COWORTH FLEXLANDS
Prep School & Nursery
Inspiring Minds, Nurturing Spirit

Missing, Absent and Uncollected Pupil Policy

Contents

1. Policy Statement 1
2. Key Personnel 2
Part One: Missing /Absent Persons 2
3. Definition 2
4. Procedures 3
Registration, Collection/Signing In and Out 3
Procedure for a person who goes missing on the school premises 3
If a pupil is confirmed missing 4
Procedure for a person who goes missing on an outing 4
Follow Up Actions 5
Procedure for a pupil who fails to arrive at school or is taken from school without authority 5
Procedure to be followed by staff if a pupil fails to attend the first day of school 6
5. Duty to Report 6
Part Two: Procedures to be followed when a child is not collected on time 6
6. Procedures 6
Document Log 7

1. Policy Statement

This policy consists of two parts: the first covering a missing child and the second covering the procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appointed time. Coworth Flexlands School is committed to ensuring that the whereabouts of all pupils in our care are known at all times. On occasions, when a member of staff identifies pupils as not present from their expected location without authorisation or explanation, immediate action is required.

Communications with parents and appropriate services (particularly the police) are an integral part of this policy. Every adult who works at the school has been trained to appreciate that he or she has 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. Every member of our staff ~~who works with children~~ has read 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 he or she is in our care.
At Coworth Flexlands School we are sympathetic to the parent/guardian of a pupil who, where the circumstances are exceptional, is not collected at the appointed time. However, we reserve the right to charge a fee for late collection to cover the additional time worked by our staff.

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a

child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including those in our EYFS setting. In line with our Provision of Information Policy, this document is available to all interested parties on our website and on request from the main school office and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance, Child Protection and Educational Visits Policies.

Coworth Flexlands School is fully committed to ensuring that the appliance of the Missing, Absent and Uncollected child policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the schools' Equal Opportunity Policy document. Coworth Flexlands School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

This policy has been developed with reference to:
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

- Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Independent School Standards Regulations 2014
- EYFS Statutory Framework 2026

This document is reviewed annually by the Assistant Head, Amanda Engley, and Local Governing Body, or as events or legislation change requires.

2. Key Personnel

The Head, Nicola Cowell, the Deputy Head, Joe Yates, the Assistant Head Amanda Engley, the Director of Studies, Claire Glover, and the Business Manager, Kerry Webb of Coworth Flexlands School are responsible for overseeing the procedures of this policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for overseeing safeguarding concerns arising from missing, absent or uncollected pupils and liaising with external agencies where required.

Part One: Missing /Absent Persons

3. Definition

A missing /Absent person may be:

- A pupil or adult who has been registered as being on site but does not arrive at their designated destination and has not been signed out of school.
- A pupil or adult missing from a fire drill or lockdown drill.
- A pupil unaccounted for at either morning or afternoon registration, or an on-site after-school club, who has not been signed out of the school premises.
- A pupil who is removed from school by an adult without the authorisation of the Head or the member of the Senior Leadership Team on duty.
- A pupil who does not arrive at school and the school is unable to contact a person with parental responsibility to ascertain the reason for their absence.
- A Pupil being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions
- An adult who does not arrive at school without making contact and the school is unable to contact them to ascertain the reason for their absence.

4. Procedures

The school holds more than one emergency contact for each pupil and emergency contact details for each member of staff. All new staff receive a thorough induction onto the importance of effective supervision of all pupils, what to do if a child goes missing and are required to read Part 1 of the Department for Education's *Keeping Children Safe in Education* guidance.

Registration, Collection/Signing In and Out

- Registration takes place during class registration periods (8.40 am and 1:00/1:30pm). A pupil arriving before school starts will be registered at breakfast club before attending any clubs.
- Any pupil arriving after registration closes must register in the school office.
- Any pupil being collected (by their parent or designated adult) during the day must be signed out in the signing in and out book in the School Office (unless being escorted by members of staff on a School Trip/ Sports Event or swimming lesson).
- At the end of the school day, form teachers will dismiss their classes to the appropriate club leaders or to their parents.
- All clubs' supervisors will maintain accurate attendance registers.
- At the end of a club pupils are handed over to parents or their pre-authorised stand-in and the collecting adult signs them out.
- If a pupil attends more than one club between 4.15 pm and 6.00 pm on any particular day, the club organiser will note on the register where the pupil is taken to when that club has finished.
- Staff, peripatetic staff and club staff must sign in and out using the signing in sheets in the School Office.
- Visitors must sign in and out using a separate book also kept in the School Office. This includes parents of the school.

Procedure for a person who goes missing on the school premises

The normal sequence of events for a missing person to be followed is:

- As soon as a person is thought to be missing from the site, the member of staff should immediately notify the Head/Deputy Head or SLT member on duty and then check the school office/medical room and staff room.
- Walkie talkies should be used to ask all staff to let the office know if the pupil is with them. The code phrase for staff is "*(insert name) is missing his/her homework has anyone seen it?*" Staff may respond with a Yes or No. If it is a yes, the Walkie Talkie can be changed to an agreed channel to pass on the information.
- If the person is deemed to be missing, the Head/Deputy Head will organise a full school register check (the Head may consider a fire or lockdown drill appropriate to ensure that all staff and pupils are accounted for).
- The Head/Deputy Head will organise staff who are free of pupil responsibilities to undertake a full and systematic search of the school buildings and grounds simultaneously in the following blocks:
  - Main House, Office and Medical room, checking all cupboards, toilets, and rooms.
  - PA Block including all sheds at rear (both locked and unlocked), all cupboards and toilets, behind gym equipment and both staircases and stairwells.
  - Academic Block, including kitchen and rooms to rear kitchen, rooms (including Premises Manager's room), cupboards (including under-eaves cupboards), stairwells and fire escapes.
  - Car park area including main entrance looking up and down the road, visually inside and under cars parked in the car park, school shop, old police hut, hedges around the car park area, refuse area and sheds/grounds as far as the external Nursery boundary fence.
  - Playground, including Peace Garden and woodlands adjacent to the playground, Nursery play area and Forest school area, all outside store huts (whether locked or unlocked, keys are kept

in the staff room), play huts, sports/garden stores, pavilion, tennis courts, outside toilet, main Forest School area and Outdoor Classroom.
- Extended playing fields, stables, paddock playing fields, second car park and entry lane and wild/wooded areas surrounding the sports fields.
- Throughout the search, staff will check doors and gates for any signs of entry/exit.
- The loud hailer should be used to ensure all areas are covered as quickly as possible.

Staff leaving to search should take their mobile phones/the school mobile/ the loud hailer/ a school walkie talkie.

If a pupil is confirmed missing

If a pupil is confirmed missing, the Head/Deputy Head or a person delegated by the Head/Deputy Head will then call the parents (confirming that they have not collected them), explain what has happened and what procedures have been set in motion and ask them to come to school at once and then immediately call the Police.

If an adult is confirmed missing, the Head will attempt to contact them via their home telephone/ mobile phone/school walkie-talkie. If unable to make contact, then call the next of kin to inform them, then immediately call the police. It is therefore essential that staff and visitors, parents and children follow the School's signing in and out procedures.

The police will want to know:

1. Where you are: Coworth Flexlands School address (Chertsey Rd GU24 8TE)
2. Next of Kin of the missing person/name of person with parental responsibility in the case of a pupil. The Office holds these details, and they are available on iSAMs.
3. Detailed description of the pupil/adult including as much clothing description as possible
4. Circumstances of any incident that may have triggered the disappearance, i.e. how long missing for, last seen, was there an argument etc.
5. Who is looking for the pupil/adult, and a contact mobile if possible.

FOLLOW POLICE ADVICE

The Chair of the Local Governing Body should be informed after calling the police. The Office staff are to remain in position to take written records covering all actions taken and reports received, and to be a point of contact for everyone involved.

In the case of a missing pupil, the teachers who taught that pupil earlier in the day and other pupils (if this can be done sensitively and without causing undue distress) are questioned in order to ascertain at what time the pupil went missing and any reasons; notes are to be kept and passed to the Head.

The Head informs the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) in the case of a missing pupil.

The Head or Deputy Head Wellbeing will be responsible for keeping all staff informed of what has happened. The Deputy Head Wellbeing will be responsible for staff well-being, should they be distressed.

Procedure for a person who goes missing on an outing

- An immediate head count should be carried out to ensure that all the other children are present.
- An adult should search the immediate vicinity while another adult supervises the rest of the group.
- Contact the venue manager and arrange a search.

- Immediately inform the Head/Deputy Head (who is also the DSL) by mobile phone and ask the Head/Deputy Head to ring the pupil's parents as soon as reasonably practicable to explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue/ the school at once.
- Immediately contact the Police.
- The remaining children should be taken back to school as soon as reasonably practicable.
- The DSL should inform the SSCP. 01483 517771
- Inform the Chair of the Local Governing Body without delay.

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

Follow Up Actions

- Once the pupil/adult is found the parents/next of kin, police, staff and SSCP should be informed.
- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil.
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- The Head will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with SSCP if necessary).
- A full investigation into the circumstances should be carried out. Witnesses will be interviewed and asked to provide written statements (if appropriate involving the SSCP).
- Coworth Flexlands school will co-operate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority.
- Media queries should be referred to the Head (after discussion with the police and SSCP if appropriate.
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the pupil was last seen, what appeared to have happened, [the purpose of the outing], the length of time that the pupil was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, as well as lessons for the future.
- If the pupil is injured, a report may be required under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- The insurers would be informed in the event of any possible claim.

Procedure for a pupil who fails to arrive at school or is taken from school without authority

- If a pupil does not arrive at school and no one has called with the reason prior to 9am, the Office will call the contact numbers provided on iSAMs. A message may be left, but follow-up calls must be made until the Office speaks to a person designated as a contact by the parents. If no contact can be made by 11.30am, the Office will inform the Head/ Deputy Head (DSL/ DDSL).
- All failures to attend school without a reason being supplied will follow the attendance policy
- If an adult who is not authorised by the pupil's parents arrives to collect a pupil, the pupil will not be handed over until that authority is given by someone with parental authority. If the adult forcibly removes the pupil, it will be treated as an abduction and both the police and parents/guardians immediately informed. (Details of the person should be noted, such as a description, vehicle license number, exact time of removal & conversation prior to removal). This will be treated as a potential Child Protection issue and the Child Protection policy followed.
- If a pupil is frequently missing from school, or there is a regular pattern to their absences, whether these absences are authorised or not, this will be treated as a potential Child Protection issue and the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy followed.

Procedure to be followed by staff if a pupil fails to attend the first day of school

- All new pupils are placed on the School's admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend the School. If a pupil does not attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Head without delay.
- If a satisfactory explanation is not provided by the pupil's parent/guardian, the Designated Safeguarding Lead may consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. If an anticipated new pupil of school age does not attend school and contact cannot be made with their parent/guardian within 10 school days, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the local authority. After 20 school days their name will be removed from the school register.
- Where there are changes affecting the pupil (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected in the admission register. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing children.

5. Duty to Report

If a pupil in EYFS goes missing, then Ofsted must be informed within 14 days.

The school monitors attendance closely and will act to address poor or irregular attendance. The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who does not attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more without permission.

Where a pupil has been continuously absent without authorisation for a period of not less than 20 school days (and there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is unwell or unable to attend because of any unavoidable cause), and the school and local authority have failed, following reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is, the school may delete the pupil's name from the admission register. The school will inform the local authority of such deletion no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

Coworth Flexlands also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

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

6. Procedures

Parents of children starting at Coworth Flexlands School are asked to provide specific information, which is recorded on our Acceptance Forms, including:

- Home address and telephone numbers, including mobile – if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given for a person authorised by the parents to collect their child.
- Place of work and telephone number.
- Names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from Coworth Flexlands, or from an off-site venue should the child be on a school outing, visit or residential trip.
- Information about any specific person who is legally banned from contact with the child.
- Details of at least two emergency contacts.

On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be contactable by the information held by the school, they will inform the office how they may be otherwise contacted.

On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect are not able to collect the child, they must give the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting the child to the School Office, who will inform the Form teacher and club supervisor if appropriate. The school will require proof of identity prior to releasing the child, this will be in the form of photo I.D. or a pre- chosen password.

If a child is not collected at the end of their last session or club, we follow these procedures:

- The child will be placed in Care Club until 6pm.
- Parents/carers are contacted using the numbers held by the school.
- If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from Coworth Flexlands School are contacted, using the emergency contact numbers given.
- All reasonable attempts will be made to contact the parents/carers/authorised person. The child will not leave the premises with anyone other than those authorised by the parent/carer. Exceptions to this are members of the Emergency Services (police/ambulance) or Surrey Safeguarding Children Board / Social Services, who have a legal right to remove the child.
- If no-one collects the child by 6pm a member of the SLT will look after the child on the premises for a reasonable period and parents will incur an additional charge.
- The school will contact Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) if the member of staff has concerns about the child's safety (see the school's Safeguarding Policy) or if the child has not been collected by 7pm.
- The school will keep a record on CPOMs where parents/carers do not collect a child from school or are late for no explained reason or there are repeated incidents.
- If any concerns about a child's safety and welfare result from a missing, uncollected or unexplained absence incidence these will be dealt with in accordance with the Coworth Flexland's safeguarding procedures detailed in the Safeguarding Policy.

The Local Governing Body receives periodic updates regarding significant incidents involving missing, absent or uncollected pupils and monitors the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures associated with pupil attendance, supervision and welfare.

Document Log

Reviewed by	Amanda Engley
Role	Assistant Head and Head of EYFS
Review schedule	Annually
Date Authorised	October 2026
Reason for review	Annual Review
Review Date	October 2027