



Missing Child Policy, Children Absent from Education & Procedures when a Child is not collected on Time

This policy pertains to the whole school, including EYFS.

PART ONE: MISSING CHILD POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The welfare of all children at Ripley Court School is the School's paramount responsibility. A child going missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. 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 children are safe and receiving suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a child is missing from School, this policy should be followed.
- 1.2. Every member of staff has read Part 1 of the Department for Education's guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 Teaching Staff and those who work directly with children have also read Annex B of this document.
- 1.3. The School's 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.

2. IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM SCHOOL

- 2.1. If a child was found to be missing, the School will carry out the following actions in order of escalation:
 - Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children are present.
 - Inform the Head of Little Court (including Nursery), if the child is in Early Years or Little Court, or the Head of Upper Court, if the child is in Year 3-6.
 - Inform the School Reception/Headmaster
 - Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell staff when they last remember seeing the child.
 - Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s), perhaps by reading to them.

- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within Little Court, or any other likely School area, inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, bathrooms, where a small child might hide.
- At the same time, check the doors, gates and CCTV for signs of entry/exit.

2.2. If the child is still missing, the following steps will be taken:

- The Headmaster will ring the child's parents/guardians and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the School at once.
- The Headmaster will notify the Police.
- The Headmaster will arrange for staff to search the rest of the School premises and grounds, or repeat the exercise.
- If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to attempt to catch up with him/her.
- The Headmaster will inform the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- The Headmaster will inform the Chair of Governors.
- The School's Insurers would be informed by the Reed's Director of Operations & Ripley Court Bursar
- If the child is injured: A report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE in accordance with current requirements if required. (See Health & Safety Policy)

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

3. 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 children were present.
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity.
- The remaining children would be taken back to school.
- Inform the Head of Little Court (including Nursery) if child is in EYFS or Little Court. Inform the Head of Upper Court if the child is in Upper Court
- Inform the Headmaster.
- Ask the Headmaster to ring the child's parents/guardians and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue/the School at once. Should the Headmaster be unavailable, another member of SLT should carry this out without delay.
- School Reception/Office Manager to send a picture of the child to staff at the location so this can be shared with venue Manager.
- Contact the venue Manager and arrange a search.
- Contact the local Police.
- The Headmaster will inform the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- The Headmaster will inform the Chair of Governors.

- The School's Insurers will be informed by the Reed's Director of Operations & Ripley Court Bursar
- If the child is injured: A report would be made under RIDDOR to the HSE in accordance with current requirements (See Health & Safety Policy)

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

4. ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- The Headmaster will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Headmaster will begin a full investigation.
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
- The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing, the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future.
- Media queries should be referred to the Headmaster.

Further information is available to Staff in the Critical Incident Plan.

PART TWO: PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF WHEN A CHILD IS NOT COLLECTED ON TIME

5. If a child is not collected from Nursery/Little Court on time, then they will go to Court Jesters. Parents/guardians will be called at this time to ascertain the reason for the delay.
6. If a child is not collected from Court Jesters on time, parents/guardians will be charged the penalty fee.
7. The senior member of staff on duty will be informed and it is their responsibility to contact parents/guardians and stay with the child until they are collected. This will take place in the main school house. This applies to all pupils who are not collected. Pupils in Year 3-6 stay in prep in the dining room until 5pm when they are brought over to Apres After School Club. This service is until 6pm.
8. If there is no response from parents' or guardians' contact numbers or the emergency numbers within a one-hour period/when the premises are closing the Senior member of staff on duty will contact Surrey Children's Single Point of Access (C-SPA) Emergency Duty Team on 01483 517 898.
9. 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.
10. The School undertakes to look after the child safely throughout the time that they remain under the care, until such time as they have 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. Senior Staff involved and the Headmaster as DSL will keep a record of incidents where parents/carers do not collect a child from School or are late for no explained 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 Child Protection policy and procedures.

Duty staff may not leave the premises until the children have been handed over to their parents/guardians, Social Care or the Police.

PART THREE : CHILDREN ABSENT FROM EDUCATION

11. DUTY TO REPORT

- 11.1. As part of the School's overall Safeguarding and Child Protection responsibilities, the School monitors pupil attendance and absence in accordance with its Attendance and Absence Policy.
- 11.2. The School will notify the Local Authority of pupils joining at non-standard transition times within 5 working days.
- 11.3. The School will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more (2 days for a pupil covered by a child protection plan).
- 11.4. Where a pupil has not returned to School for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the pupil. This will apply where the School does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.
- 11.5. The School also recognises its wider reporting duties following deletions from the admission register, in accordance with the Education Regulations 2006, to help identify children who are missing education and/or otherwise at risk of harm.

Compiled by: Gavin Ryan (Headmaster & DSL)	Revision Number: 6(Autumn Term 2025)
Approved by: Education & Pastoral Committee	Next Revision date: Autumn Term 2026

Revision History Table

Revision Number	Section/Paragraph number	Amendments
6 – Autumn 2025	Whole document	Update job titles as required
	1.2	Update reference to KCSIE 2025
	3	Final sentence added
	7	Replace reference to pupils being brought over to Little Court for Court Squires with Apres After School Club.
	11.2	New