

Early Years Missing Child Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT

At Clifton College, we believe that safeguarding the welfare of children is paramount. We are committed to providing a safe, secure, and supportive environment for all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This policy outlines our procedures to prevent children from going missing and the immediate actions to be taken should a child go missing from our care, whether on-site or during an off-site visit.

This policy aligns with the EYFS Statutory Framework (2026), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026), and the College's overarching Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.

2. AIMS

- To ensure all staff understand their responsibility in maintaining strict supervision.
- To establish a clear, unambiguous procedure to follow if a child is believed to be missing.
- To ensure timely communication with parents/carers and relevant authorities in the event of an incident.
- To satisfy regulatory requirements regarding the supervision and safety of pupils.

3. PREVENTION AND SUPERVISION

The College employs a robust approach to supervision to minimise the risk of a child going missing:

- Accurate registers are maintained at the start of every session (AM/PM) and following every transition (e.g., moving between indoor/outdoor areas, dining, or specialised activities).
- Staff are deployed to ensure appropriate ratios are maintained at all times, in accordance with the EYFS Statutory Framework.
- Children are counted regularly during transitions. Any movement of children across the site must be supervised by a member of staff.
- Gates, doors, and fences are checked daily for integrity. Staff must ensure no unauthorised entry or exit is possible.
- Risk assessments are mandatory for all off-site visits, including specific protocols for headcount and supervision (refer to Educational Visits Policy).

4. WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD IS MISSING

Staff must remain calm, act quickly, and follow these steps sequentially.

Useful contact numbers:

Emergency Contact 1	0117 315 7101
Emergency Contact 2	0117 315 7102
Emergency Contact 3	0117 315 7103
Marshall	0117 3157 148
Upper Head Master office	0117 3157 106
Hammond Building (Upper School Deputies)	0117 3157 175
Preparatory School Headmaster office	0117 3157 501
Preparatory School office	0117 3157 502

Step 1: Immediate Verification

1. The member of staff who notices the child is missing must alert the nearest colleague immediately.
2. A rapid headcount of the remaining children in the group must be conducted against the register.
3. Immediately check the immediate environment (toilets, cloakrooms, play areas) and ask other staff if they have seen the child.

Step 2: Escalation (Immediate Action)

1. The member of staff must inform the Deputy Head of Pre-Prep, the DSL and the Preparatory Headmaster immediately.
2. A designated member of staff will coordinate a sweep of the school site. Staff should be sent to exit points and perimeter boundaries.
3. The DSL (or deputy in their absence) will take command of the incident:
 - Designate one staff member to remain with the remaining children to maintain safety and calm.
 - Designate staff to search specific zones of the school.
 - Consult CCTV (if available/appropriate) via the Data Protection Advisor (DPA@cliftoncollege.com).

Step 3: Contact and Reporting

If the child is not located within 10 minutes of the initial alert:

1. The Deputy Head of the Pre-Prep or DSL will contact the parents/carers to inform them the child is missing. Professional judgment must be used; if there is immediate cause for concern regarding the child's safety, this may be done earlier.
2. If the child remains missing, the Police (999) must be contacted immediately.
3. The DSL will ensure relevant regulatory bodies (e.g., ISI, Local Authority) are informed as per statutory requirements regarding serious incidents.

5. POST-INCIDENT PROCEDURE

Following any incident where a child has gone missing (even if recovered quickly):

- The incident must be recorded in full detail on CPOMS. This record must include the timeline of events, staff involved, search areas, and the eventual outcome.
- A formal debrief will take place with all involved staff within 24 hours to identify how the breach occurred.
- The Preparatory School Headmaster, Head of Pre-Prep and DSL will review this policy and current supervision procedures to prevent recurrence. Any identified weaknesses will be addressed immediately.
- Provide support to the child, parents, and staff involved, as safeguarding incidents can be stressful and traumatic.

6. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

- All staff receive safeguarding induction training that covers this Missing Child procedure.
- Regular refreshers are provided during staff meetings and INSET days, consistent with our culture of continuous professional development regarding KCSIE.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Clifton College Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy
- Supervision of Pupils Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Head Counting Action plan for Preschool