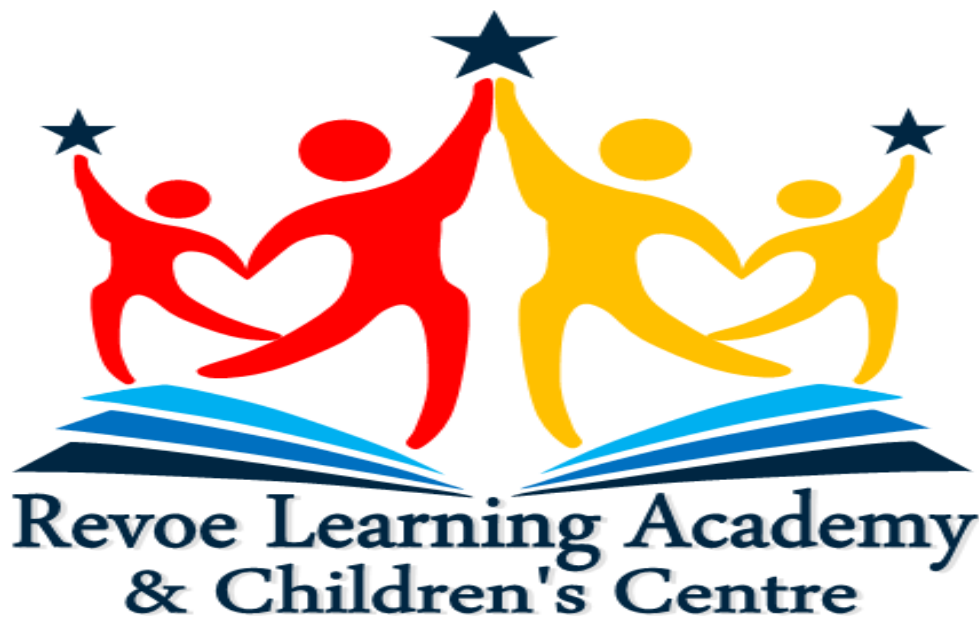


# Our Lost Child or Missing Child Policy



Redrafted March 2016

**To be read in conjunction with our Critical Incident Policy and Pupil Attendance policy.**

**RATIONALE:** Every effort is made to ensure the safety of all children whilst they are in our care at Revoe Learning Academy. This policy sets out our procedures for maintaining safety and managing the unlikely event of a child going missing.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:** It is the **Headteacher's** responsibility to ensure that all staff are aware of this policy, the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a regular basis. It is the responsibility of all **staff** to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

It is the **parent's** responsibility to ensure that they provide correct, updated contact information, including passwords, and know the procedures for the handing over of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.

It is the **Governors'** responsibility to ensure that they are aware of RLA's procedures and to challenge/support the Academy in its review of this policy.

**There are a limited number of situations for a child to become missing or lost, they are:**

- Where a child wanders off on an outing - see policy for visits
- Where a child escapes from a secure room/play area
- Where a child is taken from a crèche/group/Nursery by an unapproved adult
- When a child wanders off from parent at dropping off/collection times
- When a child runs off, through their own choice

**To ensure opportunities for a child to go missing are minimised the following are followed:**

- Registers/ number in session boards are completed for all classes/nursery sessions/crèches and groups
- Registers/ number in session boards are updated if children arrive throughout the session
- Regular headcounts of children are carried out
- Key person system in EYFS ensures children are linked to a named member of staff
- Rooms have key coded doors, corridors doors need passes to allow access and outside areas have padlocks as appropriate
- Risk assessments are completed to ensure the needs of children are identified and supported
- When moving between areas one member of staff must be in front of the children, preventing them from running ahead, and another at the back ensuring all children stay together.
- There are clear procedures for leaving the premises for fire/fire practice evacuations
- During drop off and collection times staff who know the children and their parent/carer well are positioned at doors/key positions to ensure children go with an appropriate adult
- A password system for collecting children is in place

**Should a child become lost or be identified as missing the following actions are taken:**

- If appropriate complete a headcount/check registers to ensure all children are present
- Alert a senior member of staff, who will try to establish when/where the child was last seen, by speaking to staff/parents/other children
- Remember the safety of other children, with regard to safety and supervision
- Ensure remaining children are supervised, other members of staff should search the building/surrounding areas
- If the child can't be found within 10 minutes then the child's parents and police should be informed
- On the arrival of the police and the child's parents/carer the senior member of staff will be responsible for apprising them of all the information in respect of the missing child and what action has been taken.
- When the situation has been resolved an incident form should be completed and a review of reasons for the event happening should take place. If necessary practice should be adapted to ensure safety of all.

**PROCEDURES AIMED AT REDUCING RISK OF A MISSING PUPIL:** The child's annual photograph is attached to their pupil record for easy identification. **Pupil information will be shared with the police in the event that a search needs to be conducted.**

### **Start of the Day for Parents and Children**

- Ensure parents are fully aware of the points at which responsibility for the care of their child passes from the parents /carers to the staff and vice versa.
- Clear procedures for welcoming pupils into RLA. Staff meeting and greeting at the door. Doors into School, other than the main entrance doors, are all closed by 8.55am.
- Pupils use designated playground entrances. Late children are signed in at the main office.
- The main entrance is used between the hours of 8.00am and 5.00pm
- Staff mark registers promptly and accurately - mornings and afternoons.

### **Outside Time/Lunch/Playtime**

- When children are outside the Academy building, they are protected by fencing and locked gates and are supervised by adults at all times.
- If pupils leave the classroom to work in other parts of RLA, teachers ensure that adequate supervision is maintained and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.
- Pupils are never in isolation when moving round RLA.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is vigorously sought and maintained.
- External doors, other than fire doors, leading onto playgrounds are locked before and after play and dinner times. Fire doors must be in the closed position unless being used in an emergency.
- All staff members on duty have a responsibility to politely but firmly refuse entry to an adult to the Academy building or playground unless they are already escorted by a member of staff.

### **Learning Times**

- If a child leaves the learning environment without permission, the teacher must ensure that the child remains supervised, even if from a reasonable distance.
- Prior to the start of learning times ie lessons, it is the teacher's responsibility to collect the children. In the event of PPA, it is the staff in charge of PPA lessons who should collect and return the children.

### **Hometime**

- All pupils must be escorted to respective playgrounds by at least 1 member of staff.
- Staff take pupils to the playgrounds and ensure that all pupils are collected by the appropriate adult using the password system. After 10 minutes, pupils who remain uncollected go to the main entrance to wait, where admin staff will telephone the parents or carers.
- Pupils, collected by an adult, must have sight of their parent/carer before they leave the relevant staff member. Although this tends not to happen in the upper years, since children tend to walk home by themselves, the **staff must ensure the children leave the site safely.**
- There is an up to date list in the office detailing how the pupils are to go home , with whom and password to be used. This list is reviewed at least at the beginning of each year and maintained with up to date contacts when parents make any changes.

## **Visits**

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff/pupil ratios are, in accordance with Blackpool **Learning Outside the Classroom** policy, provided when pupils leave Academy premises. There must be good communication between the group leader and RLA and the teacher must keep a list of pupils/groups to be taken on visits and be familiar with our **Critical Incident Policy**.
- Parents / Carers are never left on their own with groups of children and should not be placed in a group with their own child, unless part of a specific risk assessment.
- Work mobile phones must be taken on every visit. Mobile contact numbers must be left at the Office.

## **PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF A CHILD GOING MISSING**

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while at RLA, that member of staff must:

- calmly inform the Office staff, who will inform the most senior leader immediately;
- promptly but calmly round up all pupils to a pre-arranged area and a designated member of staff will engage the children by reading a story or arranging another suitable calming activity;
- count and name check all the pupils present against the register whilst the group is assembled in one place. At the same time all other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and notify the Office and SLT member if the child is found immediately;
- Conduct a thorough check of exits to ensure gates/doors are locked and there are no other ways a pupil could have left. If a breach is discovered, this must be reported to SLT immediately;
- If the child remains unfound, staff will begin a search of the wider area, including the immediate vicinity;
- If the child has still not been found from the initial report of them as missing, the police then parents must be notified. When contacting parents/carers, ask them to bring with them a recent photograph of their child;
- try to remember and write down a description of what the child was wearing and any distinguishing features, including if the missing child has any special medical or learning needs.

## **MISSING CHILD WHILE OFF SITE, FOLLOW CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY**

If the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing while off RLA premises:

- Group leader must ensure the safety of the remaining pupils.
- A member of staff must notify the venue manager to ensure all exits are supervised or closed.
- One or more adults should immediately start searching for the child.
- Group leader should contact RLA to alert them in accordance with our Critical Incident Policy.