSL will check with the LSCB this has happened
- The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors

- The School's insurers would be informed as soon as reasonably practicable. If the child is injured, A report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). If the child is injured and is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment a report would be made under RIDDOR to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days of the accident.

When to contact the police for a missing child:

- For a KS1/2 this should be immediately the pupil is known to be missing outside of the immediate school environment
- For KS3 a call must be made after 20 minutes
- For KS4/5 a call must be made after 30 minutes
- These times indicate the minutes from the last positive sighting by an adult of the child.
- The pupils' risk assessment plans supersede these times where pupils are identified with increased vulnerability
- Parents/Carers of the pupil who is missing should also be informed

If contacting the police about an absent / missing pupil, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name
- the pupil's age and date of birth
- an up-to-date photograph if possible
- the pupil's height, physical description and any physical distinguishing features
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- the pupil's home address and telephone number
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing
- any relevant comments made by the pupil such as "I'm going to run away".

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. The School will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

Part Two: Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time

If a child is not collected at the agreed collection time, we will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers, or transport provider. Where reasonably possible the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. If there is no answer, the school will begin to call the emergency numbers for this child. During this time, the child will be safely looked after. If there is no response from the parents' or carers' contact numbers or the emergency numbers within one hour the school may contact the Social Care Duty Officer. Social Care will

make emergency arrangements for the child and will arrange for a visit to be made to the child's house and will check with the Police. The School will make a full written report of the incident.

The School will look after the child safely throughout the time that they remain under our care, until such a time as the child has been collected by a parent, guardian or carer, or until appropriate, alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care and/or the Police in order to prioritise the child's safety. The School's DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from school or are late for no explanation or good reason, or where there are repeated incidents. If any concerns about the child's safety and welfare result, these will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Child protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures.