



Missing Child Procedure

This policy applies to all sections of the School, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Reviewed: April 2025

Next review: April 2026

Terra Nova has a duty of care towards all children and structures are put in place to meet their needs. Terra Nova is fortunate in that absconding from the site is difficult and pupils beyond the school premises outside the School would be readily identified.

General Procedures to monitor pupils

- All Pupils are formally registered twice a day;
- Pupils **must** be present at Registration;
- Electronic registers have the capacity to record intended pupils' movements at the end of the school day, including Supper and/or Boarding;
- The inner door to the Entrance Hall is kept closed throughout the day and gates from the main drive to the academic area secured;
- Active supervision takes place whilst children are outside in free activity situations by allocated Duty Staff;
- A digitized signing out process takes place for children in Years 4-8, allowing for real-time record-keeping after hours; for pupils in Year 3 and below, pupils are signed out by their Class Teacher at the end of the school day;
- Parents should collect from the door of the buildings or arch way area and children should be signed out before departing;
- Members of Staff oversee sign out for pupils in Years 4-7 via electronic systems, permitting pupils to leave upon sight of a parent or recognized adult; pupils in Year 8 are permitted to self-sign out, and proceed to after-school activities, boarding or home themselves;
- Staff will check attendance during Prep and at Supper;
- An attendance check is carried out when the boarders go up to bed and a Fire Register is produced for Overnight.

Actions to be Followed If a Child Goes Missing From The School (including EYFS)

If a child goes missing during the normal school day then the following steps should be taken:

- Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children in the group are present;
- Inform members of the SLT;
- Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child;
- Occupy all of the other children in their classroom(s);
- At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the building, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a small child might hide;
- Check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit, along with CCTV footage as relevant.

IN YEARS 1-8

If the child is still missing, the following steps should be taken:

- Inform the Headmistress and the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- If the child is not found the Fire Alarm is sounded and a full Roll Call taken;
- The Headmistress would arrange for staff to search the rest of the school premises and grounds;

- The Headmistress would ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the school at once;
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead would notify the Police;
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead would inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) via Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by LSCB;
- The Headmistress will inform the Chair of Governors;
- The Insurers would be informed by the Bursar;
- In any cases with media attention staff will not speak to any media representatives;
- Post-incident risk assessments will be conducted following any incident.

IN EYFS

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

- Inform the Headmistress and the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- The Head of EYFS/Nursery manager will call the police and follow police guidance;
- The parents of the missing child will be contacted;
- A second search of the area will then be carried out;
- During this period, available staff will be continually searching for the missing child while other staff maintain as near to normal routine as possible for the rest of the children in the Nursery or reception environment;
- The Head of Pre Prep/Nursery manager will meet the police and parents, along with the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Incidents will be recorded in writing as soon as possible;
- ISI will be contacted and informed of any incidents;
- The Headmistress will inform the Chair of Governors;
- The Insurers will be informed by the Bursar;
- In any cases with media attention staff will not speak to any media representatives;
- Post incident risk assessments will be conducted following any incident.

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.

HIGH RISK AREAS

Three areas are identified as being High Risk:

- Boarding
- SuperNovas
- School Trips, including Fixtures

BOARDING

The following **must** be adhered to all by all staff with responsibility for children boarding:

- All Staff to be instructed in the Policy by the Head of Boarding
- All staff are to be made aware of general school guidelines published in the Staff Handbook

In the event that a child is identified as missing:

- All children should be brought into the Dining Hall where the Boarding members of staff should ask questions of the children in a calm but assertive manner.
- A search of the immediate building space should begin, conducted by all available adults.
- If, following the initial search, the child is not located within ten minutes, the Head of Boarding or in their absence the most senior member of staff present, should then be informed immediately that a child is missing and a further search of the buildings and grounds carried out using all contactable resident staff and any other adults at school.
- If the child is not found the Fire Alarm is sounded and a full Roll Call taken.
- If the child is still not accounted for, the Head of Boarding will contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headmistress and then the parents will be informed to advise them of the situation and of the steps the School is taking to find their child. The police will be notified either by the Head of Boarding, Headmistress, Designated Safeguarding Lead or the most senior member of staff present.
- The Headmistress will inform the Chair of Governors and follow the School's crisis management procedure.

In the event that a pupil is believed to be missing during an off-site trip for boarders, the first effort will be to determine if he/she is truly missing. If it is deemed that a pupil is missing, the Head of Boarding should be contacted by the member of staff in charge; if the Head of Boarding is overseeing the trip, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed immediately. Available staff members will be designated as a search team and will look for the pupil while the remaining staff members continue to care for the rest of the travelling group.

The DSL should be updated of any developments, and shall keep the Headmistress apprised of the situation. If agreed, the school's crisis management procedure shall be activated.

Any necessary internal or external communications will follow the standard communication protocols, at the direction of the Headmistress (or Deputy) or, if convened, the crisis management team.

SUPER NOVAS

The following **must** be adhered to by all staff with responsibility for children in the after school care facility of Super Novas.

- All Staff to be instructed in the policy by the Bursar
- All staff are to be made aware of general school guidelines published in the
- Staff Handbook

General Procedures in Supernovas

- At the beginning of the session an Attendance Register confirms those children present in Super Novas
- The outside door is to be checked to ensure that the building is secure
- No child is to be permitted to leave the building without an adult in attendance
- No child is to be released from Supernovas unless to a known adult; any queries should be directed immediately to a member of SLT.
- An attendance check should be carried out at 5.00pm and again at 6.00pm.

In the event that a child is identified as missing:

- All children should be brought into the central area where the Team Leader responsible for Supernovas should ask questions of the children in a calm but assertive manner.
- A search of the immediate building space should be conducted. Children should not be used for this search. It should be remembered that children enjoy 'hide & seek' and are capable of placing themselves in very small spaces thus no cupboard or potential hiding place should be ignored.
- If, following this first search, the child cannot be found then the Headmistress, or in her absence the most senior member of staff present, should be informed immediately that a child is missing and a thorough search of the buildings and grounds carried out by any adult still on site at the time.
- If the child is still not accounted for, the parents will be informed and the police notified by the Head or the most senior member of staff present.
- The Headmistress will inform the Chair of Governors and follow the School's crisis management procedure.

SCHOOL TRIPS

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
- Adults would search the immediate vicinity
- The remaining children would be taken to a central location/school
- Contact the Police
- Inform the SLT-on-call and the Designated Safeguarding Lead by mobile phone.
- The Headmistress or SLT-on-call shall ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue/ the school at once
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead would inform the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) via Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)
- The school would cooperate fully with any Police and/or any further investigation
- The Head will inform the Chair of Governors
- The Insurers would be informed by the Bursar

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.